

## BRIGHT, STURDY WORKLIGHTS

**M**y coworkers and I depend on portable lighting because when we begin a finish-carpentry job, the final electrical work is often still weeks away. After putting three new worklights from Milwaukee to the test over several months, I've concluded that the company has made great strides in cordless job-site lighting.

### Rocket

The Rocket (\$400 with no battery) provides 3000 lumens, can run off AC power, and has an onboard charger for M18 batteries. Three independent heads have a 180° range of motion and can be turned individually or grouped together to pivot as one. The Rocket is power hungry, burning through a 5.0-Ah pack in about two hours at its brightest setting. Still, the power used by the Rocket is a fraction of that used by halogen worklights, which is a huge benefit when you're running other tools or lights off of the same circuit. Plus, if you lose AC power to the Rocket, the battery seamlessly takes over. How many times has someone unplugged your light while you were in the middle of a task, or how many times have you been left in the dark by a tripped breaker?

Weighing in at 18 lb., the Rocket is 41 in. long when it's collapsed and can stretch to 7 ft. when fully extended. This makes it great for when you need overhead lighting but there's nowhere to hang a light. I purposely knocked over the extended light multiple times with no ill effects.



### Radius

Though less than half the size of a 5-gal. bucket, the M18 Radius (\$300 with no battery) puts out 4400 lumens, which is more than enough for general job-site lighting.

At 10½ lb. and with a large handle, it's easy to carry. A sturdy hook on the bottom—wide enough for 2x stock—allows it to hang upside down for overhead lighting. Milwaukee even includes a tether for hanging the light from larger-diameter objects.

Three brightness modes and the option to turn off half of the light to conserve battery power allow you to match the light output to your needs. There's even a One Key version (\$350 with no battery) so that you can control and program the light to turn on and off on a schedule from your phone. Both versions include male and female 120v plugs for connecting multiple Radius lights together. This model can also run on AC power, but it doesn't charge batteries as the Rocket does.

The Radius is IP54-rated for dust and water resistance, and the one I have has endured multiple drops without breaking. This is the light you want for general site lighting. You can illuminate a large room with a single unit.



### Rover

The 1000-lumen, 2-lb. M12 Rover (\$80 with no battery) is for people who want a lot of light in a tiny package. Its multiple mounting options—a high-strength magnet, a well-designed spring clamp for grabbing 2x material, and a key-hole slot—mean that you can stick it anywhere.



The flood-shaped beam has a nice even spread. The edges of the beam are a little blue, but the center is close to white. There are three light levels—200, 400, and 1000 lumens—and I found that the light will run for up to five hours on the brightest setting using a 6.0-Ah battery pack. Like the Rocket, the Rover flashes when the battery is running low.

Milwaukee claims that the Rover can survive a 9-ft. drop. That seems realistic given some of the good hits it took while I was using it, including a tumble down stairs. This is the light you want in your toolbox and within grabbing distance while you're working. It's a localized flood light with the power of a 250w halogen.

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