

THE IP RATING DECODER

MANUFACTURER JARGON, TRANSLATED FOR THE REAL WORLD

IP stands for Ingress Protection. It is an independently tested standard, so unlike a brand's own marketing name it is a genuine, comparable measure of how much dust and water a tool can take.

FIRST DIGIT, 0 TO 6

Dust and debris. In practice you are choosing between a 5 and a 6.

SECOND DIGIT, 0 TO 9

Water. The jump that matters on site is between splashes and jets.

IP54 · SPLASH PROOF

Safe for a light drizzle. Fine for damp conditions, but get it under cover if the rain gets heavy. This is the default for most cordless hand tools.

Rule of thumb: never buy a site radio with less than this.

IP56 · HEAVY JETS

Safe for heavy rain. Handles a proper UK downpour, or getting sprayed by a hose nearby.

IP65 · WATER JETS AND DUST TIGHT

Site ready. Completely sealed against plaster dust, and it copes with low-pressure water jets.

Rule of thumb: worth it on sensitive gear like laser levels.

IP67 · IMMERSION

Trench ready. Dropped it in a muddy puddle or a flooded trench? Pull it out, wipe it off, and you are fine. Rarely necessary on a drill that lives in a bag.

NO IP NUMBER? · CHECK THE CLAIM

Plenty of tools carry a brand system instead, like Makita's XPT. A well-designed one can perform very well, but it is the manufacturer's own word, not an independently tested figure.

Rule of thumb: a tested number beats a marketing name.

COMPARE SPECS. TRACK PRICES. CHOOSE SMARTER.

Full specs and honest advice at toolpicker.co.uk/guides

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