

Laying it on the line

The Zenith laser level from Datum Survey Products fulfils a multitude of functions

I have often asked manufacturers why it is that they can't make one laser level that does everything. The answers they have given have generally been to do with technical obstacles, but I always suspected that it was as much a commercial consideration. Why should they sell you one machine when they can sell you two? Inevitably, technical developments, and a good dose of stiff competition, has forced their hand and we are now moving much closer to one all singing all dancing laser. This DPL5+ from Datum Survey Products is not all the way there because it can't see behind itself and it doesn't do gradients but it is close, very close, to being the only laser you will ever need.

The DPL5+ will give you the usual vertical and horizontal cross line, so you can set out tiling, level kitchen units, lay screed datum points set out portioning and suspended ceilings. But, by selecting the dot option, you can then set out squares and plumb up from floor to ceiling. The five dots are side to side, backwards and up and down at right angles to each other, so you are covered on all fronts.

ROGER SAYS...

If you have been put off laser levels in the past because they don't quite do enough, or because they are too complicated, then this is the laser level for you. If you are thinking of upgrading your existing level to get some more features then this is well worth checking out.



This laser level doesn't rotate, so you have to turn it to get a line around the room, but the 150° fan angle means that if you set up on the tripod and turn it, you can do this in seconds. It is so simple to set up and operate that I reckon I could beat most rotating levels out of the box but the 150° fan angle means that if you set up on the tripod and turn it, you can do this in seconds. It is so simple to set up and operate that I reckon I could beat most rotating levels out of the box but the 150° fan angle means that if you set up on the tripod and turn it, you can do this in seconds. It is also very frugal on battery power and has an auto cut out.

All kitted out

Opening the box, I was really surprised to find the comprehensive set of accessories that are available in this kit. The package varies between box and soft bag options, but in the box you get a target, an adjustable multi function rotating base, so you can set up and see the bottom dot, a mini tripod, a magnetic clamp, detector glasses and battery. The pulse detector has a range of up to 50m and is useful for outdoors, so it is a must for landscapers and drainage contractors.

Now the big question: Is it accurate enough to be taken seriously? This might have been the place to start, but if it hadn't been accurate we would have sent it packing and not wasted your time with a review. There is a good little section in the instructions which tells you how to check the calibration and at the same time familiarise yourself with the functions, but I started to play without even looking at the instructions and it took all of two minutes to work everything out. Does that make me Einstein? Sadly no, because a well



trained monkey could do it.

As with all levels you need to check them regularly rather than getting right around the room with a line only to find it doesn't meet. The vertical is easily checked by hanging a plumb line on a wall. It should be good for +/- 3mm over 10m. The accuracy of the 90° angle is 4.5mm in 10m. These are the worst figures, after which it should be returned for calibration, but our test sample was within the thickness of the line in the rooms we set up in.

The unit is wrapped in a protective rubber case, but this is not an invitation to bounce it around. There is a transit lock on the side which should always be engaged when not using the level. What would have been really clever is to make it impossible to put it into the case without engaging this lock. That is a nit picking point though because it is hard to find anything bad to say about this little baby.

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