

Keep up to date with the latest cordless tools

Around the farm or in the workshop, cordless tools have revolutionised the way we work, saving time and improving safety. By Josh Giumelli

The last few decades have seen cordless tools evolve from low-powered units with poor battery life, to a preferred alternative to 240V tools. As the vast range of these tools will attest, our appetite for battery-powered tools has grown exponentially.

Every cordless tool review Kondinin Group has conducted over the years has shown significant improvements in power and battery life, to the point where they are starting to rival some engine-driven tools.

For example, a cordless chainsaw would have been unheard of a few years ago, yet today there are dozens of models on the market from a range of manufacturers (see our test in *Farming Ahead* 306, July 2017).

Lithium ion batteries and brushless motors have pushed the performance of cordless tools to new levels, with many manufacturers now offering high voltage battery packs for heavy-duty applications. And while the flexibility of working away from a power supply is an obvious benefit, it is worth remembering that operator safety is also improved by removing a source of dangerous voltage.

This month Kondinin Group takes a look at the range of both new and innovative cordless tools from a range of popular manufacturers. It is worth remembering that prices will probably vary from one retailer to another, and sometimes significant savings are available by buying multiple cordless tools as part of a kit or promotional package. All prices quoted include GST.



Cordless caffeine fix: Some cordless tools seem a little more novel than practical, such as this Makita 18V portable coffee percolator. While it might be just the thing for a quick cuppa out in the paddock, we are still waiting for someone to invent a cordless espresso machine for our testing kit.



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Cordless grease guns are one of the most popular battery powered tools on the farm, with the Milwaukee unit highly regarded. While there are stand-alone units from Macnaught and Alemite, this is the only unit that shares a common battery platform with a range of cordless tools. It uses 450g cartridges and pumps to a maximum pressure of 10,000psi, and is priced at \$539 for the tool only, or \$689 with charger and 2Ah battery.



If in the market for a battery grease gun, be careful as there are two similar looking Milwaukee models. The 12V M12GG0 model pictured is significantly cheaper (\$239) but is designed to accept the smaller US 400g grease cartridges rather than the more common 450g cartridges used in Australia.



Kondinin Group last tested 3/4 inch impact wrenches a couple of years ago when Milwaukee and Makita made the only units available (see Workshop, FA 306 July 2017). This latest brushless 18V model takes it up a step with 1" drive, and features a side handle, lifting eye, and a claimed 2440Nm of "nut-busting" torque. Either way, it looks the goods, and costs \$899 for the skin with a two year warranty. Weight is 5.9kg with an 8Ah battery.



Makita now makes a brushless 3/4" impact wrench which utilises its new 40V battery. The unit has a claimed maximum torque of 2050Nm and costs \$559 as a skin only, but also has a five year warranty.



The Hikoki (formally Hitachi) 3/4" impact wrench costs a little less at \$469 for the skin, but also has a lower maximum torque of 1800Nm. This unit accepts Hikoki's new multi volt battery, which delivers either 36V or 18V depending on the tool it is attached to.



To round out the 3/4" impact wrench selection, DeWalt's 18V brushless flexvolt unit costs about \$500 for the skin, and delivers a claimed 950Nm of torque, or 1625Nm of maximum breakaway torque, and weighs in at 2.6kg without battery.

EF-5S - Engineers Files, 5 Piece Set - Second Cut (F100)



ONLY \$55

APW-22 Auto Parts Washer (A370)



ONLY \$88

Metric Alloy Steel Tap & Die Set - 45 Piece (T014)



ONLY \$198

HS-12 Hand Lever Shear (S188)



ONLY \$198

APW-76 Auto Parts Washer (A368)



ONLY \$176

X8 Industrial Bench Grinder (G159)



ONLY \$236.50



7 This Milwaukee right-angle 3/8" drive impact wrench caught our eye, and would be ideal for working in confined spaces. With two torque settings of 40 or 60Nm, it is never going to undo wheelnuts or remove seeding points, but might just fit the bill for a specialist application. Priced at \$300 for the skin.



8 If working in tight spaces is your thing, the Milwaukee "Hole Hawg" right-angled drill might be a little more useful. The 18V unit is fitted with a 13mm chuck, with the key stored on the tool itself. It features a max speed of 1500rpm and 11 torque settings for driving (up to 43Nm), and costs around \$450 for the skin. Others are made by Dewalt (\$599 skin) and Makita (\$669 skin). There is a cheaper 18V Milwaukee version available for \$300, or a 12V unit for \$149, both as skins with 10mm chuck.



9 Makita recently released its range of XGT 40V MAX cordless tools. These new batteries are not backwards compatible with older or current 18V Makita tools, but are used exclusively on their new range of 40V tools for greater power and run time. The XGT circular saw costs \$409 for the skin, and the XGT drill/driver costs \$349 as a skin. Other tools in the 40V XGT range include a reciprocating saw, impact driver, rotary hammer and the 3/4" impact wrench mentioned previously.



11 This Milwaukee transfer pump caught our eye (\$359 for the skin). It can shift 30L per minute to a head of 23m and is self-priming with a suction lift of 5.5m. The positive displacement pump has a clear window over the pump impeller (top), and the battery fits into a splash-proof compartment for additional protection (bottom). Apparently it can shift up to 900L off one 5Ah battery charge. However the unit is only rated for water; how handy would it be if it was rated for fuel and oil?



12 Need to fit some stubborn tubing or heat some heatshrink sheathing over some wiring? These cordless heat guns from Dewalt and Milwaukee both cost \$209 for the skin.



10 The other option Makita uses for higher-power tools is to run twin 18V LXT batteries to give 36V. We first saw this when we tested their cordless chainsaw back in 2017. This 9" or 230mm angle grinder is a hefty beast and costs \$399 for the skin.



13

While it might struggle to blow up your average tractor tyre, this Makita cordless inflator is rated for car and light truck tyres and includes onboard storage for inflation accessories. We were impressed by the digital screen and controls which allows the unit to cut out at a pre-set pressure. \$129 for the skin.



14

If you want to step things up a bit, DeWalt makes a battery powered brushless air compressor with 10L tank. Primarily designed for operating air-powered nailing guns, the unit is powered by a 54V Flexvolt battery, and outputs 31L/min at a maximum pressure of 9 bar. It costs \$395 for the skin.



15

For wiring work, a cordless soldering iron makes a great alternative to a butane-powered unit. This Milwaukee unit operates from a 12V battery and features a pivoting head and interchangeable tips. It heats up to operating temperature in around 18 seconds, and costs \$170 for the skin.



16

Delicate grinding jobs have normally been tackled by air-powered tools. Here are two battery options that would be pretty handy to have tucked away in the workshop. The 18V Milwaukee die grinder (top) operates at up to 27,000rpm and can be used with abrasive attachments or carbide burrs and costs \$279 for the skin. The 9mm belt sander from Makita (bottom) is really neat, with a variable belt speed of 600 to 1700m/min. The sanding head can pivot for access into difficult areas, and it costs \$399 as a skin.



17

Bosch has released its new X-Lock angle grinder disc attachment system which negates the need for any tools. Shown top are a 125mm X-Lock grinder with disc release button (\$399 skin) and standard 18V grinder (\$319 skin). Bottom: the two tools flipped over showing the grinder spindles. We haven't tested one so can't comment on how well it works, but it certainly looks like it would make changing discs easier while wearing welding gloves.



18

Ego makes a range of garden products utilising a 54V battery (we tested the Ego cordless chainsaw in 2017). This 54V blower costs \$429 including charger and a single 2.5Ah battery, and its performance literally blew us away. With a rated maximum output of 900 cubic metres per hour, it certainly rivals or betters many petrol-powered blowers, and is just the thing for harvester blow-downs. There is also a slightly more powerful model (up to 980 m³/h) with 5.0Ah battery and charger for \$589.



19



Other options include this Dewalt 54V skin for \$249 (left), but its output is noticeably lower at 400m³/h. The Milwaukee blower operates off 18V and costs \$349 for the skin, with a claimed output of 760 m³/h. We reckon neither of them are a patch on the Ego blower.



20

This top-handled 300mm Dewalt chainsaw can be used with the 54V flex battery or standard 18V unit and costs \$349 for the bare saw. It wasn't available when we tested chainsaws last, but we did subsequently test the standard-layout 400mm DCM575N model when it was released shortly afterwards, which performed very well (\$529 for the skin).



A



B



C



21

D

The range of torches, searchlights and area lights powered by cordless tool batteries continues to grow each year, thanks in part to the impressive run times of high-capacity batteries coupled with energy efficient LED light sources. It is impossible to cover them all, but here is a selection of what is out there. A: Milwaukee 18V search light with rotatable head and claimed 640m beam distance for \$177. B: Bosch 18V area light rated at 10,000 lumens for \$449. C: Dewalt 18V area light with 5000 lumen rating for \$419. D: Makita torch and AM/FM radio for \$109. All prices are for skins only.



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EDBD-13 Drill Sharpener <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3-13mm or 1/8"-1/2" CBN grinding wheel Split point 80W, 240V motor  <p>Order Code: D070 \$99</p>	D1272 - Metric Precision HSS Drill Set <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 25 piece set Precision ground flutes HSS M2 bright finish Range: 1-13mm 0.5mm increments  <p>Order Code: D1272 \$99</p>	MGP-6R Ratcheting Gear Puller Set <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ratchet action jaw lock alignment Combination 2 or 3 jaw type system Reversible jaws (Internal or External) Includes 3 x 100mm & 3 x 175mm legs Includes a blow mould case  <p>Order Code: P005 \$132</p>	MGP-17 - Puller Set with Slide Hammer <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Drop forged jaws 15-30mm internal dia. 15-80mm external dia.  <p>Order Code: P013 \$132</p>	Harebarchi - Portable Steel Fire Pit & Grill <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Precision laser cut 3.5mm steel ready to assemble in seconds 484 x 484 x 305mm (L x W x H) 2 x vertical & 2 x interlocking plates 5 x grill bar supports  <p>Order Code: F400 \$119</p> <p>INCLUDES CANVAS CARRY BAG</p>	PN1/2-2P1 - Pipe & Tube Notcher Attachment & Hole Saw Set Package Deal <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ø51mm OD tube cap. Ø38.1mm NB pipe cap. Angles up to 60° 19-76mm HSS hole saw set  <p>Order Code: K4010 \$236.50 SAVE \$22 off RRP</p>	PB-24 Manual Panbrake <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 600 x 1mm capacity Fabricated steel Adjustable clamp blade Multiple finger widths  <p>Order Code: S249 \$396</p>	VJ-680 - Hydraulic Vehicle Positioning Jacks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 680kg hydraulic lift per jack 270mm max. tyre width Ø20mm max opening Sold in pairs  <p>Order Code: A332 \$341</p> <p>360° SWIVEL WHEELS</p>	PROMAX 200 - Auto Darken Welding Helmet <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Application: Mig & Arc & Grinding 9 ~ 13 adjustable shade 2 arc activation sensors Ultra clear vision with enhanced colour recognition Switching speed 0.00003 sec  <p>Order Code: W001 \$99</p> <p>Weldclass Be Outstanding</p>	VIPER™ 182 Multi-Function Inverter Welder-MIG-MMA <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 30 - 180 Amps Inverter technology 10% @ 180A duty cycle 240V / 10amp  <p>Order Code: W244 \$655</p> <p>GAS / GASLESS UNIMIG</p>	HS-S 1T3M Chain Block <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 tonne x 3 metre G80 load chain Ball bearing load wheel Swivel hook  <p>Order Code: C143 \$143</p>	PT-2500 Hydraulic Pallet Truck <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2500kg lift capacity 1220mm fork length 85 - 195mm lift height  <p>Order Code: J061 \$407</p> <p>CAST IRON PUMP DESIGN</p>	RSS-4WSA Industrial Steel Shelving Extension <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 364kg shelf load capacity Suits RSS-4WS racking  <p>Order Code: S014A \$286</p>	RSS-4WS - Industrial Steel Shelving <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1955 x 610 x 1830mm 364kg capacity per shelf Adjustable shelves Interlock design, no tools required  <p>Order Code: S014 \$319</p>	IWB-40 Industrial Work Bench <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1800 x 750 x 900mm 1000kg load capacity Heavy duty steel fabricated frame High density laminate top  <p>Order Code: A420 \$462</p> <p>PACKAGE DEALS AVAILABLE</p>	TiGer 2000S Wetstone Grinder <ul style="list-style-type: none"> German design & technology 200mm stone & 225mm hone wheel 120rpm grinding stone speed Includes straight edge jig, setting gauge & honing paste  <p>Order Code: W859 \$220</p> <p>120W/240V MOTOR Schepach</p>	T-13B - Bench Mount Thicknesser <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 330 x 152mm capacity 2 x HSS blades Anti-kick back fingers 2hp, 240V motor  <p>Order Code: W812 \$517</p>	SB-200 Sandblasting Cabinet <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Heavy-duty steel cabinet 835 x 510 x 360-550mm blast area Includes LED light, tempered glass screen, gloves, gun & ceramic nozzle  <p>Order Code: S289 \$352</p>	SJ-24D - Bead Roller <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1.2mm mild steel capacity 460mm throat depth Strengthened frame & stand Roller holders on post 7 x sets of rolls  <p>Order Code: S641 \$495</p> <p>MOTORIZED MODELS ALSO AVAILABLE METALMASTER</p>	SUPER 16 Air Compressor <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 453l/min. W-triple pump 125 litre tank 3hp, 240V motor  <p>Order Code: C345 \$1,727</p> <p>120PSI PRESSURE</p>
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