

The Best 8 Air Compressors to Buy in 2018

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Are you looking for a new air compressor for the first time or as an upgrade? Air compressors are one of the most useful and diverse tools you can have around the home or garage. They inflate tires in a pinch and supply air to some power tools such as nail guns. Since they come in many different sizes and types, it can be difficult to know where to start when you're looking to buy a new one.

The first thing you need to decide is what type of motor and tank you may need. Most air compressors will come with different electric or gas motor options, air tanks (measured in gallons), and different types of accessories or features. How you plan to use the compressor is also important. If you intend to use it for a few DIY or hobby projects around the home, a mid range air compressor will be perfect for your needs. If you have some professional projects, you should be prepared to spend more for a commercial grade compressor.

Check out this list of the best air compressors you can buy right now.

- Best Overall: Campbell Hausfeld DC080500



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A good, useful air compressor is one that will get the job done whenever you need it. The best isn't necessarily the one that's expensive or packed with the best features. It is the most reliable. The electric Campbell Hausfeld DC080500 fits this position perfectly. With an 8 gallon tank and 125 max PSI rating, it is capable of holding and flowing air almost immediately. Large wheels and a rubber grip also make the compressor portable if you want to move it around the garage or outside.

One of the best features of this compressor is its durability. Campbell Hausfeld has designed this thing to last, with several key components lasting up to four times longer than the competition. It is also up to 50% quieter than other compressors, meaning you can use this one around the house or in the evening. With its large tank and reliable build, you can confidently use it for projects requiring repetitive tasks like inflation, painting, or power nailing and stapling.

- Runner Up, Best Overall: California Air Tools 5510SE



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If you're looking for a more affordable option that is still one of the best air compressors, the California Air Tools 5510SE is a great choice to consider. This one has an oil free pump capable of 120 Max PSI and an ultra quiet operation that is only 60 dB loud. The electric motor is designed to operate at lower speeds which creates less noise and wear during long, continuous running times.

The tank is smaller than many other air compressors at just 5.5 gallons. This makes the whole set up relatively lightweight at 46 pounds. The included wheel kit can make it even more portable for projects that require moving around.

- Best Budget: Bostitch BTFP02012



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Many air compressors can get pretty pricey if you're looking for all the fancy features. Thankfully, a good air compressor is going to get the job done no matter what the price is. Taking the top spot for budget models is the Bostitch BTFP02012. Despite its affordable price, it comes with a 6 gallon tank, oil free electric motor rated for a maximum of 90 PSI, and durable build to last a long time.

For outdoor projects, this option really shines. The high-efficiency motor is designed to easily start up in cold-weather. The included extension cord also makes it easy to use outdoors around the yard. At 29 pounds, it is also one of the lightest options on this list. Pick it up, carry it to your work spot, then set it down as much as you want without straining your back.

- Best Stationary: Briggs & Stratton 3-Gallon Quiet Power



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Air compressors with wheels are quite handy around the garage, lawn, or worksite. Despite their mobile advantage, however, they do have some drawbacks. The wheels can make them less stable when running at a higher power. The Briggs & Stratton 3-Gallon Quiet Power offers the ultimate stability as a stationary air compressor. The 3 gallon tank is rated for 150 PSI, which makes it small and lightweight for moving it around.

The high-performance electric motor is designed for quiet and long running times so you can just keep using it time and time again. Compared to other Briggs & Stratton compressors, this one is reported to be up to 80% quieter while lasting three times as long.

- Best Heavy Duty: Industrial Air ILA3606056



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For some projects, the regular, run-of-the-mill air compressors just won't cut it. If you are a professional or working on commercial projects, a heavy-duty air compressor like the Industrial Air ILA3606056 is going to be your best bet. This one is designed to thrive in mechanic shops, paint shops, and on trucks. All the components are built with a heavy duty mindset, meaning they will last in the most demanding conditions.

The gas operated, twin cylinder pump is built with cast-iron components. Oil changes are simple with an easy to access oil fill and convenient oil gauge. The 60 gallon, 155 Max PSI air tank dwarfs anything else on this list. A large tank and powerful motor means this can compress a lot of air quickly. For projects that require continuous running times, the tank will continue to supply air long after others have run out.

- Best Portable: Viair 00088 88P



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When midrange and professional air compressors are too heavy or overpowered for the job, the best tool is a portable compressor. These type of air compressors are lightweight, electric, and most often run on rechargeable or car batteries for ultimate mobility. The Viair 00088 88P is the type of air compressor you want when you need to be sure you can inflate things like tires anywhere.

The 12 volt, 120 max PSI motor is perfect for inflating tires with a width up to 33 inches, which covers a variety of bike, ATV, and car tires. A 16 foot hose and three-piece inflation kit will ensure you are prepared for a variety of projects or emergencies. With this one, you will never have to worry about finding power for it. Two alligator clamps are included so you can connect it directly to a car or ATV battery when you are out on the road.

Interested in reading more reviews? Take a look at our selection of the [best portable air compressors](#).

- Best Wheeled: Dewalt D55146



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Sticking wheels to a large air compressor can make it much easier to move around to whatever needs air. To find the best air compressor with wheels, you have to remember the magic rule: the bigger the air compressor, the stronger the wheels need to be. The Dewalt D55146 comes with one of the best mobility kits available on the market. Its 10 inch, non-flat foam tires are designed to take the abuse of a variety of outdoor job sites, so you don't have the change or replace them. For convenient storage, the compressor is also designed with a vertical stand and collapsible handle.

The 4.5 gallon, 200 Max PSI storage tank is powered by a 120 volt electric motor. While small, the 200 PSI rating will allow you to compress more air in a smaller space. The pump runs at a consistent 90 PSI, which allows the compressor to quickly refill after the initial tank charge is used up.

- Best Gas-Operated: Industrial Air Contractor CTA5090412



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Only one thing will keep running when there are no power outlets or batteries around. That is the trusty, gas powered motor. The Industrial Air Contractor CTA5090412 features a 5 HP Honda OHC/OHV motor that is perfect for both residential and commercial uses. The motor is designed to be low maintenance and features an oil free, direct drive pump design with two-piece cooling system to extend its life. Five horsepower will be plenty of power for equipment-intensive projects.

For off-site jobs, the pontoon style tank design is a great option to have. This uses two separate 2 gallon tanks that can be individually set up or disassembled for maximum portability. Together, these tanks are rated for a maximum of 155 PSI, so more air will fit into the smaller tanks.