



UK Camper's Power Guide

The Complete Guide to Portable Power for Camping, Fishing & Van Life

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Introduction

Why Portable Power Changes Everything on a UK Camping Trip

Whether you're a first-time weekend camper or a seasoned van lifer who spends half the year off-grid, portable power has changed what's possible outdoors. A few years ago, camping meant managing on batteries and hoping your phone lasted the weekend. Today, a good power station means a working fridge, a charged laptop, a CPAP machine running through the night, and lights that don't die at 10pm. But here's the thing — not every setup is right for every camper. The wrong power station is either underpowered (frustrating) or overkill (expensive). This guide helps you find the right one for the way you actually camp.

What you'll find inside:

- How to calculate your real power needs — no guesswork
- The different types of portable power and when each makes sense
- The best EcoFlow products for UK conditions
- Solar panel advice for British weather (it does work — honest)
- Specialist setups for carp fishing and van life
- Top tips to get more life from every charge

By the end, you'll know exactly what to buy and why. Let's get into it.

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Calculate Power

How to Work Out Exactly How Much Power You Need

Before you buy anything, you need a rough idea of how much power your trip actually uses. The good news: the maths is simple.

The formula: Watts × Hours = Watt-hours (Wh) needed per day

- Smartphone: 10W × 2 hours charging = 20Wh
- LED camping light: 5W × 5 hours = 25Wh
- Mini 12V fridge: 45W × 8 hours = 360Wh
- CPAP machine (no humidifier): 30W × 8 hours = 240Wh
- Laptop: 65W × 3 hours = 195Wh

Add your numbers up. That total is the minimum capacity you want your power station to carry — ideally with 20–30% headroom so you're not running it flat every night.

What's your camping style?

Weekend warrior (1–2 nights): Phone, lights, maybe a small speaker. A 256–512Wh station is plenty.

Regular camper (3–7 nights): Add a fridge and laptop. You'll want 512–1000Wh.

Van lifer or long-haul camper: Running a fridge, lights, devices, and possibly a CPAP or heater. Think 1000Wh and above — and pair it with solar.

Carp angler: Bite alarms, bivvy light, phone, fish finder. 256–512Wh covers most sessions.

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Types of Power

Power Stations, Solar Panels, and Car Chargers — What's the Difference?

Power stations

Rechargeable battery units you charge at home, in your car, or from solar panels. The most versatile option for UK camping. They power everything from USB devices to AC appliances and are safe to use inside a tent or van. This is what most of this guide is about.

Solar panels

Panels that convert sunlight into electricity. They don't store power on their own — they pair with a power station to top it up during the day. Great for longer trips where you won't have mains access. Work better in British weather than most people expect.

Solar generators

A power station and solar panel sold as a matched system. Convenient if you want everything to work together out of the box. EcoFlow sells several as combos.

Car chargers (12V/DC)

Charge your power station from your vehicle's 12V socket while you drive. Useful for topping up between sites. Slow compared to mains or solar, but better than nothing.

Which do you need?

If you're camping for 1–3 nights: a power station charged at home before you leave is usually enough.

If you're camping for longer or going off-grid: add solar panels so you can recharge on site.

If you want the simplest setup: a matched solar generator system does both.

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EcoFlow Products

The Best EcoFlow Products for UK Campers

EcoFlow Autumn Sale — up to 45% off, ends 7 October 2026. Use code EFAFFUKAUTUMN5 for an extra 5% off.

EcoFlow make some of the most reliable portable power stations available in the UK. Here are the models worth knowing about, matched to different camping styles.

EcoFlow RIVER 2

Capacity: 256Wh | Weight: 3.5kg | AC output: 300W (600W surge)

Best for: Weekend campers, carp anglers, festival-goers. Light enough to carry easily, powerful enough to run lights, charge phones, and keep a bite alarm running for a full session.

EcoFlow RIVER 2 Pro

Capacity: 768Wh | Weight: 7.8kg | AC output: 800W

Best for: Campers who want more headroom without stepping up to the DELTA range. Runs a small fridge for 10–12 hours. A solid all-rounder for 2–4 night trips.

EcoFlow DELTA 2

Capacity: 1024Wh | Weight: 12kg | AC output: 1800W

Best for: Week-long camping, van life, and running multiple devices at once. This is the one most serious campers end up wishing they'd bought from the start.

EcoFlow DELTA 2 Max

Capacity: 2048Wh | Weight: 23kg | AC output: 2400W

Best for: Van lifers, overlanders, or anyone running a fridge, laptop, CPAP, and lighting all at once.

Expandable up to 6144Wh with add-on batteries.

All EcoFlow products available via the link below. Autumn Sale pricing applies until 7 October 2026.

→ **Shop EcoFlow UK:** <https://tidd.ly/46RXuDg>

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Solar Panel Guide

Solar Panels for UK Camping — Does It Actually Work?

The short answer: yes. Even in British weather.

The myth that solar panels don't work in the UK is wrong. They work on cloudy days — just more slowly. On an overcast day, a good panel might produce 20–40% of its rated output. That's still meaningful free energy over a full day.

What to look for in a solar panel for UK use:

- Monocrystalline cells — these perform better in low-light conditions than polycrystalline panels.
- High efficiency rating — EcoFlow panels typically run 20–23% efficiency, which is strong.
- Foldable design — portable, easy to position, and packs away small. The EcoFlow 110W and 220W foldable panels are well suited to UK camping.

How to pair solar with a power station:

Match the panel's output to your power station's solar input limit. The RIVER 2 accepts up to 110W solar input. The DELTA 2 accepts up to 500W solar input.

As a rough guide:

- EcoFlow 110W panel + RIVER 2: full charge in 3–5 hours (sunny day)
- EcoFlow 220W panel + DELTA 2: full charge in 5–8 hours (sunny day); 10–14 hours (overcast)

For longer trips and van life, a solar panel is not a luxury. It's what takes you from "managing power" to "not thinking about power".

→ **See EcoFlow solar panels:** <https://tidd.ly/46RXuDg>

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Carp Fishing Power

Power for Carp Fishing — What Anglers Actually Need Bankside

Carp fishing sessions run long — sometimes 48 or 72 hours. You need power that keeps up, without weighing you down.

Here's what most carp anglers are running bankside:

- Bite alarms: 0.5–2W each (very low draw, a good power station will run these for weeks)
- Bivvy light: 5–15W
- Phone charging: 10W
- Fish finder / echo sounder: 10–20W
- Heated blanket or mat: 40–80W
- Kettle (if electric): 1000–1500W (consider a gas kettle instead to preserve power)
- Laptop or tablet: 45–65W

Total for a standard 48-hour session: roughly 200–400Wh, depending on your setup.

Recommended EcoFlow setup for carp anglers:

Short sessions (24–48 hours, light kit): EcoFlow RIVER 2 (256Wh)

Longer sessions or running more kit: EcoFlow RIVER 2 Pro (768Wh)

Top tip: Pair your RIVER 2 or RIVER 2 Pro with a 110W solar panel for multi-day sessions. Position the panel during daylight hours and your power station's itself up while you fish.

→ **Shop the RIVER 2 and RIVER 2 Pro:** <https://tidd.ly/46RXuDg>

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Van Life Power

Power for Van Life — What You Actually Need on the Road

Van life has different demands from weekend camping. You're running the same devices for weeks or months at a time — and power becomes infrastructure, not a luxury.

Here's what most van lifers are running:

- 12V compressor fridge: 40–60W continuous (your biggest draw)
- Lighting: 10–20W
- Laptop: 65W
- Phone and devices: 20–30W
- CPAP machine: 30–60W
- Diesel or electric heater: varies widely

A well-equipped van typically uses 500–900Wh per day. Without solar, that means daily charges from the grid or your alternator. With solar, most van lifers can run indefinitely in summer and partially off-grid in winter.

Recommended EcoFlow setup for van life:

EcoFlow DELTA 2 (1024Wh)

The minimum I'd recommend for full-time van life. Runs a fridge, lights, and devices comfortably. Pairs with up to 500W solar input — two 220W panels charges it from flat on a good day.

EcoFlow DELTA 2 Max (2048Wh)

The smart choice if you're running a CPAP, a high-draw fridge, or you want buffer capacity for grey UK days. Expandable to 6144Wh with bolt-on batteries.

→ **Shop the DELTA 2 and DELTA 2 Max:** <https://tidd.ly/46RXuDg>

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About Chris

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Life Gear Lab is a UK-based outdoor gear review site run by Chris — a lifelong camper, carp angler, and van life enthusiast.

Everything on this site is tested, researched, and written for real outdoor use. If it's recommended here, it's because it genuinely earns it.

Visit the site for more guides, gear reviews, and tips:

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Ready to pick your EcoFlow?

→ Browse the full EcoFlow UK range at Autumn Sale prices:

<https://tidd.ly/46RXuDg>

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Full affiliate disclosure:

This guide contains affiliate links to EcoFlow UK products via the Awin affiliate programme. If you purchase through these links, Life Gear Lab may earn a small commission at no extra cost to you. This does not influence which products are recommended — only genuinely good kit makes it onto these pages.

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Battery Tips

10 Tips to Get More from Every Charge

1. Charge at home before you leave. Starting with a full battery is free. Always do it.
2. Charge from your car on the way. Most EcoFlow units accept 12V DC input. Use the drive to the site.
3. Set up your solar panel as soon as you arrive. Every hour of daylight counts — even on an overcast day.
4. Set your panel toward the south. In the UK, south-facing at a 30–45 degree tilt maximises output.
5. Switch off devices when not in use. Bite alarms aside, don't leave things plugged in and drawing power overnight.
6. Use the EcoFlow app to monitor draw. The app shows real-time wattage in and out, so you can spot unexpected draws.
7. Keep the unit out of the cold. Battery capacity drops in cold weather. Store it in your bivvy or van overnight.
8. Don't regularly run it flat. Lithium batteries last longest when kept between 20–80% charge. EcoFlow units have built-in battery management for this.
9. Use DC output rather than AC where you can. DC (USB, 12V) is more efficient than the inverter. Charge phones and tablets via USB, not the AC socket.
10. Turn off X-Boost if you don't need it. X-Boost (which allows higher-wattage devices to run) draws extra standby power. Turn it off when running low-draw devices.

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