

## DeWalt DC390KB circular saw

It may lack the power of a mains-powered tool but its Li-ion batteries ensure it still boasts great capacities

**S**ome types of woodwork machines will eat a battery in next to no time and, without Lithium-ion technology, are rather unsuitable as a cordless tool. This why there are relatively few cordless planers on the market. The same problem applies to circular saws; most manufacturers put out one, but they are also high drawers of power and so often either trim saws of lower voltage and low cutting capacities, or higher voltages to cope with bigger capacities and durability.

I can live with bigger voltage batteries in the case of circular saws – after all, they sit on the work, so there's no fatigue like supporting a drill. 18V is still the most popular platform, though, and to have a variety of voltages, especially if they have differing connectors, results in more gear being carried. This saw, then, is a pretty good compromise of power and capability.

Testing the saw on some 40mm-thick worktop, the first thing I noticed was the speed of the blade, which runs at more than 1000rpm lower than a mains-powered machine. The power available is obviously lessened as well so while you can push a mains model hard, this saw will start to slow on thicker material. A steady feed rate is the order of the day.



▲ The bigger batteries come in useful on this saw

Taking things at a more gentlemanly pace, the saw will cut through thick stock well. It's ideally suited for dryer material such as worktops and sheet stock, but with a maximum blade projection of 56mm you can cut standard constructional timber stock. The thinner kerfed blade, at only 1.5mm, isn't ideal in wetter timber, but all battery saws use them to keep the motor strain down and get more runtime from the battery. The saw bucks with recent trends, though, incorporating a riving knife, so if you are cutting wetter timber it's safer should the saw bind in the cut and kick back as the back of the blade is protected, but wetter timber really is detrimental to the saw and is ill-advised.

The downside of a riving knife is that it prevents plunge cuts, so kitchen fitters and the like won't find it a benefit when plunge cutting worktops for hobs and sinks; however, it's only a single hex screw fitting, so it's easy to remove if required.



### User-friendly

An alloy base and easy-to-alter height and angle settings make the saw pretty user-friendly throughout, and there's a basic notch in the base to indicate 90° and 45° positions when freehand cutting to a line. The top grip built into the handle isn't maybe as good for comfort on tilted cuts – my personal favourite here is the ones that are fixed directly to the base as that doesn't alter as the saw bevel does. But all in all, this is a very nice, well-constructed saw. It may lack the power of a mains saw, but it has great capacities, equal to the mains varieties favoured by the trade.

With Lithium at the forefront of battery power, it's worth shopping around for saws such as this as the NiMH and NiCd technology is superseded – you could pick up a bargain to add to your own existing 18V gear. In DeWalt's case, this saw can be bought 'naked' so you can simply add the body only if you have the batteries, and the Lithium batteries are backwards compatible so if you already have those, you get the full benefit. 🔧

### Good The Woodworking Verdict

- + Good capacities, well constructed
- Not as speedy as a mains model

Rating ★★★★★

Typical price: **£360** with batteries £140 without batteries

Battery: 2 x 18v 2.6Ah NiMH

Speed: 3700rpm

Max depth of cut @ 90°: 56mm

Max depth of cut @ 45°: 42mm

Supplied blade: 165mm x 24 tooth

Web: [www.dewalt.co.uk](http://www.dewalt.co.uk)