

# Best Air Compressor Reviews – Buying Guide 2015

Shopping for [air compressors](#) is no different to shopping for major appliances. You determine your needs, do your research, compare products, and read tons of **air compressor reviews**. Sometimes, you read brutal complaints and learn about a unit's weakness. Other times, you're able to learn insider tips and tricks on maximizing an air compressor's potential. Either way, **air compressor reviews** that provide pros and cons of a unit, along with recommendations and technical tips, are indeed helpful in finding the **best air compressor** for your needs.

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Be aware though that like any other online reviews, not all are as genuine as you'd hope it to be. Some **air compressor reviews** can be biased to the point of looking like an advert for that particular brand, while others may go totally against the unit for no valid reason. It can be tricky to spot these extremes at first, but you'll be able to pin-point them like a professional online shopper after encountering a bunch of such reviews.

## Top 5 Air Compressor Reviews

### [Senco PC1010 Air Compressor Review](#)

With over 200 5-stars on Amazon, the [Senco PC1010](#) air compressor is a favorite among home users and professionals. It is a tiny, lightweight machine with plenty of power, ideal for light tasks in and around the house.

The Senco PC1010 runs with a 1 HP motor and 1 gallon tank, which fills up within two minutes. While it measures only 12.5 x 10.3 x 14 inch, this unit provides several useful features including a pressure/motor switch and pump breaker to prevent overload, pressure release valve, outlet pressure gauge, air intake filter, drain valve, super quick cool down, and more.

The [Senco PC1010 air compressor review](#) on Amazon has about 87% positive feedback (based on the 4 and 5-star rating of 300+ users). Majority of the praises for this unit are based on the portability and lower-than-normal noise level due to its own noise-reduction technology incorporated into



the [small air compressor](#).

Users who rated this product 3 stars and below complain about the Senco PC1010's inability to handle more tools. Although this is understandable since everyone who buys a product should receive his/her money's worth, buyers should be aware that each air compressor is built towards a specific market. The Senco PC1010 is ideal for home use and as backup unit for contractors, and not for advanced tools and industrial settings.

>>>> [See Full Senco PC1010 Air Compressor Review](#) by Air Tool Guy <<<<<<<

[READ FULL REVIEW AND BUY ON AMAZON.COM](#)

## [Makita MAC700 Big Bore 2.0 HP Air Compressor Review](#)

If you require a bigger air compressor with more power, the [Makita MAC700](#) can do the job seamlessly. With almost 400 5-star reviews on Amazon, this model has gotten raves from advanced home users and professionals as it can handle medium to large-scale jobs with ease.

Built with the Makita's trademark BIG BORE design, the MAC700 boasts of increased compression, faster recovery and less noise. The 2-HP motor, oil-lubricated pump and heavy-duty filters operate within a cast iron cylinder.

The Makita MAC700 [air compressor review](#) on Amazon has received a whopping 88% positive rating and for good reason. Its motor produces 3.3 cubic feet per minute at 90PSI, its large 1720 RPM pump operates with lower noise levels, and the air tank refills within 20 seconds. The Makita MAC700 also has the automotive-style filter, a significantly low amp draw, and thermal overload protection.



Positive reviews point out that the MAC700 has the power and durability of heavy-duty air compressors, which is particularly amazing for a mini-compact model. It can handle a wide range of homeowners' needs, with carpenters, engineers and plumbers raving about MAC700's performance.

Many negative ratings of the [Makita MAC700](#) is related to delivery, which is a shame because the unit itself works as advertised. These users complain about their air compressors arriving with dents, broken legs, units covered in oil, and other issues that may have occurred during the handling or shipping of the item.

>>>> [See Full Makita MAC700 Review](#) by Air Tool Guy <<<<<<<

**See More Best Makita Air Compressors:**

- 1) [Makita MAC700 Big Bore 2.0 HP Air Compressor](#)
- 2) [Makita MAC5200 Big Bore 3.0 HP Air Compressor](#)
- 3) [Makita MAC2400 Big Bore 2.5 HP Air Compressor](#)

[READ FULL REVIEW AND BUY ON AMAZON.COM](#)

## [PORTER-CABLE C2002-WK Oil-Free UMC Pancake Compressor Review](#)

The Porter-Cable C2002-WK is another popular compact [pancake compressor](#), which is rated with over 315 5-star reviews. It features a tiny construction ideal for filling tires, blowing dust of small spaces, and other small jobs. It may measure only 18.3 x 18 x 19 inches at 34 pounds, but this electric-powered pancake compressor is definitely a stand-out.

Compared to bigger models with only 1-2 gallons capacity, this tiny machine boasts of a 6-gallon pancake-style tank, which removes the need for several recovery times, and ultimately, a longer-lasting unit. The Porter-Cable C2002-WK runs with a low-amp 120-volt motor that starts up easily even on cold days. It is designed with portability in mind, so bonus points to Porter-Cable for the built-in shroud handle, rubber feet, and console cover.



The [PORTER-CABLE C2002-WK Oil-Free air compressor reviews](#) on Amazon have 80% positive ratings. Many of the users rave about the factory-installed air coupler and plug on the air house, which helps in preventing leaks and reducing start-up time. Many found the 13-piece accessory kit included in aC2002-WKunit pretty helpful, since the 25-foot nylon hose, blow gun and attachments, tire chuck, tire gauge, quick coupler, plugs and Teflon tape can already do plenty for DIYers.

Negative reviews point out that the Porter-Cable C2002-WKis not ideal for condo use or spaces where loud noises could be a problem. They complain that the small unit operates with up to 120 decibels in volume.

**>>>> See Full [Porter Cable C2002 WK Oil Free Review](#) by Air Tool Guy <<<<<<<**

**See more [Best Porter Cable Compressor](#)**

- 1) [PORTER-CABLE C2002-WK Oil-Free UMC Pancake Compressor with 13-Piece Accessory Kit](#)
- 2) [PORTER-CABLE CMB15 150 PSI 1.5 Gallon Oil-Free Fully Shrouded Compressor](#)
- 3) [PORTER-CABLE PCFP02003 3.5-Gallon 135 PSI Pancake Compressor](#)

[READ FULL REVIEW AND BUY FROM AMAZON.COM](#)

**[California Air Tools CAT-6310 Air Compressor Review](#)**

Made specifically for people and professionals looking for air compressors with ultra quiet operation, the [California Air Tools CAT-6310](#) is designed with portability and noise level in mind. Its 1.0HP motor operates at only 1680 RPM, which creates only 60 decibels noise level and ensures a longer-lasting unit.

The California Air Tools CAT-6310 is bigger than other air compressors on this list, weighing about 50 pounds and measuring 23.6 x 13.3 x 24 inches, but it is still portable enough thanks to its wheel kit. It operates with an oil-free dual piston pump system, which is ideal even in uneven terrains or different temperatures.

The [California Air Tools CAT-6310 air compressor reviews](#) on Amazon have a whopping 94% positive rating. Many users attest to this unit being the “quietest” they’ve ever worked on, while still capable of handling light to medium tasks. Most users found the wheel kit useful, even if others thought installation can be tricky.

Negative reviews of this air compressor are rare and can be attributed to factory defects, since some receive loud units. Others have high expectations on the CAT-6310, assuming that this air compressor can handle advanced tools and heavy-duty tasks.

>>>> [See Full California CAT-6310 Air Compressor Review by Air Tool Guy](#) <<<<<<<<

**See more Best California Air Tools Air Compressors:**

- 1) [California Air Tools CAT-1610A Ultra Quiet and Oil-Free 1.0 Hp 1.6-Gallon](#)
- 2) [California Air Tools CAT-10020 Ultra Quiet and Oil-Free 2.0 HP 10.0-Gallon](#)
- 3) [California Air Tools CAT-4610A Ultra Quiet and Oil-Free 1.0 Hp 4.6-Gallon](#)

[READ FULL REVIEW AND BUY FROM AMAZON.COM](#)

## [Rolair JC10 1 HP Oil-Less Compressor Review](#)

The [Rolair JC10](#) oil-less air compressor is one of the smallest pancake-style models on this list. It measures 17 x 16 x 15 inches and weighs only 42 pounds, so portability will never be an issue. But what makes this model different to any other compact air compressors is that the Rolair JC10 has overload protection and one of the quietest operations in its range.

Operating with a 1725 RPM motor at 2.35 CFM, the Rolair JC10 comes out of the box set at 90 psi, which can pretty much handle any pneumatic tools for light jobs. It is designed with a durable cast aluminum cylinder and a 2.5 gallon tank. The oil-less design not only reduces the recovery time, it also prevents unnecessary maintenance.

[Rolair JC10 1 HP Oil-Less air compressor reviews](#) on Amazon often begin with how this unit exceeded users’ expectations. About 91% are positive ratings that describe how easy it is to work with trims and a single tool





continuously. Many of the negative ratings of Rolair JC10 are related to factory defects of the valve, which when replaced, has turned complaints into raves.

>>>> [See Full Rolair JC10 Air Compressor Review by Air Tool Guy](#) <<<<<<<

See more Best Rolair Air Compressor on Amazon:

- 1) [Rolair FC2002 2 HP Twin Stack Compressor with Overload Protection](#)
- 2) [Rolair VT25BIG 2.5 HP Wheeled Compressor with Overload Protection](#)

[READ FULL REVIEW AND BUY FROM AMAZON.COM](#)

## Air Compressor Buying Guide

You can read reviews of the **best air compressors** online all you want, or seek recommendations from a friend who has the latest model, but you have to understand that what's good for your friend or anyone else isn't always good for you. To be able to buy the **best air compressor for air tools** you have or plan to use, you have to identify the best type of air compressor for your application, required pressure, and capacity/flow rate requirements, before diving in to find a unit based on brand and price.

We've created an easy-to-understand **air compressor buyer guide** for beginners, DIY-ers and those who have tried several models but can't seem to find one appropriate for their specific projects.

### Understanding Pressure and Capacity

Pressure, expressed in pounds per square inch (**PSI**), describes how strong the air is transferred from the compressor to your tool. Capacity, expressed in cubic feet per minute (**CFM**), describes how much air.

Models sold at hardware stores are usually in the range of 125 to 175 PSI, but the capacity varies significantly because it will depend on the tool/number of tools requirements. Most tools require 100 PSI when used one at a time. If you plan on using two or more simultaneously, you need to determine the pressure requirements of each one and compute from there.

The computation you used for pressure requirement can also help you determine if a small compressor with lesser capacity is enough for your tools, or a bigger model with more capacity is required.

### Tank size

An air tank serves as your unit's reservoir. It is easier to decide on tank size once you have your require PSI and CFM ready. Generally, a large tank size allows you to work longer before the tank drains below the PSI setting. When the tank drains, your tools slowly wind down until it completely stops as the tank empties.

If your projects require continuous use of the air compressor, or you plan on using multiple tools simultaneously, a model with a larger tank size is recommended. But if you need an air compressor for occasional tire inflation or basic nailer jobs, a small unit with up to 6-gallon tank capacity will do.

>>>>> [Check out all air compressor tank price from Amazon.com](#) <<<<<<

### Pump Types



Four varying pump types are used on air compressors, each with its pros and cons. The required PSI for your tools and usage frequency are factors to consider when choosing the type of pump on an air compressor.

- Single-stage – All rotary air compressors have a single-stage pump system, but can have one or more cylinders. With this design, the air is compressed once at around 120 PSI and directed to the storage tank for use.
- Two-stage – Piston-type air compressors can sometimes be designed with a two-stage pump system, wherein air is compressed similar to single-stage but is sent into an intercooler tube for a second compression (this time, at 175 PSI), then directed to the after-cooler before finally arriving at the tank storage. The dual-process provides longer operation.
- Oil-free – Advertised as a feature that makes a unit quiet, oil-free pumps are often compact, portable and maintenance-free. The problem with oil-free designs is that the air compressor tends to have shorter life spans.
- Oil-lubricated – With an oil-lubricated model, an oil tank lubricates all moving parts of the motor. These models are often bulky and heavy, but have better lifespans with proper maintenance.



[>>> Check out all air compressor pump replacement from Amazon.com <<<<<](#)

## Portable vs. Stationary

Portability of an air compressor is another factor you should consider when buying a unit. Are you going to use this for car tire inflation at home alone? Or do you plan to use it for multiple applications?

[Portable air compressors](#), as its name suggest, can be moved around from point A to point B (usually by a single person). As such, these units tend to be lighter and smaller with tanks no more than 30 gallon capacity. These are ideal for light-duty projects since they are often not capable of handling multiple tools continuously.

[Stationary compressors](#) are fixed to a platform and can be bulky and heavy. They have over 30 gallon tank capacity, which means it is able to sustain longer operations. Unfortunately, stationary compressors are expensive and are ideal for heavy-duty, industrial use.

[>>>> Check out our best portable air compressor reviews here <<<<<<](#)

Several types of air compressors exist, (such as turbo and scroll compressors). But the two most popular are reciprocating/piston air compressor and rotary screw air compressor, which we are going to discuss below:

## Reciprocating air compressor

Reciprocating air compressors, which also go by piston compressors, are the most common type of compressors. They are low-capacity with low to high pressure and motors that operate up to 10HP. They are specifically designed for intermittent use and are ideal for small-scale workshops, small businesses, garages, home renovation, and light-duty construction jobs.

Reciprocating air compressors use pistons to compress air. Like an internal combustion engine, a motor-powered central crankshaft drives two or more pistons within cylinders. It is called reciprocating because the pistons move back and forth in a reciprocal motion.

Whenever the pistons draw back, air is injected from an intake valve into the cylinders of the pistons, compressed by the “reciprocal” motion and discharged into a pneumatic tool, or stored in the air tank of a compressor.

## **i) Types of reciprocating air compressors**

Reciprocating air compressors are classified into single-acting compressors, double-acting compressors, diaphragm compressors, and other types that are based on aspects such as number of stages (single-stage, double-stage), cooling method, power source and drive type, lubrication method, and other factors.

## **ii) Pros and cons of reciprocating air compressors**

Reciprocating air compressors are popular for being relatively cheap. They are easy to operate, easy to maintain, and easy to understand the mechanics due to their simple designs. These types of compressors are suitable for high pressure, even without oil or lubrication.

However, reciprocating air compressors are infamous for their loud level of noise. The moving parts are vulnerable to problems, and maintenance can be expensive. As such, many users just go with buying a new one when their old compressor ceases to work.

## **Rotary screw compressors**

A rotary screw air compressor works by compressing air using two screws/rotors that turn in opposite direction, causing the air to get trapped in between, and compressed. These machines are capable of compressing air continuously as needed, so many factories and large-scale businesses use them for industrial operations.

Rotary screw air compressors come in single stage and two-stage. Expenses can be an issue on single-stage types because its motor runs 24/7, while those with two-stage models are more energy efficient. A mix of both worlds comes in newer models with variable speed, which allows users to control air compression and prevent unnecessary energy expenditure.

Rotary screw air compressors start at 10HP with massive models operating up to 1000HP. They boast of high pressure, and high flow. While these machines are noisy as well, noise-reducing enclosures are available to reduce noise levels.

The downside to this type of air compressor is that it is extremely expensive, not only due to the machine's price, but also in terms of maintenance and operations.

## **Reciprocating vs. Rotary Screw: Which one do you need?**

Reciprocating compressor pressure can handle up to 15,000 psi. Capacities of these machines range from 1 to 70 CFM only. This type of machine is right for you if:

- You only require a small amount of air
- You will not be using compressed air continuously
- Most of your pneumatic tools are hand tools, but if you have big tools that require plenty of compressed air, you only use them occasionally.
- You need over 1500 PSI pressure for your projects

Rotary screw compressor pressure can handle up to 215 psi. Capacities of these machines range from 20 CFM to 500 CFM. This type of air compressor is better for you if:

- You need continuous compressed air
- You use many big tools that require plenty of air

- If you have machines that need compressed air on extended times
- If you need compressed air regularly, since these machines work best when used. They rust and reduce their lifespan significantly when not in use.

If you're worried about maintenance costs, rotary screw compressors win over any kind of reciprocating air compressors. Parts of reciprocating models, such as piston rings and valves, could add up significantly when replaced. Plus bills of routine maintenance add to the expenses.

Another important consideration about choosing between reciprocating and rotary screw air compressors is noise level. Modern rotary-type models have built-in, noise-reducing enclosures, which lower the DBA significantly. While newer models of reciprocating air compressors are starting to include enclosures similar to rotary compressors, the norm is still machines built open on a tank. As such, noise can be an issue with reciprocating compressors.

## In conclusion

Now you know all there is to know about air compressors, the popular types, and how to determine the pressure, capacity, tank size, pump type, and need for portability... your next step is to compare brands based on your air compressor requirements and budget.

For further reviews of more different type of air compressors, check out our link here

And if you want extra tips & tricks on running, maintaining your air compressor, check out

- [Air Compressor Maintenance](#)
- [How to use an Air Compressor](#) (Video)

Also, remember to check out our detailed [Ultimate Air Compressor Comparison Table](#), with the most relevant information to guide your purchase. Do visit our [Compressor Review sections](#) with 20+ air compressor reviews from major brands such as [California Air Tools](#), [Senco](#) & [Porter Cable](#).

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