

How to Use a Power Drill

A power drill is one of the most helpful tools you can have. With the change of a bit, you can drill holes, drive screws, stir paint, and a whole lot more...

1. CHANGING THE BIT

- These jaws inside the tip hold the bit in place as you loosen or tighten the chuck. Twist the collar, or chuck, to open the jaws wide enough to slide the bit in. Twist the opposite direction to tighten it until it stops or clicks. A keyless chuck tightens and loosens by hand. For a keyed chuck, slide the key into the slot on the collar, and twist it to tight the bit in place. This holds the bit with more force, so it's better for heavier duty jobs.

2. DRIVING AND DRILLING

- The trigger on the handle is your main control. And the switch (usually right above it) changes the direction of the spin. Set it in "forward" to drive a fastener in with a clockwise spin. To drill a hole, place the tip of the bit against the surface. Pull the trigger partway so you don't skip off the surface - and work up to full speed as you get going. Keep forward pressure on the drill when drilling. If you need to, press on the back for more leverage. Don't cover the vents or you may overheat the motor.

3. BACKING OUT SCREWS

- To back out screws, or if a bit sticks, move the switch on the handle to set it in "reverse." You may also have a neutral position that locks the trigger, so it won't spin if you bump the trigger while you're carrying it.

HELPFUL TIPS:

- To avoid stripped screws, when you're driving a long screw or you're drilling into hard material, first drill a pilot hole using a drill bit a few sizes thinner than your screw. Then drive in your fastener. If the bit starts to spin on the head of the screw, stop. You might need to change to a bit that fits tighter. The tips are angled differently to grip onto the fastener heads. If that doesn't work, back the screw out while there's still grip left. Once the screw head is stripped, it's tough to get out without using a specialty bit or cutting off the screw.

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NOTE: Always follow manufacturer's recommended safety precautions and instructions for the products you use.