

5 flash triggers to suit every budget



If you're going to be using your flashgun off-camera, you'll need something to fire it with. **James Abbott** has five great options for you to consider...



There's absolutely no getting away from the fact that triggering one or more flashes away from the camera provides the best lighting results. Even many professionals have turned their back on heavy location lighting systems in favour of more portable flashguns fired by wireless triggers. Contrary to belief, high

quality flash triggers can be found at very reasonable prices. The problem, as always, is separating the wheat from the chaff. Here we have five very different options suitable for every budget, and providing a variety of different features and functionality. If you're looking for a flash trigger set, you're in the right place!

Cactus V5 Duo

£60 | Compatible with all DSLRs with a hotshoe | gadgetinfinity.com

The Cactus V5 Duo set features two transceivers, meaning that trigger units can be used as both triggers and receivers. This is a fantastic feature because it means if the trigger unit fails, you can simply use another unit as a trigger. The V5s feature 16 channels and support camera sync speeds up to 1/1000sec. Working range is quoted up to 100m, which is more than adequate. Unit weight is 58g, and the V5s conveniently take AAA batteries. The Cactus transceiver set

KEY FEATURE

The V5 Duo set comes with a PC sync lead and a 3.5mm jack lead with a 6.35mm adapter for studio use.

costs a very reasonable \$60, which at the time of writing is £39. However, since they're only available to buy online from the US, they will be liable for import VAT and customs duty. Additional V5 units cost \$35 or £23.

PP verdict

The Cactus V5 Duos are well-built and compatible with a range of flashguns and, apparently, all DSLRs. The price is very good, even when taking import duty etc into account.



Interfit Strobie iSync4

£46 | Compatible with most DSLRs/flashguns | interfitphotographic.com

The Interfit Strobie iSync4 trigger kit is the most basic of the five looked at here. The trigger and receiver feature four channels, and the receiver can be fired with the radio trigger, or set to work as an optical slave. In this mode the receiver will fire a flashgun when another flashgun is fired. It's an old-fashioned feature that's much less reliable than radio triggering. The radio trigger works up to a range of 30m, suggesting a weak signal that could struggle in some locations. Sync speed is up to

KEY FEATURE

The iSync4 receiver can be triggered by the radio trigger or optically by another flashgun being fired.

1/250sec, which is ideal for DSLRs. The trigger and receiver are both small and lightweight. The batteries used are 23A and CR2, which aren't the most readily available types, and are much more expensive than AAA batteries.

PP verdict

The Strobie iSync4 trigger kit is very basic, and expensive considering build quality, features and the weak transmitter. Batteries aren't the most commonly available types either.



Hähnel Tuff TTL

£98 | Compatible with Canon or Nikon | hahnel.ie

Wireless TTL flash means that you can shoot with off-camera flash in exactly the same way as you would with your TTL flashgun when it's attached to your camera. The Hähnel Tuff TTL Flash Trigger set is competitively priced at £98, with extra receivers costing £58. Build quality is rugged, as the Tuff name would suggest. And the trigger and receiver both take readily available and cheap AA batteries. Shooting range is advertised as 100m, which is more than enough.

KEY FEATURE

Even with the trigger on the camera, the trigger hotshoe allows a flashgun to be attached and used TTL.

These triggers will also work in manual mode, allowing high speed sync and second curtain sync for creative effects. Connection to studio lights requires a separate cable costing £8.

PP verdict

The Hähnel Tuff TTL set offers a range of great features at a very competitive price. The units are well-built and feature a protective rubber cover. Additional receivers are reasonably priced too.



Phottix Strato II Multi 5-in-1

£100 | Compatible with Canon, Nikon or Sony DSLRs | phottix.com

The Phottix Strato II Multi 5-in-1 wireless trigger set is well-built, with a trigger and receiver that look almost identical but are fortunately clearly labelled. Sync speeds up to 1/250sec are supported and the units have four channels in four groups offering plenty of options. Working distance is quoted as 150m. All the cables you need to attach the receiver to studio lights are supplied, plus cables so that the trigger and receiver can be used as a wireless cable release to fire the shutter remotely. These

KEY FEATURE

The Strato II trigger set is conveniently backwards compatible with the older Strato 4-in-1 wireless triggers.

triggers are available for Canon, Nikon and Sony. Make sure you choose the right one for your camera, because the transmitter's pass-through hotshoe is specific to each manufacturer.

PP verdict

For standard triggers, the Strato II set offers a range of useful features including wireless flash firing and remote shutter release. They're reasonably priced, and extra receivers cost £49 each.



PocketWizard MiniTT1 and FlexTT5

£298 | Compatible with Canon or Nikon | pocketwizard.com

PocketWizards have long been the choice of professional photographers because of their great build quality, and most importantly, reliability. But as one of the leading brands at the higher end of the market you certainly pay for this, with one trigger and one receiver costing £298. But for this you get TTL functionality with syncing up to a staggering 1/8000sec with a compatible DSLR and flashgun. Most newer models are compatible, but it's worth checking.

KEY FEATURE

The PocketWizard FlexTT5 is a transceiver, so it can be used as a receiver, or on-camera as a trigger.

The PocketWizards can be used in manual mode, and can be used to fire a studio flash. However, for this you'll need to purchase a jack cable. They can also be used to fire camera shutters, but the cable is quite expensive.

PP verdict

The PocketWizards provide all the features and functionality you'd expect for the price. However, they are very expensive compared to the Hähnel TTL option.

