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A-Core Container

Inverter output DC

Overview

Inverters can be very big and hefty—especially if they have built-inbattery packs so they can work in a standalone way. They alsogenerate lots of heat, which is why they have large heat sinks (metalfins) and often cooling fan. Inverters can be very big and hefty—especially if they have built-inbattery packs so they can work in a standalone way. They alsogenerate lots of heat, which is why they have large heat sinks (metalfins) and often cooling fans as well. As you can see from our top photo,typical ones are about as big as a car battery or car battery charger; larger un.

When science teachers explain the basic idea of electricity to usas a flow of electrons, they're usually talking about directcurrent (DC). We learn that the electrons work a bit like a lineof ants, marching along with packets of electrical energy in the sameway that ants carry leaves. That's a good enough analogy forsomething like a basic flashligh.

One of Tesla's legacies (and that of his business partner GeorgeWestinghouse, boss of the Westinghouse Electrical Company) is thatmost of the appliances we have in our homes are specifically designedto run from AC power. Appliances that need DC but have to take powerfrom AC outlets need an extra piece of equipment called a rectifier,typically built.

We've just had a very basic overview of inverters—and now let's go over it again in a littlebit more detail. Imagine you're a DC battery and someone taps you on the shoulderand asks you to produce AC instead. How would you do it?

If all thecurrent you produce flows out in one direction, what about adding asimple switch to your output lead?

Switchin.

If you simply switch a DC current on and off, or flip it back andforth so its direction keeps reversing, what you end up with is veryabrupt changes of current: all in one direction, all in the otherdirection, and back again. Draw a chart of the current (or voltage)against time and you'll get a square wave. Although electricity varying in that fashi.

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