

AstroPig140, after almost 2.5 years of use/testing:

All in all, I have been extremely happy with my power box project. I have a few notes/comments to add to the initial write-up of a few things that I have changed and why along the way that I wanted to make note of for anybody who wants to use my writeup as a guide for their power box project. I have had several people make their own based on my design, and so far, they have all had success and now have their own home-built power solutions. Without further adieu, my additional notes:

First, the power distro panel: although it was expensive, was incredibly worthwhile. It made it all very simple and has made interchangeability extremely simple as well. For instance one night I had an issue with one of the cigarette plugs and instead of having to troubleshoot it in the middle of the night during an imaging session I could simply unplug that one, plug in a spare I had made up for just such an occasion, and was on my way. That allowed me to sort it the next day (a wire had simply come loose) without the stress of doing it while doing so much else in the dark. Also, when I changed the inverter (more on this in a moment) I was able to unplug the old one, put the new one in without any soldering or panel changes. The inverter I originally used worked ok for small things (charging a phone or powering a small light) but I tried to use it a few too many times to power an extra laptop and it didn't like that and blew up. Soooooo I went with a much more durable, heavy duty, pure sine wave one that can handle laptops and things with a bit more power drain ([Here is the one I use now](#)). It has been mounted underneath as it is a bit larger but works fantastically (I've had it about 16 mths now).

All in all I have been extremely pleased with AstroPig. I even carted it all down to Southern France for a week-long imaging marathon in the mountains and it performed beautifully. If you don't want to have to worry about finding power to recharge it or are at a star party or whatever, you can get the solar charger ([I got this one](#)) to charge during the day and run everything at night. It's brilliant.

I have added a few fans for ventilation. Not because I had a problem and needed them, but more precautionary and it helps to circulate air across the electronics, keeping the inside cooler.

The only real complaints I have after all of this time are of my initial inverter (lack of power and durability) and the overall weight of the thing. It's a bit of a beast (helped along by the massive battery which is incredibly heavy in its own right) so I load the battery and the power box separately and put the battery in after they are on the ground at the site. If I had the ability to, I would like to have a lightweight plastic-type frame made instead of the wood but what I have is sturdy and has been great. Definitely needs the heavy-duty pneumatic wheels I have though to get through the fields with its weight.

The build and all itself was straightforward and everything I put on has been super helpful for me.

That's the short and sweet of it.