

## Welders for Beginners

Well so you thought of buying a welder. The question is which type of welder will suit you the professed enthusiast, handyman or restorer?

There are many questions must ask yourself including; What materials do you wish to weld? What can I weld and what can I afford?

There are a huge variety of welders on the market, including;

1. Arc welders: can now be electronic inverter type. These are the conventional type using flux coated rods. Choke welders improve the Direct current by smoothing it out after it has been transformed and rectified from the mains 240 volt AC supply.
2. MIG welders: or metal inert gas. These use wire on a reel and argon or CO2 argon mixture to exclude oxygen. Gasless MIG welders, these use wire coated with flux to exclude oxygen.
3. Inverter TIG or Tungsten inert gas welders: can be DC or AC/ DC (The only type suitable for aluminum). These use filler rods of the metal being welded and argon gas as a shield.

As a maintenance fitter I am frequently welding to repair items, and so I would like to share with you a few pointers.

Arc welders have been around for a very long time and are still considered one of the best. They are only suitable for welding steel and stainless steel and that with special rods.

MIG welders are excellent being used in the professional world and good for structural steel right down to sheet metal work. Gasless MIG welders are OK but having used one at home it was not very good in my assessment and I was glad to sell it. The down side of mig is that you have to rent a gas bottle It is also difficult to use outside in windy conditions as the gas blows away and does not get rid of the oxygen, and a poor weld results.

Technology has come a long way since arc welders The favourite welder for tradies is these days the inverter welder which can be used as arc or TIG. They are capable of welding stainless steel, cast iron, bronze, copper and aluminium. They also have the draw back of using gas which means hiring a bottle.

They are electronic technology light in weight and very compact. The one I use at work is 13 inches long 4 inches wide and 7 inches tall and weighs a massive 2.5 kilos. This welder is a Franios brand. It is capable of 120 amps. They come in various types for different applications, the professional, average home user, and a cheaper version for just occasional use.

Prices for inverter welders start at \$250 and go up to the thousands

I use a WIA inverter welder at home. It weighs 3.5 Kilo produces 150 amps. It can be used for arc welding but I also do a lot of tig welding of stainless steel.

When purchased it 9 years ago it was worth \$1500. The old Transarc I had went to scrap after blowing up on me..

Don't be afraid to have a look on the internet go out and buy an inverter welder.

You don't have to be a tradesman to appreciate this type of welder.

Next time I will give a few pointers on set up use and safety equipment but bye for now from the Fitter Dude.

Andrew Manning



Inverter Stick arc welder  
\$130 on Ebay



MIG welder \$290 on Ebay



Inverter TIG AC/DC with  
plasma cutter, \$900 on Ebay