

Elinchrom One review

The Elinchrom One packs power, portability and performance in a flash the size of a 70-200mm lens. Is this "the one"?

By James Artaius



(Image: © James Artaius)

OUR VERDICT

The Elinchrom One is a powerful, portable, versatile monolight that delivers fantastic performance in a tiny footprint. While it's less powerful than the Profoto B10, it's also nearly half the price, takes almost double the amount of shots per charge and has an intuitive touch menu system.

FOR

- 131WS POWER, HSS
- CHARGE WITH A POWER BANK
- SHOOT WHILE CHARGING
- GREAT TOUCH MENUS

AGAINST

- LOWER POWER THAN B10
- OUR CHARGER BLEW UP!

The Elinchrom One is a portable, powerful, high performance monolight that's about the size of a 70-200mm lens. Offering everything from high speed sync to fast charging and recycle times to the ability to use USB power banks to keep on shooting, this is a flash that promises to move seamlessly from studio to location.

For flash aficionados, the Elinchrom One will be compared to the Profoto B10 – and while its rival is a more powerful option (on paper, at least), it also costs almost twice as much. It also features a budget challenger in the form of the Godox AD300.

So the question is, is Elinchrom's portable powerhouse "the one", and can it challenge the best lighting kits on the market right now?

Special thanks to Fareham Studio and model Sinopa Rin for their assistance with this review.



(Image credit: James Artaius)

ELINCHROM ONE: SPECIFICATIONS

Power: 131 Watt seconds

Power range: 7 to 131 Watt seconds

Battery: Integrated 41.04Wh Li-Ion (USB-C charging)

Battery life: 9700 min power / 725 max power

Active charging: Yes

Recharge time: 1h 40m

Recycling: 0.06 (min power) to 0.9 (max power) sec

Cooling: Fan cooling

Shortest flash duration: 1/7,000 sec

Color temp at max power: 5,600K HSS / 5,900K Action mode

Color Stability: ±150 K

LED lamp color temp: 2,700-6,500K (+/- 400K)

LED lamp CRI: 95

LED lamp life: 90 mins

LED lamp power: 20 Watts / equivalent to 120W / 3000 lumen

Connectivity: Bluetooth, USB-C

Dimensions: 225 x 100 x 100mm

Weight: 1.5kg



[Canon EOS R3](#) + [Canon RF 85mm f/1.2L USM](#) (1/125 sec, f/5.6, ISO100) (Image credit: James Artaius)

ELINCHROM ONE: KEY FEATURES

The Elinchrom one is compatible with with Profoto modifiers straight out of the box, and with Elinchrom modifiers via an included adapter, so you can use it with a variety of light shapers to suit the work you're doing.

In terms of power, at minimum it delivers 7Ws and a recycle time of just 0.06 sec, and at maximum output it gives you 131Ws and takes 0.9 sec to recycle. Elinchrom states that you can achieve 725 full power flashes per charge of the integrated battery, which takes 100 minutes to recharge.

And you can keep on shooting when the battery is dry, by plugging in a USB source – either via mains power or a USB power bank, which is an absolute godsend when working on location (and isn't possible on the Profoto or Godox).

The One offers high speed sync, with a duration of 1/7,000 sec at minimum power and 1/625 at full output. It also boasts a 20W modeling light with adjustable color temperature, which is actually sufficient to provide a kiss of light for some videography purposes.

It has a beautiful and intuitive touch menu system, enabling you to quickly and easily adjust everything from color temperature to modeling light power to even the color of the illuminated Elinchrom logo on the side – which not only lights up to indicate charge levels, but can also be used to differentiate multiple heads on a shoot (so one can be green, one can be red and so on for ease of reference).



Canon EOS R3 + Canon RF 85mm f/1.2L USM (1/125 sec, f/6.3, ISO100) (Image credit: James Artaius)

ELINCHROM ONE: PERFORMANCE

The first thing worth mentioning about the One, specifically in comparison with the B10, is the power performance. While the Profoto is, on paper, more powerful at 250Ws, anecdotally we found that its output was only marginally brighter.

This is likely due to the design of the respective models. While the Profoto features a flat head, the Elinchrom has a bulbous bulb that projects from the front of the body, meaning that you get a much bigger spill of light – and this actually fills modifiers better than the narrower beam projected by the B10, delivering less hotspots and far more 'effective' power than the 131Ws rating would suggest.

Indeed, Elinchrom claims that the engineering of the One is so efficient that it delivers an output comparable with 200Ws lights. While only anecdotal rather than empirical, our experience does bear this out.

The flash also exceeds its specs in terms of battery performance. We got almost 1,000 shots before needing to plug in a USB power source, and again – you can keep shooting with the One while using one of the best power banks (Elinchrom sells its own 20,000mAh bank that adds an additional 1,100 full power discharges).



Canon EOS R3 + Canon RF 85mm f/1.2L USM (1/125 sec, f/6.3, ISO100) (Image credit: James Artaius)

Something worth noting, however, is that the official Elinchrom mains charger actually 'blew up' while charging one of our test units; while there was no smoke or fire, there was a loud bang and an unpleasant smell. These things can and do happen with all kinds of electronics, but we would be remiss not to point it out here.

While the One can be used seamlessly with Elinchrom and Profoto modifiers alike, the included diffusion dome is a surprisingly good performer for many situations – especially if you use tried and true tricks like bouncing it off walls, reflectors or V-flats – meaning you can get maximum results with minimal kit.

In addition, because the unit is small and light enough to hold, it can easily be used handheld either with your off hand or by an assistant to manually direct the light (the mounting foot can even be removed to make it easier to hold).

It proved more than capable of overpowering the sun for outdoor shooting, and performed spectacularly as a studio light – and the fact that it really does have the footprint of a 70-200mm lens means that it takes up minimal space in either setting.



Canon EOS R3 + Canon RF 85mm f/1.2L USM (1/125 sec, f/5.6, ISO100) (Image credit: James Artaius)

ELINCHROM ONE: VERDICT

The Elinchrom One is a fantastic flash unit for freezing motion, overpowering the sun with high speed sync, shooting products and portraits in studio or events and lifestyle on location.

Its tiny form factor means that it takes up minimal room in your kitbag, and makes it easy to handhold when assistants or stands aren't an option. Its USB-C battery has enough life to see you through demanding shoots, and once it's empty you can either plug it into the mains or a power bank to keep on firing frames.

The Profoto B10 packs more power on paper, but in practical terms we're not sure that it justifies the significantly higher price tag. For our money, the Elinchrom One – fully compatible with Profoto as well as Elinchrom modifiers – is the one we'd reach for whether in studio or on the road.



Canon EOS R3 + Canon RF 85mm f/1.2L USM + Moment Cinebloom Diffusion Filter (1/30 sec, f/1.8, ISO800) (Image credit: James Artaius)

James Artaius

The editor of Digital Camera World, James has 21 years experience as a magazine and web journalist and started working in the photographic industry in 2014 (as an assistant to Damian McGillicuddy, who succeeded David Bailey as Principal Photographer for Olympus). In this time he shot for clients as diverse as Aston Martin Racing, Elinchrom and L'Oréal, in addition to shooting campaigns and product testing for Olympus, and providing training for professionals. This has led him to being a go-to expert for camera and lens reviews, photographic and lighting tutorials, as well as industry analysis, news and rumors for publications such as Digital Camera Magazine, PhotoPlus: The Canon Magazine, N-Phot0: The Nikon Magazine, Digital Photographer and Professional Imagemaker, as well as hosting workshops and demonstrations at The Photography Show. An Olympus and Canon shooter, he has a wealth of knowledge on cameras of all makes – and a fondness for vintage lenses and instant cameras.

Digital Camera World is the world's fastest-growing photography website, covering every aspect of image-making, from DSLR and mirrorless cameras to mobile photography, drones, webcams, post-production and printing.

Through informative tutorials, no-nonsense reviews and in-depth buying advice, Digital Camera World helps photographers find the best gear and shows them how to use it.

Created by the experts behind the world's best-selling photography magazines, DCW is for image-makers of all skill levels, from beginners through to professionals.

DCW has a huge global social media audience across multiple platforms, including Facebook, YouTube, Twitter and Pinterest; the site also works closely to showcase content from its live sister UK events, The Photography Show and The Video Show.