



Tried & tested *paving brushes*

Geoff Hodge brushes away the debris to reveal a spic-and-span patio

A WELL-maintained patio can be an attractive garden feature. One that has moss and weeds growing between the gaps in the paving and lichen or algae and stains on the surface is certainly not. And poor maintenance can make them incredibly slippery, turning them into a treacherous

accident waiting to happen.

A patio brush is invaluable for removing moss, algae, weeds and other debris from the grouting between the slabs and between paving. They can also be used to scrub off lichen, algae and other deposits from the surfaces.

The brushes on test use rows of

converging bristles to clean out debris.

Some also feature built-in blades or hooks to remove more stubborn weeds, moss and other debris, especially those deeper in the cracks between the paving.

The test

I tested the brushes to see how well they removed weeds, moss and algae from the

grout between paving slabs and between block paving. I also used them to remove algae, lichen and other stains and marks from the surfaces of some well-worn paving slabs.

I also looked at the angle between the handle and the brush head. I found that some were angled so that the whole head

wasn't in contact with the paving when I used the brush comfortably. These had to be held in an awkward and uncomfortable position to make them make full contact.

Some of those with wooden handles were poorly finished, with rough surfaces, which could lead to splinters.

Fiskars QuikFit Paving Brush

Part of the Fiskars QuikFit range of interchangeable tools.

Quality ★★★★★

Coated aluminium handle 162cm (63¾in) long, using the 1.5m (5ft) QuikFit Shaft L handle, with soft plastic grips at the top and middle. Tough steel wire bristles set in a FyberComp plastic block.

Performance ★★★★★

Produced the best results in all situations. The curved slab blade was excellent at removing difficult weeds and other debris.

Usability ★★★★★

The longest on test, relatively light, good angle and the grips made it great to use.

Value ★★★★★

Price guide £17.99; Shaft L £19.99; other handles available: Shaft M £14.99, Handle S £10.99

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WIN OUR 'BEST BUY'

We have four Best Buy Fiskars QuikFit Paving Brush and L Shafts to give away! Send your name and address to Garden News Paving Brush Giveaway, PO Box 57, Coates, Peterborough PE7 2FE or enter online at www.greatcompetitions.co.uk Closing date is January 8. Please write 'do not contact' if you don't want to be contacted by us or by carefully selected partner organisations.

Burgon & Ball Miracle Block Paving Brush £9.95

Quality ★★★★★

Beech wood handle 152cm (60in) long and very smooth. Tough wire bristles set in a wooden block.

Performance ★★★★★

Good cleaning in all situations.

Usability ★★★★★

The lightest brush on test and very manoeuvrable. Good angle between handle and head.

Value ★★★★★



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Draper Paving Brush £6.30

Quality ★★★★★

Ash wood handle 123cm (48½in) long, but a bit rough. Stainless steel wire bristles set in a wooden block.

Performance ★★★★★

Good cleaning in all situations. The thin triangular weeding tool was good at removing difficult weeds and other debris, even in small and thin crevices between the paving.

Usability ★★★★★

The handle was too short for me, and I had to bend over to use it properly.

Value ★★★★★



15/20

Bosmere Block Paving Cleaning Brush £13.99

Quality ★★★★★

Ash wood handle 155cm (61in) long, but a bit on the rough side. Tough wire bristles set in a wooden block.

Performance ★★★★★

Good cleaning in all situations, although needed a fair amount of force to remove lichen from paving surfaces.

Usability ★★★★★

Good angle between handle and head.

Value ★★★★★



15/20

Gardman Patio & Block Paving Brush £12.99

Quality ★★★★★

Coated steel handle 152cm (60in) long with plastic grip. Stainless steel wire bristles set in a plastic block. Easy to change, replacement brush heads are available.

Performance ★★★★★

Good cleaning in all situations, although the in-line metal cleaning hooks in the head did catch on the paving surfaces.

Usability ★★★★★

The heaviest brush on test, but still comfortable to use.

Value ★★★★★



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Creative Garden Two-in-One Paving Brush £12.50

Quality ★★★★★

Ash wood handle 145cm (57in) long, but quite rough. Tough wire bristles set in a wooden block. Replacement brush heads are available.

Performance ★★★★★

Good cleaning in all situations. The hooked weeding tool was good at removing difficult weeds and other debris. There was some movement in the head socket when brushing vigorously.

Usability ★★★★★

The angle between handle and head was very steep and awkward to use easily and comfortably.

Value ★★★★★ Supplied by Garden Gear



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Yeoman Block Paving Brush & Scraper £9.99

Quality ★★★★★

Ash wood handle 152cm (60in) long, but a bit rough. Mild steel wire bristles set in a wooden block.

Performance ★★★★★

The softer wire bristles weren't as good at removing difficult growth. The thin triangular weeding tool was good at removing difficult weeds and other debris, even in small crevices.

Usability ★★★★★

The angle between head and handle was OK, but not the best.

Value ★★★★★



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Wilkinson Sword Lite Alloy Patio Brush £29.99

Quality ★★★★★

Aluminium handle 155cm (61in) long, top half with plastic coating. Stiff steel wire bristles set in a wooden block.

Performance ★★★★★

Good cleaning in all situations.

Usability ★★★★★

The angle between head and handle was OK, but not the best.

Value ★★★★★



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Spear & Jackson Block Paving Cleaner £7.99

Quality ★★★★★

Ash wood handle 152cm (60in) long, but a bit rough. Mild steel wire bristles set in a wooden block.

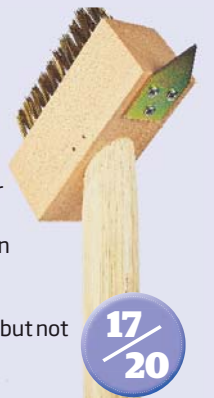
Performance ★★★★★

The softer wire bristles weren't as good at removing difficult growth. The thin triangular weeding tool was good at removing difficult weeds and other debris, even in small and thin crevices between the paving.

Usability ★★★★★

The angle between head and handle was OK, but not the best.

Value ★★★★★



17/20

Wolf-Garten Multi-Change Weeding Brush

Part of the multi-change range of interchangeable tools.

Quality ★★★★★

Very smooth varnished ash handle 162cm (63¾in) long. Stiff steel wire bristles set in a wooden block.

Performance ★★★★★

Good cleaning in all situations.

Usability ★★★★★

The angle between head and handle was OK, but not the best.

Value ★★★★★

Price guide £12.99; 1.5m (5ft) handle £16.99; other handles available: 1.4m (4ft) £14.99, 1.7m (5ft8in) £17.99



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SUPPLIERS: Some suppliers only sell direct to gardening stores, but you can often buy their products online. **Bosmere** 01293 586200, www.bosmere.com **Burgon & Ball** 0114 233 8262, www.burgonandball.com **Draper Tools** 02380 494333 for stockist details, www.draper.co.uk **Fiskars UK** 0115 927 7335, www.fiskars.com **Garden Gear** 01476 576541, www.gardengear.co.uk **Gardman** 01406 372237, www.gardman.co.uk **Spear & Jackson** 0114 281 4242, www.spear-and-jackson.com **Wilkinson Sword** from E P Barrus 08458 941599, www.wilkinsonsword-tools.co.uk **Wolf-Garten** from E P Barrus 08452 707603, www.wolfgarten-tools.co.uk **Yeoman** 01905 791984, www.yeomangarden.com