

## Weigh In!

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# TOOLS

OF THE TRADE

## Cordless Table Saw

BY NATHAN RINNE

**When manufacturers first started** offering big-battery tools, promising long runtimes and corded performance, I was a skeptic. I saw them as a gimmick that likely performed nowhere near the claims the manufacturers were making. It took running a substantial amount of oak through a buddy's DeWalt FlexVolt table saw for me to acknowledge that these tools were viable pro options.

Fast forward about a year or so, and I was forking over close to \$700 for a cordless miter saw and its sold-separately batteries. It's a heavy price tag, but the saw is worth the money. It performs incredibly well, and I can cut all day with it and still have half a charge left. These aren't the toys I had erroneously assumed they were.

Still, those are miter-saw cuts; short cuts, by and large, compared with long rips with a table saw. The draw on the battery is different. I was curious to see how a cordless 10-inch table saw played out.

### FULL-ON 10-INCH TABLE SAW

Metabo HPT (formerly Hitachi) has been making waves with its MultiVolt platform. One of the newest, and arguably most anticipated, additions to the lineup is the C3610DRJ 10-inch table saw.

You read that right: 10-inch. As in full-on, 3<sup>1</sup>/<sub>8</sub>-inch depth of cut at 90 degrees versus 2<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> inches at 90 on smaller saws. And a nice, big table surface that works for me and the work I do.

While other manufacturers are offering blade diameters of 8<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> inches with rip capacities at or under 25 inches, Metabo HPT went all in with the 10-inch blade and a whopping 35 inches of rip capacity to the right and 22 inches to the left—more than any other cordless or corded jobsite saw save Metabo HPT's corded version of this saw.

Add to that a motor that has a no-load speed of 5,000 rpm (for reference, that's about 1,400 more than my corded jobsite saw and 500 more than the corded saw Metabo HPT sells) and the ability to use an optional AC adapter for plugging in to a receptacle and you might have the ultimate jobsite table saw.

### POWER

The first question on most people's minds is power. Metabo HPT's 36-volt battery delivers 4.0 amp hours of runtime. Metabo says the battery will last four hours under continuous use; though I haven't tested that, I have put this saw to moderate use for full workdays and had more than 50% charge left at the end of the day. The tool



Metabo HPT's C3610DRJ cordless 10-inch table saw is built on the company's corded platform. At 5,000 rpm, the saw can handle the hardwood and plywood the author works with, and he gives the outfeed support bar high marks. The optional folding stand bolts to the saw and has locking legs.

Photos by Nathan Rinne

also has soft start, which reduces noise and recoil at start-up, and its electric brake stops the blade quickly for added safety.

There is a slight drop in rpm when I am running 3/4-inch materials, which is typical for a jobsite table saw. It's less noticeable when plugged in to the AC adapter. Nonetheless, it powers through whatever material I use—hardwood, framing, plywood, PT lumber—and that is the bottom line.

This saw is more than ample for any task you want to throw at it. It will even spin an 8-inch dado stack at up to 13/16 inch.

### BUILD

This saw appears to be well made with features that show a great deal of forethought in its design. For starters, the onboard storage is second to none. It holds the blade-guard assembly, small parts, auxiliary fence, included push stick, miter gauge, and the anti-kickback pawls, all within easy reach. The large table surface (28 3/4 inches by 22 inches) is backed up with an indispensable adjustable outfeed support bar that you will wish you had on every saw you've owned.

The rack-and-pinion-style fence is the most easily adjustable fence system on jobsite saws today. A simple release lever unlocks the dial, which in turn can fine-tune for a cut with relative ease. The fence also has a secondary narrow fence that, when flipped into the horizontal position, is used as a work support for pieces wider than the table top.

### OPTIONAL STAND

The optional stand features a design that makes one-person transport much easier. Wheels that have no trouble going through

gravel and other terrain make the tasks of pack-in and pack-out a bit easier. The legs operate much the same as those on my miter-saw stand, with a spring-loaded ball catch. They both unfold and collapse easily. The metal used isn't what I'd call heavy duty, but it does seem to do the job.

The saw must be mounted to the stand with bolts, which could be a pro or a con, depending on your preference. Some carpenters would prefer a quick release to separate the two, while others would rather carry the saw and stand together for fast setup. One thing worth noting is that the saw and stand together have a fairly large footprint. You aren't going to throw this in the backseat of your crew cab.

### CONCLUSION

The Metabo HPT 10-inch table saw is a stellar option in the field. For me, the battery power is a lifesaver in so many situations; for instance, on a site where there are four trades but only one outlet, or on a dock, or, obviously, anywhere that doesn't have power.

Having used both cordless table and miter saws for some time now, I'd never go back to plugging in again—unless I had to, and I can with the MultiVolt system.

The included blade, dado plate, and charger with a USB port all make this great saw even better.

I found the bare tool for about \$440 online. [metabo-hpt.com](http://metabo-hpt.com).

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## Hands On With a Green Laser

BY TONY BLUE

**I didn't own a laser level** prior to purchasing DeWalt's 12-volt 360, a green three-beam laser level (DW089LG; [dewalt.com](http://dewalt.com)). A co-worker, Jason, has a Hilti PM 2-L (two-line red laser level) that we use for most tasks. In addition, I used a standard beam level, line level, and plumb bob. With the DeWalt 360 in my arsenal, those still have their place, but I use them much less often.

After shopping lasers, I decided the DeWalt 360 in green was my choice (\$500; the red-laser option was about \$100 less). We were in the middle of a bathroom and bedroom remodel when my laser arrived, so I put it right to work. Out of the box, it's easy to use. I quickly vowed to never hang drywall without it again.

I hung the unit on a drywall screw in roughly the center of the bedroom we were working in, approximately 5 feet up off the floor (to raise it above any 4-foot sheet goods resting on the wall). I turned on the plumb laser and rotated it to each premarked stud



The author illuminates premarked stud locations by rotating the laser to each stud. No more marking the wallboard with level and pencil to minimize misses.

location. This significantly sped up setting screws. Never again will I have to use a level or other straightedge so I don't miss the stud.

The next task was to frame a wet wall for a shower, with a

Photo: Tony Blue





While the laser is mainly for indoor use, the beam, though faint, is visible from a distance for marking deck ledgers and other exterior layout.

32-inch rough opening. I made a quick pencil mark on the new subfloor and one halfway up the adjacent wall and, within a few seconds, had the laser positioned on the floor with a bright, green plumb line through both marks. I tacked my wall together plumb and square and nailed it off without reaching for a beam level.

Other uses I found were squaring tile work, installing outlets at the same height, leveling cabinets, and even installing windows. Because we build a few decks each year, I wanted to see if I could get by without using a rotary laser or string line for setting my post heights. I didn't have any deck projects coming up, so I did a quick test run on a sunny day. In daylight conditions, the beam is hard to see with the naked eye, but with the help of the included green laser target card, I could pick up the faint line well enough that I could mark off the line for each imaginary deck post.

*Tony Blue owns Squared Away Contracting, in Greenwich, N.Y.*

## Cordless 23-Gauge Headless Pin Nailer

BY BARRETT SITES

**The new Grex** GCP650 pinner is a perfect fit for the work I do. At under 4 pounds and cordless, this pinner is great for the shop or the jobsite. Don't be fooled by its size, though; this gun packs a punch. I used it in hardwood (white oak) and softwood, and it didn't flinch.

For trim work or to assemble glue-ups, it performed extremely well. I used it for tasks like fastening dentil molding, for instance, and temporarily fastening patterns to pieces I scroll cut with a router. Running off two AAA batteries and a fuel cell keeps it lightweight and compact. There's minimal maintenance: Both the battery and the fuel cell are in the handle and easy to change. Of course, there is no compressor or hose to deal with, so time saved. Seeing the fasteners is easy through the window at the nose of the gun. Also, with the dry-fire lockout, there's no need to backtrack to see where the gun stopped shooting.

The tool—which I used mainly in my shop but also on site building a coffered ceiling and a mantle—shoots from  $\frac{3}{8}$ - to 2-inch fasteners. Setting the depth is as easy as sliding the depth knob.

With the non-mar tip, which is removable, the nose of the tool won't ding your work. There is a back-up tip stored on the tool as well, opposite the belt hook, which I think is well designed. I also like that the nose assembly is slim for fastening in tight spaces.

With the 23-gauge pin, you rarely need to address holes before finishing. Primer and paint will seal the fastener hole nicely. And for molding and other detail work, these pins hold fast. Add a little glue and paint and those pieces aren't going anywhere.

At 1,300 shots per fuel cartridge and 5,000 per battery pair, it's made for performance and never left me hanging. This gun is a joy to use and is comfortable to hold. The black rubber hand grip on the handle keeps the tool from sliding around in your hand.

To sum it up, this is a versatile tool from shop to site. Grex has made just about the most perfect tool for the work I do. It costs about \$440. [grexusa.com](http://grexusa.com).

*Barrett Sites has owned HHI (Handyman Home Improvements) for 20 years and is a remodeler and finish carpenter in Chambersburg, Pa.*



Light, powerful, well-designed, and cordless, the Grex 23-gauge pinner delivered on site and in the shop.

Photos: Tony Blue (top); Natalie Sites (bottom)