

The 2G Combi Hammer Drill from GMC

We Get The Benefits

Independent Review
by Peter Brett



Cordless combi drills are a staple – needed by almost any trade or household you could mention. Even when they were powered by the now ancient NiCad technology, we couldn't replace our corded drills quickly enough. But now, with Li-Ion batteries and one-hour smart-charging technology, our appetite for a wide range of drills seems limitless. I confess that I regularly use at least five cordless drills of various sizes for various different jobs. For example, my faithful 18v cordless is used for driving screws when I am out of the workshop, and I would not do without my small 10.8v driver when I am working up a ladder. I know that I am spoilt for choice – so will the virtues of the 2G Combi hammer prove to be a useful addition to any workshop or light trade user?

Younger users will probably not take much notice of the "Transformer" style looks of this combi drill – it certainly looks and feels very macho in the hand, but older users might be a bit taken aback. But you just have to handle the drill a bit and use it for a few jobs before you realize that the styling is functional to a large extent. For example, the white plastic side-flashes on the motor housing that bear the GMC name, act as sidebumpers when the machine is put down. Actually the heavily ribbed ABS casing is very rigid as a result of the "Transformer" look, and that will certainly add to its ease of use and longevity.

So, starting at the bottom, where a large flat battery casing makes a stable base on which to stand the drill when it is not being used. There is a good rubber bumper all round the base of the battery casing, which, I have found by bitter experience, is actually a good idea. Even DIY work can be very punishing for battery casings when they are dropped!



The catches that hold the battery casing in place operate very positively and smoothly, leaving the battery to slide out backwards when it needs to be recharged. The standard two batteries are 18v, 1.4Ahr Li-Ion cells that are charged in one hour on the fairly compact smart charger provided as part of the kit.

The handle is comfortably-shaped with a rubberized overmould that feels very grippy. A bright green carry strap is attached to a loop at the base of the handle, and there are two handy "snaps" to hold spare driving bits too.

The trigger is big and well-shaped with a rubberized facing, and a progressive trigger action. The more you squeeze, the faster the drill goes. Speed control is quite easy to control, so even driving small screws at slow speed is a doddle. Forward/reverse is selected by the common method of a push through switch above the trigger.

On top of the casing is a big green sliding selector switch. This is pushed forward and back to select the two speed ranges of the drill. Slow speeds range from 0-350rpm and high speeds range from 0-1250rpm.

A fairly substantial magnesium collar seems to be the main load bearing part



of the drill casing. The other ABS casing components are well attached using substantial screws, and it is hard not to be impressed by the fact that the drill is fairly compact in size. It also weighs a solid 2.3 Kgs (with battery) but with its grippy handle and good basic balance, it has good handling characteristics.

The torque selector collar behind the chuck has 18 positions plus Drill and Hammer modes, and is very easy to move because once again the "Transformer" looks have made nice big steps that help the hand grip and move it easily. The torque selection goes in quite small steps, so it is easy to select the torque needed even for quite small screws. Of course, for big screws, my default setting is "max". The drill and hammer settings are right at the end of the setting, and need a good twist to select them.

The chuck is a plastic-collared and keyless. Once again, the large plastic collar makes it easy to grip, so bit changing is a simple procedure. As we would expect from an 18v cordless, the chuck capacity is 13mm. I found the chuck gripped very well, even with small bits, because the jaws were well milled and accurate.

I like having an electric brake on a drill, and the one on this motor worked very well, without the funny noise you get on some electric brakes.

I was impressed with the moulded case in which the kit is presented. Although it is custom-moulded, it is easy to pack away the cord on the charger for example. All the components are securely held during transit, but I was slightly disappointed to find that there is no extra space for holding drill and driver bits. The lid of the case holds a substantial auxiliary handle that is attached to the magnesium collar. This handle can be adjusted at any angle to suit left and right-handed users. With its robust metal catches and ribbed outer casing, this case should stand up to light trade use pretty well.

I have to say that with the range of jobs that I chose to test the 2G drill, I was very happy with how it performed. With a 20mm spade bit in place, I drilled hole after hole in hard and softwood with no problems at all. Drilling steel, as you would expect, is a much harder task, especially as it depends on having a good, sharp drill bit to ensure good results. I had very good results drilling alloy sheet, but I suspect that I need to get some new drill bits soon!



I drilled bricks quite well with an ordinary TCT masonry bit. As is always the case with cordless combis, the noise level goes up considerably, but the hole gets drilled.

So on the performance level, the 2G does a sound job, but for many users the issue of value for money is a key one, especially these days. With a retail price of £145.00 inc. vat, it is good value for what it does.

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AIRSTREAM BUSINESS COMMUNICATIONS LTD

Wiston, Coppice Way, Haywards Heath, West Sussex RH16 4NN, UK
Tel: 01444 450071 Fax: 01444 414813