

The PL Series

Infrared lasers



The PL series of continuous wave (CW), grating tuned, infrared gas lasers sets the standard for high power, stable sources for a wide variety of applications from molecular spectroscopy, non-linear optics, interferometry, process control, atmospheric studies, plasma density measurements and much, much more.



The infrared has long been dubbed the "Cinderella" spectral region due to the low level of blackbody emission at long wavelengths but this was changed with the development of carbon dioxide (CO_2) and carbon monoxide (CO) lasers in the 1970's.

In the same way that every individual can be identified by their unique fingerprint, the infrared spectrum of a sample uniquely defines the constituent molecules present.

The PL-series of lasers include grating tuned CO_2 lasers with a step tunable wavelength from $9\mu\text{m} - 11\mu\text{m}$ with single line powers from a few Watts (Model PL2), to 50W (Model PL5) and even to 180W (Model PL6) each characterised by excellent amplitude and frequency stability for the most technically challenging tasks.

The PL2 laser lends itself to flexible tailoring to scientific applications. For example, if used with our 184T pump station, the laser head can be filled with the desired isotopic gas mix which gives the user access a range of alternative wavelengths.

Our PL3 model is unprecedented in today's market. It operates as either a CO_2 (output power up to 25W) or CO (with output $>1\text{W}$ over the range $5.1 - 6.0 \mu\text{m}$) laser. Using different isotopic gas fills the PL3 laser can give up to 1,000 lines across the infrared.

The higher power PL-series lasers can be used to optically pump polar gases (for example methanol, formic acid, etc) to create Far Infrared (FIR) laser emission. The FIR/TeraHertz region ($40\mu\text{m} - 1.2\text{mm}$, 7.5 to 0.25THz) can be used for temperature measurement of fusion reactor plasma. There are also many applications in homeland security and scanning, scattering density measurements, radar modelling, etc.

PL2-M / PL2-S

The PL2-M is a new, compact version of the previous model PL2. It has been significantly reduced in size without sacrificing any of the performance specifications. The PL2-M has a maximum rated power of 10W and the PL2-S has a maximum rated power of 1W on the strongest lines and more than 60 lines are available. The laser is

operated in sealed off mode with initial gas lifetime guarantee of 12 months. A vacuum valve is fitted to allow user replenishment, with standard or isotopic gas mixtures for ultimate flexibility and ease of operation at lowest cost. Operation is via a hand held control console for laser ON/OFF, discharge current (with liquid crystal display) and piezo voltage.



PL3

The PL3 laser operates sealed off on low gain CO transitions in the range 5.2μm to 6.0μm under hazard free, near room temperature conditions. It features a UHV sealed, split discharge tube with both the diffraction grating and piezo mounted output coupler within the vacuum envelope for lowest loss operation.

As with the PL2-M the PL3 gas is user replenishable. By changing the cavity optics and gas mixture, the PL3 can be converted into a tunable CO₂ laser covering the 9μm to 11μm region. Typical single line powers are 1.0W CO and 20W CO₂. The PL3 is driven by the compact, LPS-D dual output switch mode power supply.

PL5

The PL5 is a flowing gas CO₂ laser producing single line powers in excess of 50W and operating on more than 80 individual lines. The cavity optics consist of two ZnSe Brewster windows, a gold coated diffraction grating and a ZnSe output coupler. The laser head is supplied with all necessary vacuum couplings, valves and a capsule gauge to enable flow operation. A suitable vacuum pump, the model 215, is available to complete the system

For CW and chopped output operation, the LPS-5 power supply is available. If pulsed output is required, in addition to the other two modes, the PL5 can be supplied with the versatile PS4P power unit.

Q-Switched operation of the PL5 can be achieved with the PL5-QS option. This is a six sided polygon scanning mirror assembly which mounts in the intercavity space between the grating and rear Brewster window.

Depending on laser operating conditions, pulses of typically 2kW peak power and pulse widths of 200ns are achieved at frequencies up to 1kHz.



PL6

The highest power tunable CO₂ laser currently available is the model PL6, offering single line power up to 180W and more than 90 lines across 9μm to 11μm. The flowing gas laser head is a single U-folded design with twin discharge tubes. The laser resonator is passively stabilised with a 5bar invar support frame which is decoupled from the laser base by orthogonal Rose bearings.

Cavity optics comprise of a gold coated diffraction grating and piezo mounted output coupler. Within the cavity, two high reflectivity folding mirrors reflect the beam internally and two ZnSe Brewster windows are used to seal the discharge tubes. The PL6 is driven by the LPS2000 dual output power supply.

Technical Specifications

	CO ₂ (9.1-10.9μm)					CO (5.2-6.2μm)
	PL2-S	PL2-M	PL3	PL5	PL6	PL3
Output Power (W) – flowing	–	–	–	50	180	–
Output Power (W) – sealed	1	10	20	–	–	1
Number of lines	50	60	80	80	90	60
M ²	1.25	1.25	1.35	1.25	1.5	n/a
Beam Divergence – 1/e ² (mrad)	<7.5	<6.5	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.5
Beam Diameter – 1/e ² (mm)	4.0	4.8	7.5	7.5	11	5.0
Polarisation	Vertical	Vertical	Horizontal	Vertical	Vertical	Horizontal
Amplitude Stability	<±1%	<±1%	<±1%	<±1%	<±2%	<±1%
Frequency Stability (kHz/sec)	200	200	60	500	500	60
Frequency Stability (MHz/10min) (actively stabilized)	±1	±1	±1	±2	n/a	n/a
Tuning Mechanism	Piezo-ceramic length tuner and diffraction grating wavelength selection					
Cavity length (cm)	42	77	178	183	388	178
Dimensions (cm) L	65	110	221	220	220	221
Dimensions (cm) W	12	12	52	22	45	52
Dimensions (cm) H	13	13	37	22	32	37
Weight (Kg)	11.8	18	100	36	125	100
Gas Requirements	Sealed/user replenishable	Sealed/user replenishable	Sealed/user replenishable	1.2 lit/min (flowing gas)	9 lit/min	Sealed/user replenishable

A wide range of accessories are available for the PL Series. These include:

Laser Stabilisers – For applications demanding excellent medium and long term stability, an active stabiliser may be required. This will compensate for laser output fluctuations caused by changes in ambient conditions and lock the variation in laser frequency or power to a value close to the passive jitter.

Edinburgh Instruments has designed a family of active stabilisation techniques appropriate to the type of laser and operating conditions.

Laser Pumping and Refilling Systems – All flowing gas laser systems are supplied with the necessary valves, gauges and vacuum couplings for simple connection to the system vacuum pump. A range of turbo molecular and dry pumps are available.

Gas Mixing Stations – Designed to allow mixing and metering of up to 3 component gases from independent gas cylinders. These comprise of 3 inlet ports with individual flow meters or needle valves for gas mixing or gas flow operation.

The PL5 and PL6 can be used in combination with our FIR optically pumped lasers.



PROTECTIVE GLASSES ARE AVAILABLE FOR THE PL SERIES OF CO₂ LASER.

Customer support is available worldwide, from the moment you enquire through to our post sales installation support.

For more information contact us at sales@edinst.com or visit www.edinburghphotonics.com

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