



# Good Woodworking Kit & Tools

New products, tools and tests

Andy King, Technical Editor  
andy.king@mytimemedia.com

## Charging is but a cradle away

Is the Bosch Wireless Charging System ahead of its time? Ideally suited to bench use and assembly work, the technology holds great promise for the future



▲ As long as the tool or battery sits central to the charger, it will continue to charge



**T**he race among manufacturers for the most powerful Li-ion batteries has taken a side step in the Bosch camp and moved into a whole new area. Instead of the higher Amp Hour batteries designed for long run times to minimise down times, this latest innovation is almost a step back in time to the very first drills where they sat on a trickle charge cradle.

### How does it work?

This wireless system from Bosch is poles apart from this and indeed, it relies on induction poles to do its magic, a primary coil in the charging base and the secondary one in the battery itself. When these are placed in close proximity to each other the charging cycle begins, transferring the energy from the base station to the battery. Clever stuff. But where does it fit in the scheme of things for us woodworkers? The tools themselves remain identical to the current Bosch Li-ion range; any tools that take the 18V batteries are fully

compatible so you can upgrade existing kit by purchasing a charging base and a battery.

### The benefits

So what are the benefits of having a battery always fitted? In principle, over time the constant swapping of batteries to recharge them will cause wear and tear and damage to terminals both on the tool and the battery, which is handily eliminated here.

In the workshop, keep the charger on the bench and simply place the tool directly on the charging plate, where it will continue to top up. The charger also has a cradle that will lock around the battery for tools that won't sit on the battery in a stable manner, sliding into the cradle to hold it in the correct position.

For on-site work, there is also a cradle and other options that can be connected up to your vehicle wiring system via the cigarette lighter socket, to charge the tools as you go and to provide a trickle charge as needed. However, despite the pluses the system has,

## Bosch wireless charging system



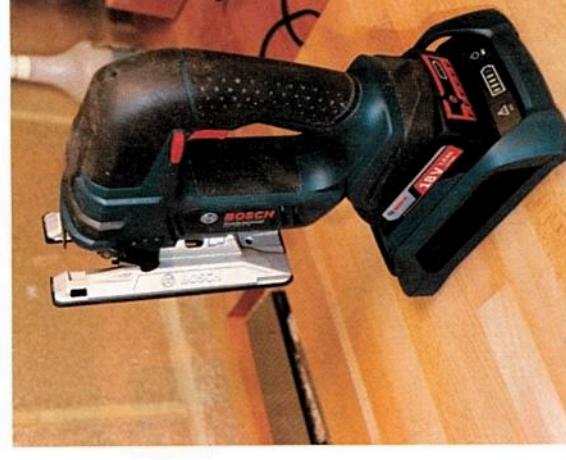
▲ Sit the battery offcentre and the charger shows a red light to indicate that it needs repositioning



▲ The blue outer cradle allows the battery to slide in and be held securely



▲ The cradle can be screwed down to secure the charger



▲ This allows top heavy tools such as this jigsaw to sit on the charger



▲ Flat-pack assembly is a great application for the drill, charging while parts are positioned...



▲ ...and easily in reach for driving in the fixings as needed

for me, it isn't really a site-friendly system just yet; you still need power to connect the charger and this has to be where you're working, which isn't always available on-site. Alternatively, despite a few current 'on the van' charging options now available, there may be a need for a secondary source on your vehicle if it isn't going to drain the main battery if the engine isn't running.

### Workshop drilling

Alongside this, high drain applications will soon deplete a battery, so it negates the benefit of constant charging in such situations as it will not keep up with demand. There are 4Ah batteries now using this wireless platform but if pushed hard, these will still get their power consumed too quickly to replenish sufficiently fast enough.

However, I have to say that the 2Ah batteries supplied do take a charge very quickly. Taking a brand new battery and checking the charge state it showed one light and within 20 minutes of cradle charging, it was fully charged. So while this system has good grounding and does work very well indeed, for me, the jury's out at the moment.

Its real suitability is in areas where drilling and driving applications are commonplace, but in a workshop rather than a site situation where power sources can often be remote. However, the docking station for a vehicle will

certainly be beneficial if it won't impact on the vehicle's needs in such situations.

### Conclusion

I think this technology is ideally suited for bench use and assembly work where it can be used regularly throughout the day but in an intermittent manner, which will allow it to work its magic on the cradle where it picks up the charge as soon as it's placed on its base when not in use. But of course, you have to get in the habit of remembering to put it on the cradle every time you put it down!

## Good The Woodworking Verdict

- + Battery constantly charges on the cradle; works especially well in the workshop
- A power supply is still needed on-site; vehicle charging ideally suited when engine is running

**Rating** ★★★★★

**Typical price:** Charging cradle plus 1 x 2Ah battery - £99;

GSB18VLI2W (2 x 2Ah battery, cradle & GSB18V drill) - £199

**Battery:** 2Ah wireless (4Ah also available)

**Charge time:** 45mins (2Ah)

**Battery voltage:** 18V  
**Web:** www.bosch.co.uk

### How we rate...

- ★ Don't get your hopes up or your wallet out!
- ★★ Well, it works but really needs improvement
- ★★★ Performs well, but you will find better
- ★★★★ Great performance and value for money
- ★★★★★ So good, even Andy would get his wallet out!

### Prices

Our product prices reflect typical values as we go to press. We cannot guarantee these prices, though, and thoroughly recommend that you shop around.