



Selbro offers its ProBlow line of walk-behind debris blowers in 8, 9 and 11-hp. Blowers have 180-degree blowing action.



Little Wonder push-style commercial blowers were field tested by 30 landscapers from New England to North Carolina.

POWER BLOWERS

Look at the range of attachments and other features that each power blower system offers.

By CURT HARLER

Size the blower to the job. A 32 cc, 360-cubic-foot-per-minute gas blower will deliver a speed of 170 mph, enough to blow wet leaves. However, for sand, dry grass or pine needles a lighter unit will do.

Choosing the right air blower is getting more complex as the variety of models increases. But bureaucratic regulations may have more of a say in your purchasing decision than the operator's comfort or working efficiency.

Some local governments restrict the use of gasoline-powered blowers, which do not meet certain minimum requirements, in residential and other areas. Blowers fall under both EPA and CARB regulations, although most models comply with the 1999 specifications. Noise levels must be kept under 70 decibels at 50 feet, according to ANSI B175.2-1990.

It's been mentioned before, but bears repeating: always operate gas blowers in a safe, courteous fashion.

There are two major categories of blowers: backpack style, and the hand-held unit. For big jobs that will take several hours, choose backpack models. Although most are much heavier than the hand-held units, backpacks usually provide better power, a larger fuel tank for longer operating time, and more freedom of movement to the worker.

Hand-held units are good for quick cleanup and short jobs and usually are simple, one-person systems to run. However, their operating time is likely to be much less than with a backpack unit and the fatigue factor mounts much quicker.

Look at the range of attachments and other features that each blower system offers. A blower which can perform multiple tasks will get more use and will return its investment fast. As always, be safe: a gas powered unit with a bottom impeller should not be set down in loose leaves or grass — the material will be sucked in and block the intake. Be cautious with drawstrings on coats or windbreakers too. They have a way of getting sucked into the engine intake.

POWER BLOWERS

AGRI FAB, INC. 217-728-8388 Circle No. 250

The Agri-Fab Vac and its host of attachments can handle clean up jobs for any landscape operation. The optional remote hose kit allows easy pickup of lightweight materials like clippings or leaves. All work with the 45-0249 shredder.

BILLY GOAT INDUSTRIES 816-524-9666 Circle No. 251

A full line of grounds blowers and vacuums from Billy Goat Industries, Lee's Summit, MO. The QB series of blowers feature exclusive 14-blade fan that eliminates the "gyro" effect and a toe-controlled quick-change discharge chute. Rolling units available in 8 hp to 16 hp.

ECHO, INC. 847-540-8400 Circle No. 252

Low-noise gas-powered blower from Echo, Lake Zurich, IL generates a mere 65 dB at full throttle. The PB-46LN is 50 percent quieter than its earlier model, yet delivers the same air volume and velocity and uses the same 44 cc, two-stroke commercial-grade engine. It has a padded backrest, rugged frame, heavy-duty auto-type filter, and a 2-quart, see-through fuel tank.

GIANT VAC 860-423-7741 Circle No. 253

The Chip-N-Vac is designed to give versatility of a yard and driveway vacuum system with a chipping capacity of two-inches diameter. The all-in-one compact machine is built to meet rugged standards.

HUSQVARNA 800-438-7297 Circle No. 254

Two-stroke blower features E-tech, a combination of features to reduce certain harmful exhaust emissions and the smoke and odor associated with them. The 225HBV features a Clean Sweep crankshaft that effectively "sweeps" the fuel/air mixture into chamber.

JOHN DEERE Circle No. 255

Deere's BP40 Backpack Blower with 40.2cc Kawasaki engine, 250-

mph air velocity and 590 cfm volume. Fully covered muffler and noise-suppressing air filter for a quiet 71.5 dB(A) sound level. Also the BH30 Hand-held blower with 180 mph velocity and 450 cfm volume. Weighs just 10.7 lbs. Extra large 23-ounce fuel capacity.



Husqvarna two-stroke blower

LITTLE WONDER 215-537-5110 Circle No. 256

Little Wonder, Southampton, PA has just redesigned its line of push-style commercial blowers. All were field tested by 30 landscapers from New England to North Carolina. Models range from the 9500HO with 5 hp Briggs engine; 9800HO, 8 hp Briggs; 9910HO, 9 hp Honda; and the 9111HO with 11 hp Briggs IP. All with side-discharge.

MAKITA 719-522-8088 Circle No. 257

The RBL500 Backpack Blower from Makita, La Mirada, CA weighs just 19.2 pounds, but its 48.6 cc engine produces 187 mph windspeed with 447 cfm air volume. A rugged backpack frame protects the blower; plus it evenly distributes weight to the operator to reduce fatigue. 61-oz. see-through fuel tank.

MANTIS 800-366-6268 Circle No. 258

The Mantis BSV does the work of three tools: blower, shredder and vacuum. Its 21.2 cc gas-powered

engine blows air at up to 125 mph. Cruise control eliminates need to hold trigger down while working. Switch to the debris-collection bag and feeder tube and it is converted to a hand-held vacuum-shredder.

MACKISSIC, INC. 610-495-7581 Circle No. 259

Nine models of Mighty Mac leaf blowers from MacKissic, Inc., Parker Ford, PA. The LB552PN (shown) is powered by a 5 hp Briggs & Stratton engine, 15-inch diameter impeller, blows 1800 cfm at 175 mph.

MARUYAMA 425-885-0811 Circle No. 260

The newest backpack blower from Maruyama, Redmond, WA represents a new generation of quieter, lighter, more powerful blower. The BL4500 features a newly designed 40.2cc Kawasaki engine with a wide-open design for cooler running. Weighs 18.6 lbs.

MCCULLOCH 800-423-6302 Circle No. 261

The 1998 ProMac line of professional products includes the BP4300 Backpack Blower. It features the durability of Mitsubishi and the craftsmanship of McCulloch. Controls mounted on the blow



pipe. The 43cc Mitsubishi Industrial engine revs up to 644CFM air volume with 70dBa at 7000 rpm.

Maruyama BL4500

RED MAX 770-381-5147 Circle No. 262

Pro Series power blowers available in the RedMax line from Komatsu Zenoah America, Norcross, GA. Choose back-pack style EB431, 441 and EB6200 which feature a maximum air speed of 186 mph and move and air volume of 565 cubic feet per minute; hand-held HB2300 has a 353 cfm air volume at 150 mph.

RYOBI 602-961-1002 Circle No. 263

Powerful 31 cc, two-cycle gas engine powers the Ryobi 280R gas blower. The unit from the Chandler, AZ company has an operating weight of 11.5 lbs. A super-low tone muffler assures quiet operation. Dual-operating handles allow for left-handed or right-handed use.

SELBRO, INC. 419-483-9918 Circle No. 264

The ProBlow line of debris blowers from Selbro, Bellevue, OH come in 8, 9 and 11 hp walk-behind models. All units feature cast aluminum precision balanced impellers, fully adjustable and reversible handles.

SOLO, INC. 757-245-4228 Circle No. 265

Lightweight air blaster is operated by a 5 hp, two-cycle engine. This backpack unit from Solo, Newport News, VA, has padded shoulder straps and an anti-vibration system. The unit is recoil started with a 1.6 quart fuel tank, providing about an hour's work between stops. It blows 468 cubic feet per minute.

STEINER 330-828-0200 Circle No. 266

THE PB 100 attaches to the company's Quick-Hitch front mount attach system on power units. A 14-inch blower fan generates winds of up to 150 mph at rated engine speeds. Durable construction and greaseable bearings.

WOLFE METAL FAB 724-339-7799 Circle No. 267

The Saxon Blower-Vac from Wolfe, Lower Burrell, PA, lets one operator do two functions. With the chute open, the unit blows clean around trees and then windrows. By pulling up a lever, the same person can vacuum up all the material. Unit has a 5-foot diameter impeller enclosure, fully-encased in a heavy-duty deck. **LM**