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## Limeade Blast L180X: A long, cool drink of portable power

by [Steven Sande](#) Jun 20th 2013 at 8:00PM



We review a *lot* of battery packs here at TUAW. Some are battery cases for iPhone, others are external packs that you can fish out of a backpack to charge up a device that's critically low on juice. But the number of battery packs that can charge either an iPhone -- or two -- or an iPad is pretty small. Limeade, a manufacturing startup out of Boulder, Colorado, has just released the **Limeade Blast L180X** (US\$129.99, available on Amazon for \$99.99), an external battery pack that carries a whopping 18,000 mAh capacity rating.

The Limeade battery packs (there are two smaller versions) started life as a Kickstarter project with a huge and enthusiastic crowd of backers who provided \$284,290 of funding when the company was only requesting \$30,000. Amazon ratings show customer satisfaction to be incredibly high, with a five-star rating with 570 reviewers.

### Design

If you're looking for buckets of power in an unobtrusive package, the Limeade Blast L180X is going to make you happy. Wrapped in a matte black smudge-resistant coating, the Blast features curved sides and a simple interface -- all of the business is at one end, with a 1.0 A USB port, a 2.1 A USB port (for charging an iPad), and a micro-USB port for charging.

Like several other external battery packs we've reviewed, the Blast L180X also has a bright white LED that can act as an emergency flashlight. There's a well-disguised button on one side of the Blast; a single tap lights up a green LED strip to indicate capacity left in the pack, while a double-tap illuminates or turns off the flashlight LED.



You might think that a battery pack like this would weigh a few pounds ... and you'd be wrong. The Blast L180X weighs only 13 ounces. Yeah, that's not exactly featherweight, but considering the amount of energy contained in that Lithium-ion battery pack, it's pretty amazing.

### Functionality

As you can imagine with a battery pack of this size, the Blast L180X takes anywhere from 11 to 18 hours to get a full charge. That means that when the pack is getting low, you'd better be near a power outlet for a while. I chose to use my iPad "power brick" to charge a fully-depleted Blast L180X, and it took just about 12 hours.

One feature that stands out completely with the Blast L180X (and the other models) is the two-in-one USB cable, which has both 30-pin Dock and micro-USB connectors. That's right; the connector normally looks like a 30-pin connector, but slide that section forward and it reveals a micro-USB connector inside. Brilliant! That way users can charge both 30-pin Dock (or Lightning, with an adapter) devices and the Blast L180X itself with the same cable. In a perfect world, this dual connector cable would have both Lightning and 30-pin Dock connectors, but since many other devices use the micro-USB standard, Limeade chose wisely.

So, how much capacity is 18,000 mAh? Well, it's not enough to fully charge an iPad, but it will get close on an original iPad or iPad 2, both of which had battery capacities in the range of 25,000 mAh. It's not even close to the 42,500 mAh pack in the iPad 3 and 4. But still, when you need a boost for a few hours, that 18,000 mAh blast of energy is going to make you happy indeed. And if you own an iPad mini, you'll be happy to know that you can completely recharge it with the Blast L180X.

As for iPhones, the Blast L180X can recharge your power-hungry iPhone 5 running the iOS 7 beta about a dozen times before it is drained.

What I love the most about the Blast L180X is being able to charge both an iPad and an iPhone at the same time -- not with the same cable, of course. Watching the little black box power up an iPad mini and iPhone 5 simultaneously was like magic.

### Conclusion

Limeade has a solid winner on its hands with the Blast L180X external battery pack. Huge capacity, sleek design, and an innovative charging cable add up to an accessory that should be in the backpack of every Apple fan.

#### Pros

- Big capacity of 18,000 mAh
- Dual 1.0 A and 2.1 A USB ports can be used simultaneously to charge both an iPhone and an iPad
- Green LED capacity meter is pleasing to the eye and easy to read
- Dual micro-USB/30-pin Dock connector is very useful
- Light weight considering the battery size
- Quite reasonably priced for a battery pack of this capacity
- Excellent reviews on Amazon.com

#### Cons

- None

#### Who is it for?

- Anyone who needs plenty of power for recharging devices away when they're not near a power outlet

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- ksong12** Jun 22, 2013

The other commenters are correct. The iPad's battery is 42.5 Wh. 42.5 Wh /3.7 V = around 12000 mAh.

1 Reply
- karia079** Jun 21, 2013

this was a kickstarter program nice to see them on here.

1 Reply
- masotime** Jun 20, 2013

Your information is incorrect. The iPad with retina display has a battery capacity of 42.5 Wh, NOT 42,500 mAh. A Wh or watt hour is VERY different compared to mAh. The former refers to total power, whereas the latter refers to total charge.

1 Reply
- isuperluuk** Jun 20, 2013

Retina iPad has about 12000 mah

How can you make such mistakes while you tested the product?!

1 Reply

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