

Cordless tools work wherever you go, no matter what the local power configuration is. I charge mine with a pocket-sized 350-watt inverter that plugs into a 12-volt outlet.

If you fall overboard using a cordless tool, it might not survive, but it won't kill you.

Cordless tools go wherever you go—up to the masthead, down in the bilge, or out to that wreck on the reef.

As a general rule, the higher the voltage, the shorter the battery cycle life. Batteries are expensive, so use lower-voltage tools wherever they are adequate. New technology may change this, but the jury is still out.

Cordless tools are not well suited to continuous duty applications such as sanding or grinding. Even though these tools are available, you won't be happy trying to do any significant amount of work with them.

In addition to drilling holes and driving screws, use a cordless drill to:

- tap threads in soft material. It's much steadier than a tap wrench.
- make irregular cutouts or to modify existing holes using a side-cutting bit.
- adjust and de-burr holes and edges using a reamer attachment.

- clean threads and small parts using a wire brush attachment.
- remove stubborn hardware by using the clutch settings as an impact driver.
- de-core a deck or hull around a hole by putting an Allen wrench in the chuck.
- turn a plumber's snake or coat hanger through a clogged hose.
- twist line or wire.
- mix paint or epoxy.
- mix frozen drinks.

Spray an anticorrosive lubricant into the chucks of your cordless drills as often as you remember to do it. Otherwise, they will seize up, and they can be very difficult to replace or repair.

There are blades available that will enable your reciprocating saw to cut virtually any material found on or near a boat—wood, metal, fiberglass, plastic, tile, glass, rigging, hose, conch shells, coconuts. With the right blade, it can substitute for a scroll saw, hole saw, jigsaw, or circular saw. Use a metal cutting blade to make passable joinery cuts in wood. Tape some sandpaper around a long blade and it becomes a great sanding and shaping tool for hard-to-reach places like the inside of a daggerboard trunk.