

MINI HELI

GUIDE

23 POPULAR MACHINES YOU CAN FLY ANYWHERE, ANYTIME!

BY THE RC HELICOPTER CREW :: PHOTOGRAPHS BY PETE HALL & HOPE McCALL

Small electric helis are very popular because you can fly them anywhere and anytime you like. Convenience means more stick time. From lunchtime at local schoolyards to inside hotel rooms during business trips, RC heli pilots can bring their favorite machines with them to practice. In this guide there's something for everyone, from basic trainers to high-end ultra-performance 3D machines and everything in between. We've covered the bases with 23 of the most popular hovering machines and we've grouped them into three categories: fixed pitch, coaxial rotor, and collective pitch.



FIXED PITCH FOR SPORT PILOTS

CENTURY HUMMINGBIRD V3

A few of the V3's features include lightweight construction, a built-in head stiffener and lightweight flybar paddles. This factory-tested and trimmed heli comes with training gear, an instruction DVD and a flight sim.

HIGHLIGHTS

- Lightweight and durable
- Affordable price
- DVD instructions and flight sim included

SPECIFICATIONS

Model: Hummingbird V3
Manufacturer: Century Helicopter Products
Main rotor diameter: 19.1 in.
Weight: 9.1 oz.
Price: \$189



EF HELICOPTERS SABRE

The Sabre is a great helicopter that's rugged enough to fly indoors or outside on calm days. The blades are shaped for high lift so rotor-head speed is low for gentle flight characteristics. The flybar has adjustable weights to adjust the control response as your hovering skills improve.

HIGHLIGHTS

- Durable construction
- Affordable price
- Spare parts available

SPECIFICATIONS

Model: Sabre
Manufacturer: EF Helicopters
Main rotor diameter: 18.5 in.
Weight: 10 oz.
Price: \$149

GWS DRAGONFLY II

The Dragonfly II features a new Gyro/ESC mixer and cooling fins for the main and tail rotor motors. Features include a choice of geared or direct tail rotor drive and the heli is available with and without a radio system if you'd rather use your own.



HIGHLIGHTS

- Rugged construction
- Radio included
- Geared tail rotor drive for beginners

SPECIFICATIONS

Model: Dragonfly II
Manufacturer: GWS
Main rotor diameter: 18.5 in.
Weight: 12.3 oz.
Price: \$259

HELI-MAX ROTORFLY

Available in six canopy colors, the Rotorfly from Heli-Max would make a great first heli. It comes with an instructional DVD, training landing gear, a full set of bearings, and a 4-channel Futaba radio system.



HIGHLIGHTS

- Durable
- Training gear included
- Instructional DVD

SPECIFICATIONS

Model: Rotorfly
Manufacturer: Heli-Max
Main rotor diameter: 13.8 in.
Weight: 5.3 oz.
Price: \$299

HOBBY LOBBY HONEY BEE MARK 2

Ideally suited for the beginner, the Honey Bee Mark 2 has a longer tail boom than the original Honey Bee and it also has a metal-ball swashplate and a fiberglass head stiffener for crisp control response.



HIGHLIGHTS

- Stiff rotor head
- Good maneuverability
- Good value

SPECIFICATIONS

Model: Honey Bee Mark 2
Distributor: Hobby Lobby International
Main rotor diameter: 20.3 in.
Weight: 10.2 oz.
Price: \$179

KYOSHO CALIBER M24

While the batteries are charging, add the decals to the neat looking, semi-scale Schweitzer 300C body and you will be all set to go. Kyosho has been pioneering electric helis for a long time, and the Caliber M24 takes advantage of the latest improvements in electronics and batteries. I especially like this heli for its solid and stable flight characteristics and appealing scale looks. A training gear set is included for your first helicopter excursions.

HIGHLIGHTS

- Great scale looks
- Simple fixed-pitch rotor head
- Fully assembled

SPECIFICATIONS

Model: Caliber M24
Manufacturer: Kyosho
Main rotor diameter: 19.6 in.
Weight: 13 oz.
Price: \$349

VENOM NIGHT RANGER II

The meanest looking heli of the lot, the Venom Night Ranger II is a sheep in wolf's clothing. Its simple yet robust construction makes it a perfect first helicopter. Sturdy and powerful, it has no problem flying outside in still air. Each Night Ranger II is factory tested, so you'll be able to enjoy it as soon as the battery is charged. You'll want to get a spare battery so you can continue your night patrol missions uninterrupted!

HIGHLIGHTS

- Performs as well as it looks
- Fixed pitch
- Easy to fly

SPECIFICATIONS

Model: Night Ranger II
Manufacturer: Venom,
Main rotor diameter: 20.9 in.
Weight: 10.5 oz.
Price: \$179

CO-AXIAL ROTOR FOR BEGINNERS

E-FLITE BLADE CX2

The Blade CX2 includes the helicopter, 2.4GHz DSM 5-channel transmitter, AA batteries, 2-cell 800mAh LiPo battery, charger, wall plug for the charger, mounting accessories, and screwdriver. The Blade CX2 is completely assembled and there is really nothing to do except charge the flight battery and install the AA batteries in the transmitter. The included charger is able to operate on 11V or 12V so it can be used at home or on the field.

HIGHLIGHTS

- 2.4GHz technology
- Extremely stable hover
- LiPo batteries for long flight times
- Ready-to-fly package

SPECIFICATIONS

Model: Blade CX2
Manufacturer: E-flite
Distributor: Horizon Hobby
Main rotor diameter: 13.6 in.
Weight: 8 oz.
Price: \$190



EF HELICOPTERS M.A.S.H. RESCUE CHOPPER

The M.A.S.H. Rescue Chopper comes factory built and includes a complete package including a LiPo battery and charger. The torque-cancelling counter-rotating blades and state-of-the-art electronics make the model super stable and easy to fly. It's light and compact so it can safely be flown indoors and comes with an extra set of blades.

HIGHLIGHTS

- Sturdy construction
- Short learning curve to fly
- Complete package

SPECIFICATONS

Model: M.A.S.H. Rescue Helicopter
Manufacturer: EF Helicopters
Distributor: Global Hobby
Main rotor diameter: 13.5 in.
Weight: 8 oz.
Price: \$155



HELI-MAX AXE EZ

The Heli-Max EZ is available in six colors and can be flown by anyone. It features lightweight composite construction, micro-electronics, and an electric motor for each rotor system—all assembled and adjusted at the factory to get you in the air in an hour or so. It includes the transmitter, LiPo battery and charger.

HIGHLIGHTS

- Ready to fly out of the box
- Included instructional video
- Anyone can fly it

SPECIFICATIONS

Model: Axe EZ
Manufacturer: Heli-Max
Distributor: Great Planes
Main rotor diameter: 13.5 in.
Weight: 7.5 oz.
Price: \$170



HIROBO XRB ROBO LAMA

The first Hirobo Lama was a tether-controlled heli but this one is fully RC with no wires attached. It comes with the Swiss rescue paint scheme and its own transmitter. Spare blades and training landing gear make it ideal for beginners.

HIGHLIGHTS

- Excellent stability
- Scale detailing
- Includes training gear for beginners

SPECIFICATIONS

Model: XRB Robo Lama
Manufacturer: Hirobo
Distributor: MRC
Main rotor diameter: 13.6 in.
Weight: 6.9 oz.
Price: \$350





HIROBO XRB SKY ROBO MINI SHUTTLE

This super-stable ready-to-fly counter-rotating bird is based on the original XRB Sky Robo Mini Lama but modeled after the renowned Shuttle nitro heli. It's perfect for indoor training and it can hover, fly forwards and backwards, and perform pirouettes. The package includes a 4-channel transmitter, two servos and a LiPo battery.

HIGHLIGHTS

- Very easy to fly
- Modern good looks
- Very complete with battery and charger
- Excellent quality

SPECIFICATIONS

Model: XRB Sky Robo Shuttle
Manufacturer: Hirobo
Main rotor diameter: 13.3 in.
Weight: 6.9 oz.
Price: \$330



MEGATECH HORSE-FLY

The Horse-Fly is relatively large for a micro heli so it is easy to see and well suited for flying outdoors. It is a replica of the full-size Lama heli but it has a beginner-friendly twin-rotor design for more stability.

HIGHLIGHTS

- Good stability
- Easy to maneuver
- Instructional DVD

SPECIFICATIONS

Model: Horse-Fly
Manufacturer: Megatech
Main rotor diameter: 18 in.
Weight: 15.1 oz.
Price: \$299



MEGATECH HOUSE-FLY 2

The Megatech House-Fly 2 is the perfect starting heli that everyone can fly from the comfort of home. The highly detailed model includes a transmitter, two 180 motors, ESC, gyro, servos, LiPo battery, and charger. This ultra-stable counter-rotating indoor trainer is perfect for mastering hovering and close-in maneuvering.

HIGHLIGHTS

- Ready to fly
- Included LiPo battery and quick wall charger
- Well-detailed manual
- Simple to control

SPECIFICATIONS

Model: House-Fly 2
Manufacturer: Megatech
Main rotor diameter: 13.5 in.
Length: 14.5 in.
Weight: 8 oz.
Price: \$155

NINE EAGLES EXPLORER AND NIGHT EAGLE

Both of these helis use the same mechanics but different canopies. The Explorer is based on the popular Lama design while the Night Eagle has a full body with functioning navigation lights. Designed as entry-level helis, they are very easy to fly.

HIGHLIGHTS	SPECIFICATIONS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Complete package ■ Easy to fly ■ Extra rotor blades included 	<p>Model: Eagle Explorer and Night Eagle</p> <p>Manufacturer: Nine Eagles</p> <p>Distributor: Bob Smith Industries</p> <p>Main rotor diameter: 13.34 in.</p> <p>Weight: 7.33 oz.</p> <p>Price: \$180</p>



COLLECTIVE PITCH FOR EXPERTS

ALIGN T-REX 450 SA

The T-Rex comes out of the box 95-percent factory assembled. With its aluminum head block, tail boom and landing skids, it is very rugged and has awesome 3D capability.

HIGHLIGHTS	SPECIFICATIONS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Lightweight aluminum construction ■ 3D capable ■ Auto-rotation system 	<p>Model: T-Rex 450 SA</p> <p>Manufacturer: Align</p> <p>Distributor: Horizon Hobby</p> <p>Main rotor diameter: 27.6 in.</p> <p>Weight: 24 oz.</p> <p>Price: \$200</p>



EF HELICOPTERS CYPHER 3D EP

The Cypher comes 95-percent assembled in its own carrying box; even the decals are already applied to the canopy. All you have to do is add your own radio, three microsensors, gyro and battery pack. A brushless motor and ESC are included.

HIGHLIGHTS	SPECIFICATIONS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Light and robust ■ Excellent engineering ■ Outstanding flight performance 	<p>Model: Cypher 3D EP</p> <p>Manufacturer: EF Helicopters</p> <p>Distributor: Global Hobby</p> <p>Main rotor diameter: 27.3 in.</p> <p>Weight: 29 oz.</p> <p>Price: \$230</p>





E-FLITE BLADE CP PRO

An enhanced version of the E-flite Blade CP, the Pro version features CCPM control with Bell-Hiller mixing for faster response. It comes with everything and almost no build time is required.

HIGHLIGHTS

- Symmetrical main rotor blades
- Good maneuverability
- Simple and light construction

SPECIFICATIONS

Model: Blade CP Pro
Manufacturer: E-flite
Distributor: Horizon Hobby
Main rotor diameter: 20.25 in.
Weight: 10.5 oz.
Price: \$250



HELI-MAX AXE CP

The Heli-Max Axe comes completely assembled and ready to go. There's nothing else needed to fly. It's easy to set up for beginners or for more advanced flight performance. It comes with good instructions and an instructional DVD.

HIGHLIGHTS

- Amazing value
- Good maneuverability
- Completely ready to go with DVD instructions

SPECIFICATIONS

Model: Heli-Max Axe CP
Distributor: Great Planes
Main rotor diameter: 20.75 in.
Weight: 16.5 oz.
Price: \$200

**ONLINE
EXTRA**

Go to radiocontrol-helicopter.com for more info on types of rotor heads



KYOSHO CALIBER 400XP

This high-performance 3D machine has the punch of a nitro machine packed in a compact package and can be flown almost anywhere. It comes with many upgrades as standard equipment.

HIGHLIGHTS

- Excellent flight performance
- Smooth tail rotor
- Good fit and finish

SPECIFICATIONS

Model: Caliber 400 XP
Manufacturer: Kyosho
Main rotor diameter: 25.8 in.
Weight: 26 oz.
Price: \$279



KYOSHO CALIBER 450V

Drawing its heritage directly from the Kyosho Caliber 90, this smaller electric version has the same crisp precision as its big brother. Suitable for intermediate to advanced pilots, it's built to last.

HIGHLIGHTS

- Push-pull control system
- Precision tail mechanics
- Carbon-fiber stacked frame design

SPECIFICATIONS

Model: Caliber 450V
Manufacturer: Kyosho
Main rotor diameter: 28.2 in.
Weight: 26.6 oz.
Price: \$430



RCER INTERNATIONAL CO., LTD. DRAGONUS II

With its futuristic windowless design, the Dragonus II has a unique appearance but is easy to assemble. The heli features a main rotor head with Bell-Hiller mixing and a belt-driven tail rotor.

HIGHLIGHTS

- Outstanding agility
- Smooth and quiet
- Easy to build

SPECIFICATIONS

Model: Dragonus II
Manufacturer: RCer International Co., Ltd.
Distributor: Hobby Lobby
Main rotor diameter: 28.5 in.
Weight: 27.5 oz.
Price: \$158



VENOM NIGHT RANGER 3D XL

Venom continually updates its heli technology, and when the Ranger 3D XL came out it was one of the smoothest 3D ARF machines available. The craftsmanship is amazing, the tail rotor is belt driven, and the rotor head is very precise. ::

HIGHLIGHTS

- Aluminum frame and tail boom
- Outstanding performance
- Phenomenal craftsmanship

SPECIFICATIONS

Model: Night Ranger 3D XL
Manufacturer: Venom
Main rotor diameter: 24.6 in.
Weight: 21.5 oz.
Price: \$500

See the Source Guide for manufacturers' contact information.