

toolkit

Useful stuff for homeowners to know

BLAST AWAY DIRT

Portable power cleaner

With this cordless sprayer and a bucket of water, you can power-wash almost anything, anywhere, with less risk of damage. BY THOMAS BAKER

The backstory

A strong stream of water is the classic way to clean outdoor surfaces, whether with a low-pressure garden-hose nozzle or a high-intensity pressure-washer. But in both cases, where you can use them is limited by the length of the hose. Not so with the HydrosHOT. This battery-powered water shooter is designed for use anywhere. Drop the draw hose into water—a bucket, a sink, a bathtub, even a lake will do—and pull the trigger. The HydrosHOT delivers a stronger blast than any garden hose can, without the damaging potential of a full-on pressure-washer. Introduced in 2017, the first-generation model ran off a single 20-volt battery. Two years later, this 40-volt version debuted, with higher pressure settings and longer run times. Both can be fitted with an array of cleaning attachments (check them out on the following page).

Features

1 Multispray nozzle Rotates to set spray angle to 0, 15, 25, or 40 degrees.

2 Pressure-cleaning lance Extends the tool's reach by 19 1/16 inches.

3 Power nozzle Mounting point for most attachments

4 Draw hose This 20-foot tube pulls water from a container—or a garden hose.

5 Two 20-volt lithium-ion batteries are required for operation.

Benefits

- **Lightweight** At 6.9 pounds, it's easily carried to cleaning sites.
- **Easy to control** With a max pressure of 450 pounds per square inch (psi), it's less likely to mar wood or force water behind siding.
- **Quiet** Operating at about 70 decibels, it's quieter than gas or electric pressure-washers.
- **Saves water** It uses only 0.9 gallons per minute (gpm). Garden-hose nozzles gush up to 2.5 gpm.
- **Works indoors, too** Use it to clean window screens from inside or scour grime off a tub or shower tile.

Things to consider

- ✓ The HydrosHOT only pumps fresh water. To add cleaner to the spray, you need to attach the soap dispenser (not included).
- ✓ Once they have been fully run down, batteries will need about 2 hours to fully recharge.
- ✓ Run time varies with pressure setting: Expect to get 30 minutes at 290 psi, 15 minutes at 450 psi.
- ✓ For comparison, pressure-washers deliver from 1,500 to 4,000 psi, and garden-hose nozzles from 100 to over 300 psi.

Shown: 40V Power Share HydrosHOT, \$220; worx.com



TASK ORIENTED

Cleanup crew

Spinning brush heads, an angled number that fits into crevices, even a window-washing kit: Hydroshot's attachments tackle a wide range of cleaning challenges.



Soap dispenser
Screw-on bottle mixes cleaning solution into the spray. Comes in a kit with the squeegee (below) and angled brush (right), \$50; worx.com

Tight fit
This 7-inch angled brush gets into gaps and crevices that spinning brushes can't reach.

Window washer
Attached to the end of the lance, it sprays, then squeegees glass clean.

Power scrubber
This rotating, stiff-bristled brush loosens dirt and grime on flat areas and flushes them away; \$35

Soft touch
Spinning bristles scrub sensitive and hard-to-reach surfaces; \$25

PREP FOR A SECOND CROP

Plant now for produce later

For many backyard gardeners, midsummer means the lettuce has bolted and the peas are a stringy mess. But take heart: Lots of vegetables thrive in late summer and continue into fall, and most can be direct-sown in the soil now. First, do the math: Use your ZIP code to search online for the first frost date for your area, then use the days-to-maturity of crops you wish to grow—check the seed packet, as these can vary—to count backward to the last day you can plant. (If you can, add two weeks to make up for waning sunlight.) Consider cold hardiness, too: Cool-season crops like kale aren't bothered by frost—but for bush beans and basil, freezing temperatures are the kiss of death. Because they mature quickly, though, even these tender crops can survive a second planting if you time it right. Before resowing, turn over the dirt, remove any roots, and add a balanced fertilizer to rejuvenate the soil.



BASIL
Matures in 30–60 days. A

tender herb, basil can be grown in pots in the garden and brought indoors if frost threatens.

CILANTRO and **PARSLEY** don't mind the cold.



RADISHES
Mature in 30–60 days.

Radishes grow fast, sprout well in warm soil, and can survive temperatures down to 20°F. But be sure to harvest before the ground freezes.



SPINACH
Matures in 35–45 days.

Spinach grows quickly and can be harvested before full maturity. It does well with fall's shorter days, and may survive winter.



PEAS
Mature in 70–80 days. Peas take

longer to mature in fall, but tolerate cold better than heat. Sow them when the air temperature outside has cooled to 75°F.



BUSH BEANS
Mature in

45–60 days. Beans grow quickly in summer's heat. They can't tolerate cold, but well-timed plantings can keep them coming until the first frost.



CAULIFLOWER
(matures in 60–80

days) and **BROCCOLI** (50–70 days) will survive and even benefit from cool fall temperatures with better-developed heads and improved flavor.



LEAF LETTUCE
Matures in

40–60 days. It's less bitter when grown in cooler temperatures than during the summer heat. Start seeds indoors if the soil temperature is above 70°F.



BRUSSELS SPROUTS
(mature in

80–100 days), **CABBAGE** (50–90 days), and **KALE** (40–65 days) are super-survivors, hardy down to 20°F. Chilly weather may even improve taste.