

Installer's review of Bosch tools

Chris Flaherty, owner of Vietec Heating based in Sittingbourne, Kent, took on the challenge to test out a combi drill and laser level in Bosch Professional's range of connected tools. Here, he explains how the experience turned him into a Bosch tools convert.

I recently had the opportunity to test out some of the tools in the Bosch professional range: the GSB 18V-60C cordless combi drill and GCL 2-50 laser level, part of Bosch's connected tools. To be honest, I don't usually use Bosch tools – rightly or wrongly I have taken them as a bit DIY, but on delivery and unpacking of the new tools, straightaway my attitude changed. The tools are stored in a quality L-Boxx stacking case, a well-made product that also allows interlocking of the box to other L-Boxx cases of the same size. This saves space in the van as the boxes can be stacked, and because they interlock they stay in place while in transit. It also makes life easier taking the tools onto site, as multiple tools can be carried at once.

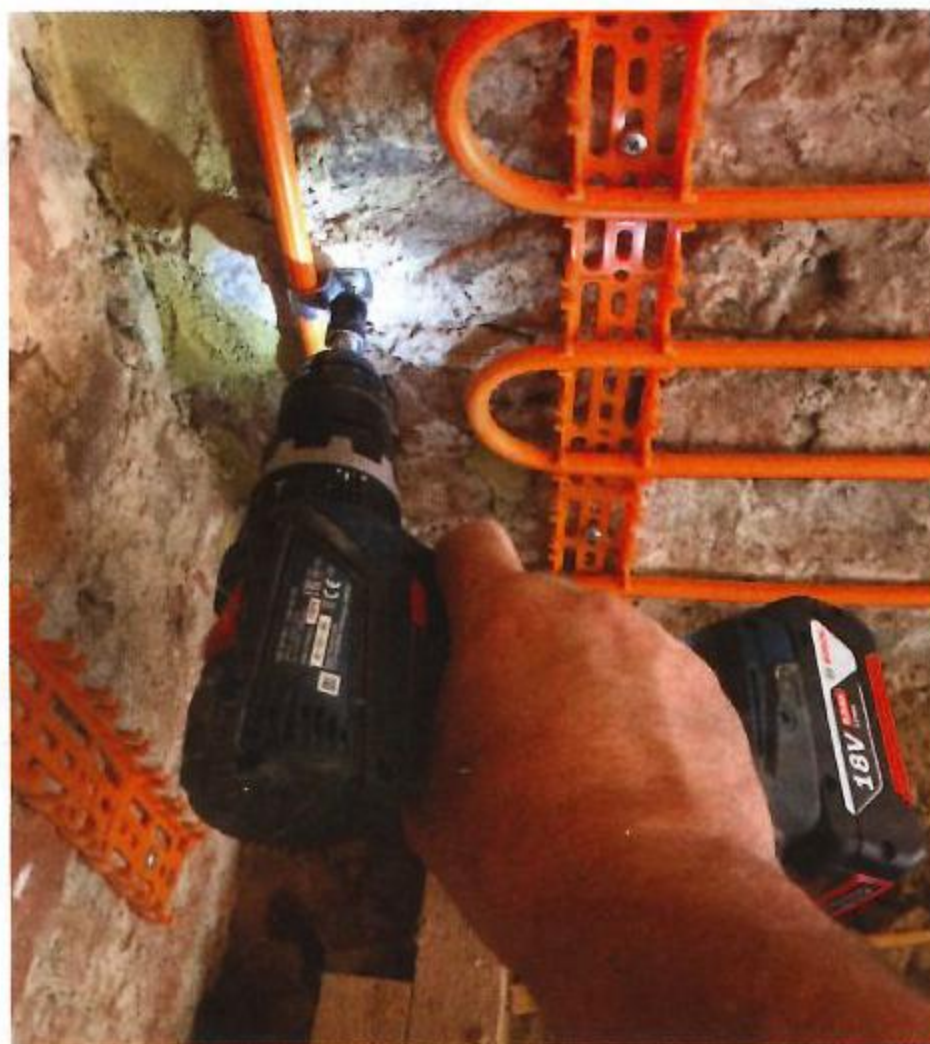


Chris Flaherty, Vietec

Quality in hand

As for the tools themselves, starting with the GSB 18V-60C, this drill feels quality in hand, nicely balanced, and comfortable to hold. The construction is solid and feels like it can take daily abuse on building sites. The same holds true with the GCL 2-50 laser level. It has a solid construction with rubber surround, and again it feels like it can easily withstand daily site use. Both tools charged fairly quickly. They only came with one battery, so a second one would be useful, although run time after charging is very good. Downtime for charging is especially minimal with the laser level.

Both these tools have integrated Bluetooth, which interacts with the free-to-download Bosch Toolbox app. There are a number of benefits to having 'connected tools'. Firstly, you can easily register your tool with Bosch via the app. Another useful feature is the ability to personalise a tool by adjusting settings such as kick back control and precision clutch.



Chris was especially impressed with Bosch Professional's GSB 18V-60C combi drill, which he pushed to the limit in a wide range of materials and uses



The GCL 2-50 laser level is highly versatile and goes anywhere

Tracking tools

You can receive alerts and warnings on motor, battery and electronics and it also lets you monitor battery levels and interact with equipment (for example, altering a floodlight's angle). Having a connected tool also lets you track tool usage (for example runtime and sensor activations). All this can be recorded in the log data.

I am hoping that the technology will one day include security for the tools, something that in the event of theft lets you either trace the tool or deactivate it, as tool security is a hot topic right now. But I expect Bosch will be adding more features to the app in the future. I see this technology as increasingly useful, especially if it can include security as a game-changer to how we use and interact with our tools.

Laser level

The GCL 2-50 laser level is now my primary laser level. It gives the option of either a bracket that can be screwed to the wall, which can give good slide action interlock for the laser so it is well secured. The base rotates, allowing me to move the laser

180° freely to my needs. It also has an adjustment knob that allows small adjustment to the height in small increments so that you can be accurate to the level you require the laser line. It also comes with a clamp bracket, so you can clamp the unit to ceiling grids and other out-of-the way places.

The laser also has the facility for a laser stand, which does not come with the unit. All round I found the laser level good to use – clear, easy-to-see laser lines both vertical and horizontal, and the app allows me to change from vertical, horizontal, or both remotely. This means I do not have to touch the unit and possibly move it from its position. The unit has its own carry case within the L-Boxx case, which helps keep it clean and protected within the storage box.

Drilling with confidence

The GSB 18V-60C Compact Combi Drill – I am really impressed with this tool, and not having been a Bosch fan for tools, this has really changed my opinion. The drill is comfortable to hold during use, it feels robust and well-made, it has a quick release chuck and a built-in LED light, which is always useful when working in dimly lit areas.

This drill is compact, so even with flat wood, bits fit between joists for drilling. It has hammer action so it can be used for all drilling without the need for a second drill on the job. It has become our main cordless. Even my other plumber much prefers to use this cordless and will always get it out from the van over the other options of cordless drills in there.

As with most installers out there we tend to push our drills to the limit, often going beyond what they are intended to do. We have used the drill to bore holes in timber beyond the maximum stating size limit and had no problems. We have used it with a mixing paddle to make self-levelling screed for UFH systems.

The drill has been dropped, bashed, kicked and generally abused and yet has not shown any sign of wear. It still powers through with drilling holes in joists for pipes. As a cordless screwdriver it manages endless screws before needing charging, and the hammer action allows drilling into brickwork for plugs. And then with a quick switch of attachment to a screwdriver head, screw the item to the wall, thus simplifying the task with minimal tools.

I am now a Bosch Professional tool convert. I have already bought a Bosch 110v multitool which also has the L-Boxx, so carrying them to site is simple, and I will be looking to extend my range of Bosch's connectivity tools, as I feel this will help manage my tools better. I feel it is the way to future-proof my cordless range of tools, as they are my livelihood.

Chris Flaherty, EngTech, is a gas engineer with 34 years of experience and is owner of Vietec Heating. Connect with Chris on Twitter @VietecHeating or LinkedIn.

Sprint Mobile *Sprint eVo!*

Create professional personalised instant wireless reports using your FGA and mobile device

Bluetooth

GET IT ON Google play

App **FREE** Download

eVo3 range starts from £549+vat. App now includes: Gas safety reports - Boiler manuals - Warning notices Quotes - Invoices - Receipts & so much more...

Sprint eVo used by all Gas Safe Register Inspectors

ANTON

Anton Industrial Services Ltd
0870 428 0075
www.anton-group.com