Specification

Bosch GSB 18V-60C 18V combi drill

Torque – max: 60/31Nm
No-load speed: 0-600/0–1,900rpm
Max impact rate: 28,500bpm
Chuck capacity – min/max: 1.5/13mm
Charging time – approx: 65 mins
Torque settings: 20+1
Battery voltage: 18V
Drill capacity – wood: 38mm
Drill capacity – steel: 13mm
Drill capacity – masonry: 13mm

Typical price: From £137 (body only)
Web: www.bosch-pt.com

Bosch GCL 2-50C laser

Power source: 12V (10.8V) battery/4 × AA Alkaline adapter
Laser class & type: Class 2 Red
Working range of visibility: 20m (50m requires additional receiver)
Working range of plumb points: 10m (top & bottom)
Accuracy of laser lines: ±0.3mm/m
Accuracy of plumb points: ±0.7mm/m
Self-levelling range: ±4°
Dust & splashwater protection: IP54
Tripod mount: 6mm

Typical price: £179
Web: www.bosch-pt.com

Connecting with Bosch

We look at the latest innovation from Bosch, leading the way in terms of embracing new technology

Most of us are comfortable with the concept of remote control, and increasingly more devices around the home (like printers, etc.) can be interacted with via a mobile phone app using Bluetooth or Wi-Fi. While it may seem unlikely to most, the thought of having an actual power tool that you can remotely control from your mobile phone is, in fact, with us at this very moment. In a clear example of 'future now', those tireless innovators over at Bosch have managed to do just that. Leaders in many fields, they've taken another electronic step forwards and have introduced half a dozen new versions of their construction oriented power tools; but fitted them out with the necessary circuitry to enable their wireless connection to a standard smartphone or similar device.

New smart range

The Woodworker recently had a look at a couple of items from this new smart range: the 18V combi drill, and one of the laser markers (red). On the face of it they are just two more power tools from the extensive Bosch range, but the key difference here is that there is now an additional layer of connectivity built in. To access this wireless advantage, the user must first download the Bosch Toolbox app (short for application) to their smart phone, followed by an additional download for the relevant power tool concerned. I can see a time when there'll just be the one app that does it all, but it's early days yet for this technology, and still much to learn.

When it comes to appreciating this fledgling technology, it helps to understand the European way of working. There it's not uncommon for small- to medium-sized building firms to supply a large part of the kit and power tools for their workers, and not just leave them to their own devices like we do here in the UK. With the Toolbox app running, it's a straightforward job for the foreman to keep an eye on a number of drills, for example, and to see how they're faring and where they physically are on site (currently within the short range of the Bluetooth Wi-Fi signal).


The battery and electronics for connectivity are housed in the handle of the combi drill


Among other things, the Toolbox app shows the battery to be very flat indeed...


Soon charged, the battery is now showing 'full' and all is good to go

The self-levelling combi line and point laser

Connectivity developments

Seen like this, the system provides a way of monitoring an expensive investment, and this on its own is not such a bad thing. Although the connectivity system allows various electronic settings to be changed and stored, where things really start to get interesting is when it's possible to physically control the power tool or device from your phone. One of the first exciting Bosch connectivity developments is the remote control of the levelling laser. With an additional powered frame fitted, it's possible to set the laser up and to view and tweak the line from where you need to be – quite possibly the other side of the room. This sort of thing is ideal for solo working and is, I think, just the tip of a benign technological iceberg.

Whenever a company takes a step into the future like this, the results can never be fully known, and very often there are pay-offs in ways no one could have imagined. This will undoubtedly be the case here, and I await the connected future with considerable interest; we'll bring you more news as it arrives...


It comes with a laser target card for enhanced accuracy


The non-powered RM2 mount can be clipped to a wall or any projection

THE TOOLS

Bosch GSB 18V-60C 18V combi drill

The Bosch GSB 18V-60C is a rugged example of an 18V combi cordless drill, with a Lithium-ion battery and all of the basic features you'd expect from a quality power tool. All of the controls are sure and simple, and I particularly liked the fade on the LED worklight, which meant it stayed illuminated for seconds after letting go of the trigger (this lag period can be remotely adjusted via the Toolbox connectivity app).

Bosch GCL 2-50C laser

This is a very useful device for all manner of setting out on site, and projects both lines and points (for plumb) in the customary red laser light (there's also a green laser available for increased visibility). Powered by the 12V Li-ion battery (compatible with the rest of the range), it's accurate to 0.3mm. The laser can be sited in its own rotating mount, which can be wall hung or held in place with its powerful magnet. Although the laser can be turned on and off with the phone app, you'll need the extra power mount (RM3) for complete remote control and adjustment from across the room.

In summary

Connectivity – the concept: it's a step into the future, with exciting potential; let's embrace it and watch its progress through the workplace. **MC**

PROS
- Remote control
- Monitoring potential on a larger scale
- A step towards tool tracking

CONS
- Needs technological commitment from user

RATING FOR BOTH: 4.5 out of 5

There's also a standard 6mm tripod mount for increased versatility


Laser on...


... and off