



# Portable camping wind turbine

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Portable solar generators are all the rage right now, especially in the camping world. We're all for it because, well, renewable energy, am I right? But solar isn't the only game in town. Wind has long been an option for powering homes and even whole cities. The problem is that few devices knew how to properly harness it in an ultra-portable, camp-friendly size—until now. Meet the Shine go-anywhere wind turbine.

True to its name, Shine's portable, 40-watt turbine is a compact, renewable energy generator that relies on wind to spin the turbine to produce electricity. The built-in USB port can be connected directly to almost any small USB-C-compatible device, including smartphones, tablets, portable battery banks, and more. Plus, the integrated 12,000-mAh battery doubles as its own power bank for those moments when the wind doesn't want to cooperate.

Fun fact: Wyoming is the windiest state in the United States, with an average annual wind speed of almost 13 miles per hour. That's why I field-tested the Shine turbine for several weeks in the wilds of the state's mountainous Medicine Bow National Forest this summer.

Upon opening the box, the unit was smaller than I had expected. It's shaped like a slightly squished, elongated American football. At roughly the size of a 1,000-ml water bottle (13" long by 4" across), it's surprisingly compact, considering that it's an entire functional wind turbine. It weighs roughly three pounds, so I wouldn't call it small or light by backpacker standards. But it's the perfect size for car camping, for those trips when you're not as concerned with the size or weight of your load out and you want all available options for keeping your favorite mobile tech charged up.

It's clear that careful thought went into designing the product. Straight out of the box, it feels solid, premium, and well-made. All of the components, including the center pole, stakes, and guy lines, fit neatly inside a hollow compartment within the central turbine unit. So, there are no extraneous parts to worry about losing.

Setting up the Shine is simply a matter of removing all of these components, staking out the center pole and three support poles, and mounting the turbine unit to the top of the whole setup. I resisted the urge to "wing it" and actually bothered to read the instructions step-by-step. Because the ground under all of my Wyoming camps was rocky, hard-packed dirt, my initial setup was tricky, leaving the turbine lop-sided and definitely not plumb. This is one product where it pays to take your time, as even a slight lean in the vertical stake can leave the turbine flopping to one side, unable to turn and generate electricity properly.

A few minutes later, I was able to right the ship. I was fortunate to be setup on a hill with a steady wind, and



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the anemometer Shine provided me with measured a consistent wind speed of around 10 miles per hour. Almost immediately, the turbine caught that light breeze, the housing turned automatically into the wind, and the blades began turning. LED lights on the housing indicated it was generating electricity, and after connecting the USB cable, I could see my smartphone begin charging. Because I'd taken Shine's advice and charged up the internal battery before leaving home, the central unit kept charging my device even when the wind died down.

My main complaint was the setup. It's not difficult, per se. But hard, uneven terrain can make it tricky. The charging times are also relatively slow—compared to what most people might expect from a standard wall charger or even a portable power bank—even with the wind roaring. But that's to be expected with almost any wind-powered device that's built this small. For that reason, it's best as a failsafe for the days when the sun isn't shining, and I'm happy to pack both this and a power bank whenever I'm car camping. Still, the smart design, straightforward setup (once you get the hang of it), and all-day power-producing capability make this a solid buy in my book.

The Shine portable wind turbine is available now with everything described above for \$399.99. That includes everything you need for a basic setup straight out of the box: The turbine itself, center mounting pole, ground pegs, and guy lines. Shine also offers several accessories to make using the turbine a little easier, including a carry case, stability sandbags, and an anemometer to measure wind speed.

Shine is already at work on the next generation of its portable wind turbine. The Shine 2.0 will boast a higher 50-watt generator, 75-watt USB-C fast charging, and an improved telescoping mounting system designed to raise the turbine higher off the ground. Early adopters can pre-order now via the official Kickstarter.

If the cold of winter won't stop you from enjoying the great outdoors, you better be prepared. Fortunately, now's an excellent time to buy winter outfits and winter gear, as you can enjoy huge savings from REI Co-op's REI Outlet Winter Sale, which runs until November 21. You can take advantage of discounts of as much as 62% off, and REI Co-op members can get 20% off on a full-priced item and an extra 20% off on a REI Outlet item using the coupon code WINTER24. We've got some recommendations for excellent bargains, but feel free to look at all the deals through the button below. You're going to want to complete your purchases as soon as possible though, as stocks may run out sooner than you expect.

The best camper vans are all about versatility. If you're a part of the WFA (that would be work from anywhere) gang, you need a mobile rig that you can live in, work out of, and use as a base camp for whatever outdoor adventures you're into. Few camper vans fill that niche, like Iveco's all-new Daily Switch 4x4. Everything we know about the new Iveco Daily Switch 4x4 camper van

Contact us for free full report

Web: <https://kary.com.pl/contact-us/>

Email: [energystorage2000@gmail.com](mailto:energystorage2000@gmail.com)



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WhatsApp: 8613816583346

