



Best lithium portable power station

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Find the best portable power stations for your backcountry and frontcountry plans, based on extensive, hands-on testing. Portable power stations are more powerful and cost effective than ever before. And, thanks to advances in lithium-ion battery technology, they're also lighter and more compact.

Brad Ford has spent most of his life using tools to fix, build, or make things. Growing up he worked on a farm, where he learned to weld, repair, and paint equipment. From the farm he went to work at a classic car dealer, repairing and servicing Rolls Royces, Bentleys, and Jaguars. Today, when he's not testing tools or writing for Popular Mechanics, he's busy keeping up with the projects at his old farmhouse in eastern Pennsylvania. n

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Portable power stations have forever squashed the notion of roughing it while camping, road-tripping, beach bumming, and otherwise hanging out or working off the grid. However, choosing the best portable power station for your situation can be confusing. It's a world fraught with ballyhooed marketing claims and mind-numbing technical mumbo jumbo.

We're here to help. Over the last few years, we've been on a quest to find the best portable power stations. We've picked apart the technology to sort hype from fact and tested dozens in the field, from dusty Baja overlanding trails to freezing Colorado nights and humid Florida encampments. We've run everything from electric coolers and speakers to welding machines and lawnmowers, then recharged them using solar, wall power, and car lighter sockets.

Here, we'll walk you through how to do that in this portable power station buying guide -- which includes both full-featured stations like our top overall pick Anker Solix C1000, as well as budget options like the Goal Zero Yeti 300 -- so you can breeze past all of that tech talk to hone in on which one is best for your needs.

If these units are new terrain for you, read up on the finer details in our Buyer's Guide and Price & Value sections -- and if you're up for truly nerding on out the specs like we are, look to our Comparison Chart for the nitty gritty. Otherwise, plug into our selections below.

Editor's Note: We updated our Portable Power Stations guide on September 11, 2024, to add the Bluetti AC180T -- a unique station with hot-swappable batteries -- as well as the DJI Power 1000 -- a station primed for keeping your drones topped off.



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We awarded the Anker Solix C1000 (\$999) our overall best in show because Anker really nailed it with a versatile balance of size, power, portability, and functionality -- all wrapped up into an aesthetically appealing package. With a price under \$1,000, it's also a decent deal.

A thousand watt-hours is enough to run 90% of what most people need a power station for, while still being easy to lift and stow. In our tests, it had plenty of inverter to run the reciprocating saw for chopping firewood, the single-pod coffeemaker, and the Instant Pot. Combined with portable solar, it can keep up with a dual zone electric cooler on a multiday trip. Or, if you're near a wall outlet, you can fully recharge it in less than an hour.

The C1000 carries well, too. We can lift the 28 pounds without worry of straining our back, plus there are solid handles on both ends, which balance the weight well. It's actually the third-lightest power station per watt-hour in this guide. That makes it practical to bring to the beach or park. It's handy for running work lights and the perfect size for fully charging e-bike batteries. A nice bonus is the light bar on the front, with three settings including a particularly soothing warm tone.

Under the cover, the C1000 has all of Anker's signature quality components, including industrial-grade electronics and a unibody design with an internal aluminum frame for when you drop it (to our horror, we unwittingly put this to the test, and it passed).

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