

# Toolbox

## Worx Recip Saw

by Scott Dornbusch

Summer before last, a new power-tool company called Worx came into being. Normally when a new line debuts, its tools look pretty much the same as all the other ones on the market. Worx tools are an exception: You'd never mistake them for another brand.

It's not just the company's distinctive green color that makes this true; the tools in Worx's Revolver line have been designed with ergonomics in mind. The drill, hammer drill, circular saw, and recip saw all have pivoting D-grip handles — the idea being that if the user can change the angle of the grip, the tool will be more comfortable to use in a variety of positions.

Earlier this year, *JLC* asked me to test the Worx WT401K recip saw, dubbed the Assault. The tool weighs 9.9 pounds and lists at 10 amps. It has a no-load speed of 0 to 2,700 strokes per minute, orbital cutting action, and a stroke length of 1 $\frac{1}{8}$  inches. It comes in a plastic carrying case and has a 10-foot cord.

Here's what we found after several months of use.

### Adjustable Grip

The WT401K's handle rotates 0 to 60 degrees and locks in place with a quick-action clamp. Milwaukee and Porter-Cable also make tools with rotating handles, but theirs rotate the other way — around the body of the tool. Although a rotating



The Worx recip saw's grip pivots over a 60-degree range and can be locked in various positions; here it's shown in the straight position (left) and rotated all the way down (right).

handle sounds like a nice feature, we discovered that once we found a comfortable angle we just left it there. One drawback to the handle adjustment is that if you rotate the handle with your finger on the trigger, your finger can get pinched between the trigger and the tool body.

Most recip saws are long, because their motor aligns with the gear train. The WT401K is shorter and more maneuverable than most; its motor angles down from the front of the saw. Its foot doesn't pivot, but it does adjust in and out by means of a spring-loaded button on the nose of the tool.

### Blade Clamp

To operate the WT401K's toolless blade clamp, the user pushes against a spring-loaded button on the end of the drive shaft. We found

### Worx WT401K Assault Specs

**Weight:** 9.9 pounds

**Amps:** 10

**Strokes per minute:** 0-2700

**Stroke length:** 1 $\frac{1}{8}$  inches

**Cutting action:** straight plus three orbital settings

**Street price:** \$130

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**999/599-3711**  
**[www.worxpowertools.com](http://www.worxpowertools.com)**



the blade clamp a bit harder to operate than those on other tools. It's located in a cramped position behind the shoe and it can be quite difficult to get at if you



The blade clamp is tucked into the nose of the saw, so it's harder to get to than the clamps on other models.

have large hands or are wearing gloves.

We sometimes had trouble getting the blade onto and off of the pin inside the blade-holder, too.

However, these were minor annoyances compared with the one big problem that we had with this tool: The thicker demo-style blades (we used the Milwaukee Ax) would occasionally pop out of the clamp during heavy cutting.

We did not have this problem with normal-thickness blades.

### Built-in Lights

Two lights are built into the front of the saw to illuminate the workspace around the blade.

Unfortunately, their intensity varies with the speed of the blade: The lights are

bright when you are cutting fast, but if you're cutting slowly in a dark area, they're so dim they're not much help.

It would be better if they were at full brightness all the time.

### The Bottom Line

The WT401K runs smoothly and has good cutting power, though we did not actually see much advantage to one of its most touted features, the adjustable grip. Everything on the saw worked well — except for the blade clamp. If Worx could work out that glitch, the tool would be a lot more appealing.

The WT401K costs about \$130.

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*Scott Dornbusch is a remodeler in North Branch, Minn.*

# Bosch PS10 I-Driver

by Norm St. Onge

A couple of months ago, I tested Bosch's PS20 pocket driver for *JLC* (see *Toolbox*, 10/06). Within weeks of receiving that tool, I heard that Bosch had introduced another compact cordless screwdriver, the PS10 — so I decided to test that one, too. Since I really liked the PS20, I had lofty expectations for the PS10.

The newer tool — called the I-Driver — has many of the same features as the PS20, plus a unique articulating head meant to make it more useful in close-quarters applications. My remodeling company concentrates on small handyman-type projects, which means I've had plenty of opportunities to use the PS10 every day.

### Specs

Like the PS20, the PS10 comes in a soft-sided nylon case. The kit contains the I-Driver, two bits, two 10.8 lithium-ion batteries, and a 30-minute charger. Loaded, the carrying case is small enough to stow in the nooks and crannies of my truck or tool trailer.

The driver feels solid and well-made — “heavy in the hand” would be an apt description — and looks hardy enough to withstand the rigors of professional use. The five-position articulating head is made from cast-metal parts; the one on our tool absorbed a couple of good drops without complaint.

A single-release button on the thumb side of the head (for right-handed users) allows the head to swivel between 0 and 90 degrees with three evenly spaced detents in between.

A nice perk is the convenient tool-hanger that folds out from the body of the tool; the PS10 doesn't really fit into a pocket or tool pouch easily, so I was pleased I could hang it off my belt.

The PS10's 10.8-volt lithium-ion battery pack provides a surprisingly long runtime for smaller fasteners. However, the author's self-drilling cabinet screws proved too much for the tool — despite the manufacturer's claim that one charge delivers enough power to drive 100 3-inch screws.



### Bosch PS10 Specs

**Platform:** 10.8-volt lithium ion  
**Maximum torque:** 80 inch-pounds  
**Rpm:** 0-600  
**Weight:** 2.2 pounds  
**Street price for kit:** \$150

**Bosch Tools**  
**877/267-2499**  
**[www.boschtools.com](http://www.boschtools.com)**



With the battery installed, the PS10 weighs a little more than two pounds. When a bit is in the quick-change holder and the chuck is in the straight-out position, the tool measures about 12 inches long; with the head rotated 90 degrees, the body is 10 inches long. Since the head itself—with a standard bit installed—is 5 inches long, the tool could conceivably fit in a 5-inch cavity when the head is rotated 90 degrees. (Of course, the length of the fastener needs to be taken into account as well.)

The barrel grip is rubberized for comfort and features a large trigger, a forward/reverse switch, and a seven-position clutch with a “drill” setting. The built-in quick-change bit-holder accepts 1/4-inch hex-shank bits. Unlike the PS20, the PS10 does not have a trigger lock or an LED work light, which wasn't a problem for me.

### Performance

Over a six-week period, I used the PS10 extensively to drive the various fasteners commonly used for installing doors and hardware, electrical devices, cabinets, and ductwork.

In most cases, it drove small to average-length screws and drilled small holes just fine. Yet I was never able to completely warm up to this tool.

Part of the problem was the barrel grip, which felt too big for my medium-sized hand. I was unable to hold the tool in such a position that my fingers could comfortably work both the trigger and the forward/reverse switch without my having to reposition my grip.

This was particularly frustrating in confined spaces when I was holding both the fastener and the workpiece.

And on a ladder, it could be a serious safety issue.

An unusual characteristic of the PS10 — which I couldn't find referenced in the Bosch literature — is how slowly the bit turns immediately after you pull the trigger; it takes a second or two to ramp up to the desired speed. This is not necessarily a shortcoming; it's just different from any other driver/drill I've used.

Since I'm a right-handed user, I could adjust the five-position articulating head by pressing the release button with my thumb — but only after repositioning the tool in my hand.

The head moves easily and the adjustment can be made one-handed by pressing the button and then leveraging the bit against a firm surface.

As with the PS20, I had some difficulty driving longer screws. Bosch claims that you can drive 100 3-inch screws on one charge, but I didn't find this to be the case: When I was installing vanities in a master-bathroom project, the PS10 stalled while driving 3-inch self-drilling cabinet screws.

Oddly, once the tool stalled, I could get it to drive the screw home — albeit very slowly — if I eased off the trigger and then squeezed again. I tried a fresh battery and had the same result.

Now, there's the possibility that with a little more use the PS10 would eventually drive 100 3-inch screws on a single charge — but personally, I'd run out of patience long before that point and switch to something faster.

### The Verdict

If you are absolutely convinced that you need an articulating-head driver, then by all means take a look at the PS10. For someone who works frequently in confined, awkward spaces, it might be a useful tool.

In my opinion, though, the PS20 is a better driver. Even with the broad range of driving tasks that I do, I rarely made use of the PS10's articulating head. In a few instances, I used it simply to compensate for the sheer size of the tool.

With two batteries and a case, the Bosch PS10 costs about \$150.

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*Norm St. Onge owns St. Onge Renovations and BackYard Tractor Works in North Bennington, Vt.*

**Better Blade.** When you're working with vinyl, a utility knife is the best way to make long horizontal cuts like those under windows and at the top course — but a dull blade can lead to wandering cuts and damaged siding. Tajima's new *Aluminist Rock Hard* snap-blade utility knife can help you avoid those problems. The 1-inch-wide blade is extremely tough — and getting fresh blades is so easy, you'll have no excuse for ragged cuts. As an added bonus, the blade extends a little extra so that you can get through those profile-matched foam backers used so often these days with high-end vinyl siding. The knife sells for \$20.

**Tajima**, 888/482-5462, [www.tajimatool.com](http://www.tajimatool.com). **Circle #13**



**Higher Calling.** If you're installing siding regularly and haven't yet abandoned your wobbly wood pump jacks, maybe now is the time to do so. Werner recently launched a line of 500-pound-capacity *Aluminum Pump Jacks*. Approved for heights of up to 50 feet, the jacks — which are compatible with Alum-A-Pole scaffolding — feature powder-coated steel parts and smooth operation. Poles come in 6-, 12-, 18-, and 24-foot lengths. I found a complete two-pole setup — 24-foot poles, a pair of 250-pound 24-foot stages, jacks, bench brackets, roof braces, end guards, and a safety net — on the Web for \$1,863.

**Werner**, 888/523-3370, [www.wernerladder.com](http://www.wernerladder.com). **Circle #14**



**Top Table.** Although a Van Mark Trim-A-Table is a sizeable purchase, the siding installers I know who bought one are glad they did. The *TAT50* extends to 18 feet for fast cuts on either end of the panel. It has a built-in pitch and angle protractor with memory stops for easily repeated miter cuts. The blade track is recessed to prevent the new guy from cutting into it. According to the maker, the 80-pound table works with most 7<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub>-inch circular saws. It costs about \$860; an optional leg kit goes for about \$200.

**Van Mark**, 800/826-6275, [www.van-mark.com](http://www.van-mark.com). **Circle #15**



### A Cut Above.

Until recently there was no good way to cut fiber cement by hand. Now there's Malco's *Fiber Cement Hand Snip*. Similar in design to a pair of aviation snips, the tool can cut 2-inch-radius curves and as little as  $\frac{1}{8}$  inch off the ends of planks. It costs \$30.

**Malco Products**, 800/596-3494, [malco.malcoproducts.com](http://malco.malcoproducts.com). **Circle #16**



### Extra Hands.

Hanging any type of siding solo is tough, but the job's nearly impossible when it involves fiber cement, which weighs nearly 30 pounds per plank. *Knockoff Clips* can help. The ABS plastic clips hang from an installed plank to hold the next piece at the correct  $1\frac{1}{4}$ -inch overlap. Once the piece is nailed in place, the prescored clips are broken off with a hammer — no special tools required. A box of 500 costs \$100.

**Knockoff**, 800/262-9680, [www.knockoffclip.com](http://www.knockoffclip.com). **Circle #17**

