

# Extreme How-To

The Enthusiast's Guide to Home Improvement

## TRANSOM NOTE

REPLACING AN  
ENTRY DOOR  
AND TRANSOM  
WINDOW

**PLUS:**

BUILDING BASICS FOR AN  
OPEN RAIL BALUSTRADE

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PRODUCT PREVIEW

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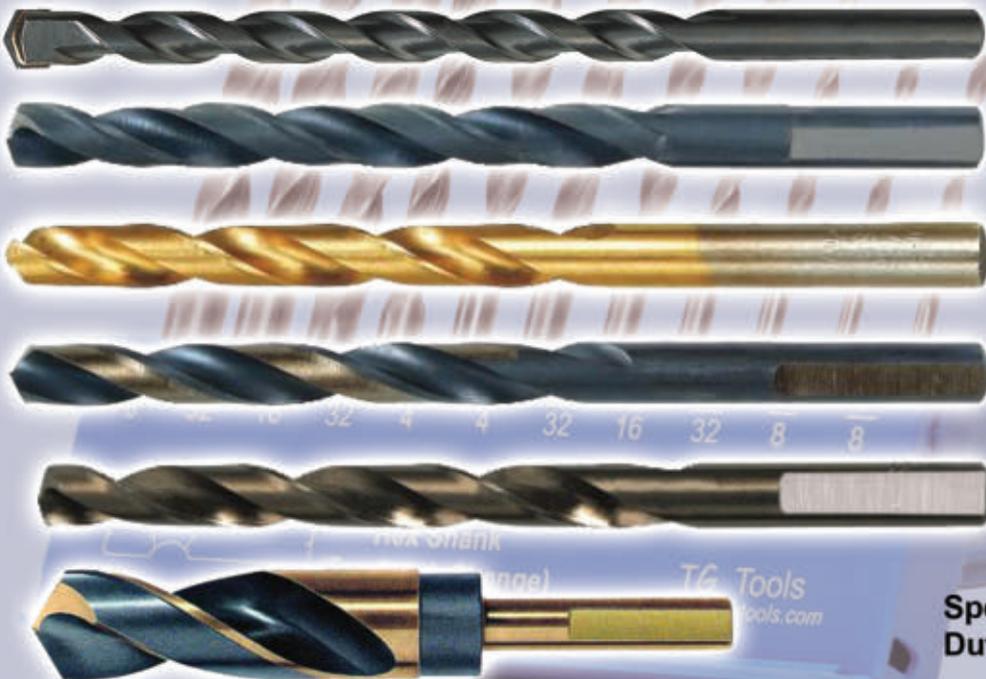
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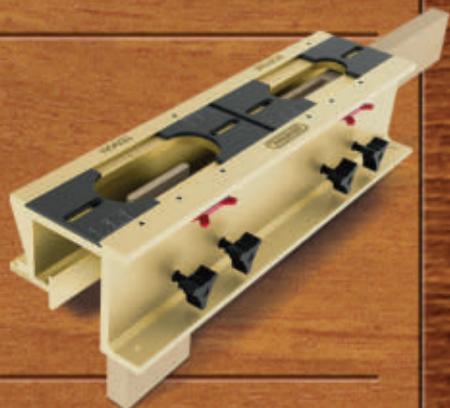
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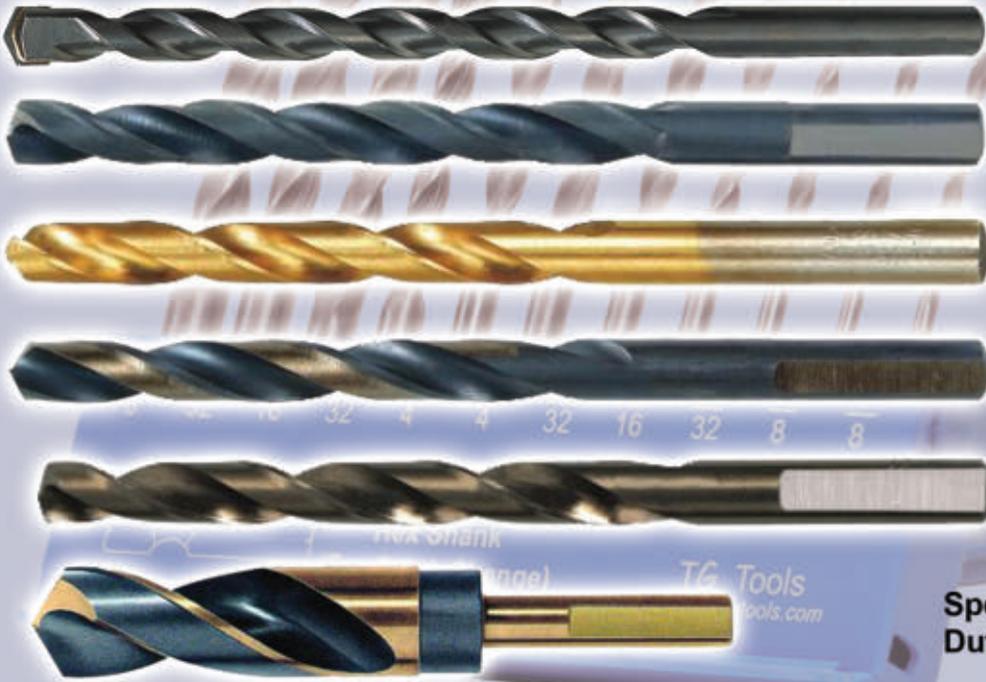
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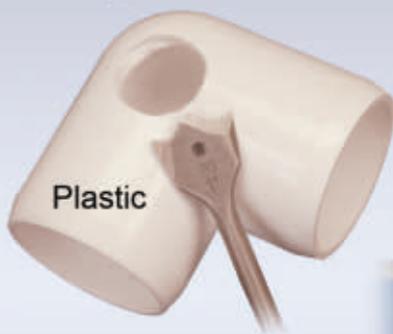
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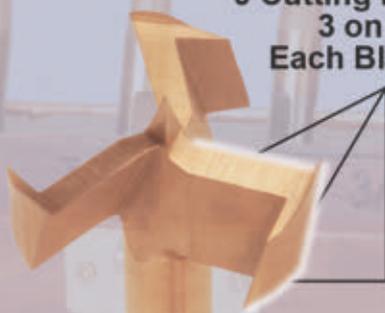
**In Acrylic:**

- **No cracking** Drilling Acrylic
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Everyone on the *EHT* staff is eager to thaw out, put the winter weather behind us and get a jump on springtime projects. If you're planning a major outdoor improvement, keep in mind that the earlier you start, the more likely you'll finish up before the scorching days of summer.

Spring is an ideal time to build a deck or a covered patio. Building these outdoor living spaces makes for fun, fresh-air projects that also add value to your home. Begin construction as soon as the weather is nice enough to comfortably work outdoors. Large projects tend to pose the most unexpected challenges and delays, so you'll likely appreciate all the extra time you allow yourself before the temperature spikes.

Building a storage shed or even a dog house makes an enjoyable outdoor project, too. If you're always tripping over your tools, it's nice to have a handy place to store them neatly out of the way. And, if you have a defiant indoor dog that continues to tinkle on the kitchen floor despite the fact that you've scolded him a million times, then you'll have a new place of shame to banish him to.

Another idea is to plant a vegetable garden. I've had a small backyard garden for years and have produced a very small amount of produce. Once the national food supply dries up in the wake of a zombie apocalypse, I should be able to feed my family a few cucumbers and tomatoes for lunch. What to plant and when depends on where you live, but the time to start planning is early in the season. A little before the last frost date, you can start

planting potatoes, broccoli, carrots, kale, cabbage and lettuce. After the last frost, you can plant tomatoes, peppers, squash and cucumbers.

From sidewalks and swing-sets to gazebos and treehouses, it's finally time to take those outdoor ideas you've been brewing up all winter and turn them into reality.

Good luck with your spring projects,



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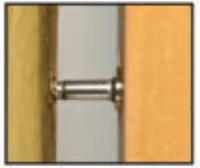
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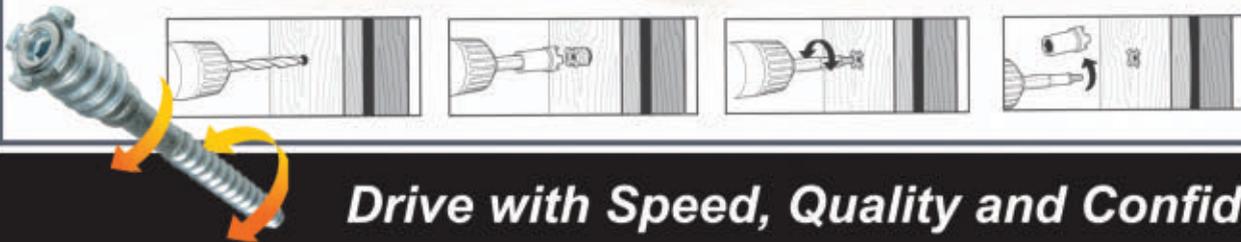
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**Q:** What's the easiest way to run electrical lines through a finished wall for a new outlet?

**A:** If you're running the wire up from a basement, you can probably cut a hole in the floor plate to feed the wire through. From the attic you may be able to do the same through the top plate. An assistant to help pull the cable through the walls will help immensely. If you're working alone, bend a coat hanger and hook it on the outlet cut-out to retrieve the wire from below. If you are routing wire from a higher floor downward, drop a fishing line equipped with a small weight on the end through the wall in the top floor and almost to the floor plate of the room below. Grab the line and secure it on the floor of the room that will have the outlet wall plate. A fish tape may be required in lieu of a weighted line when pulling wire through insulated walls. Fish tape, a tool available at most hardware stores, offers the right combination of flexibility and rigidity to assist pulling the wire.

**Q:** How do I install crown molding when the nails won't reach the ceiling joists?

**A:** Due to the direction of the ceiling joists, two walls in the room won't have the same solid framing for secure fastening. One trick is to predrill and drive a 16D nail at an angle to hit the framing at the top of the wall. Another option is to cut and install triangular filler blocks that fit flush behind the crown molding. Nail the filler blocks into the wall studs, and then nail the crown molding over the blocks.

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snap into alignment with the two copper bars inside the track, which supply the electrical current to the individual lights. The track lights, which have dual contact points, twist into place the same way as the live-end connector. This allows you to install multiple lights and reposition them along the track to direct the light right where you want it.

**Q:** I'm installing additional loose-fill insulation in my attic. How far away from light fixtures should it be kept?

**A:** Electrical codes generally require that insulation be kept at least 3 inches away from heat-producing fixtures. A common solution is to nail 2x blocking around the fixtures perpendicular to and flush with the ceiling joists. The blocking creates a small protective wall to keep the insulation away from the light. **EHT**

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## **BOB-CAT QUICKCAT STAND-ON MOWER**

BOB-CAT announces the introduction of its first stand-on mower, the QuickCat. With a nimble design that places the platform close to the drive axles, the QuickCat features ergonomic handling that reduces vibration and rider fatigue, which is ideal to provide pros or large-acreage homeowners with all-day comfort



It's been a long, cold winter, and the *Extreme How-to* staff is glad to see it go. As you thaw out and plan this spring's outdoor projects, take a look at these new lawn and landscape tools for a little inspiration.

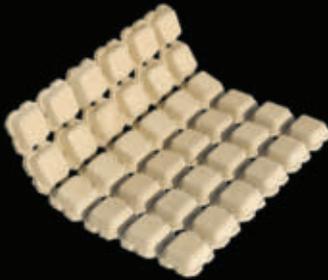
## **WORLD'S FIRST CORDLESS ELECTRIC CUT-OFF MACHINE, THE STIHL TSA 230**

There's something new under the springtime sun. Powered by a 36-volt lithium-ion battery, the TSA 230 Stihl Cutquik is a game-changer for heavy-duty hardscape and concrete projects. This slick

new portable cut-off machine offers easy electric starting and powerful cutting performance in a lightweight, compact package that can be used indoors because it produces no emissions. It features a semi-automatic belt tensioner, and a reversible cutting arm lets you cut in the inboard or outboard position. The quick-connect, onboard



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and stability. The new QuickCat was designed to deliver exceptional performance as a primary mower or to complement a fleet of zero-turn radius (ZTR) mowers. Features include 8-mph mowing speed and 10.5-mph transport speed, extra-large drive tires for a smoother ride and better traction, and low placement of the 6.5-gallon fuel tank for improved balance on uneven ground. The extra-strong DuraDeck mower deck is backed by a limited life-time warranty. Learn more at [www.bobcatturf.com](http://www.bobcatturf.com).

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- Standard kit includes 12 oak wood stair treads, a landing, a complete handrail, and all necessary hardware and connectors.
- Diameters available include a 5 ft. 3 in. model and a 4 ft. 3 in. model.
- The height range for the standard kit is adjustable from 8 ft. 3 in. to 10 ft. 2 7/8 in. and with additional components, can be installed to a maximum height of 11 ft. 9 5/16 in.
- Powder coat finished painted in either Hi-Gloss Black or Hi-Gloss White.
- Can be installed in a clockwise or counterclockwise rotation.
- Stair treads and landing are made of solid Oak wood with a natural stain and a polyurethane protective coating.
- Balcony rail kits are available in matching color and horizontal baluster and railing design.
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# Frame Your Flat Screen



By Danny Lipford

A decorative frame for a flat-panel wall-mounted TV is essentially a picture frame for the electronic device.

You begin creating it by measuring the dimensions of the television itself. The structural frame is made from 1-by stock. We're using 1x6, but you can vary the board width depending on the depth of the TV and how much you want to cover.

The box will have mitered corners with inside dimensions that are 1/8 inch larger than the outside dimensions of the TV, so be sure to make your measurements to the short point of the miter cuts. The box is assembled on a flat surface with glue and finish nails.

Next, cut the decorative molding which will be attached to the front

of the frame. To leave the 1/8-in. reveal where the molding overlaps the frame, so we're adding twice that amount—or 1/4 inch—to the dimensions we cut. These miter cuts are made on the flat side of the molding so the pieces create the picture-frame look when they all go together. The frame can be fastened to the box with finish nails.

Once the frame is complete, stain or paint the frame and box unit with whatever style best matches your décor. We chose a dry brush faux finish similar to the fireplace mantel near the TV.

After that, apply self-adhesive felt strips on the inside of the frame box to protect the TV from scratches.

Apply an elastic band attached with eye hooks across the back to

prevent the frame from sliding off the front of the set.

The result is a TV that's a decorative accessory and not just an electronic eyesore. **EHT**



*Build the box with inside dimensions 1/8" larger than the TV.*

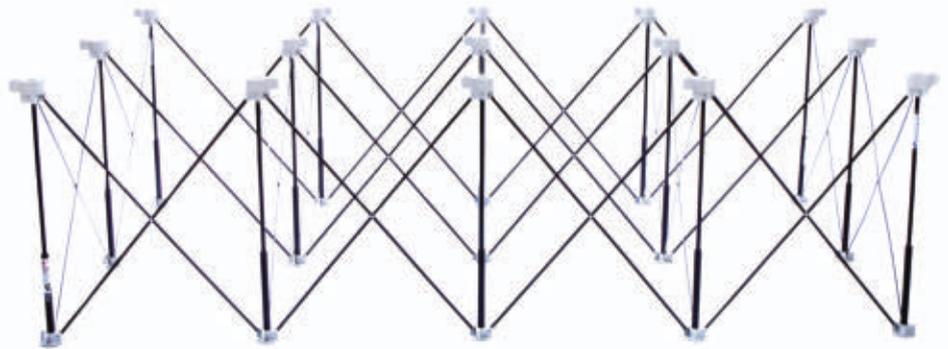


*Cut 45-deg. miters.*

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Apply wood glue to the miter joints.



Assemble on a very flat surface to ensure tight joints. Use corner clamps if necessary.



Fasten the the miters with brad nails driven in a cross pattern.



The molding should reveal 1/8" of the box's inner edge.



Cut inside miters with the long points on the thick edge of the molding.



Assemble the molding pieces for a picture-frame look.



Apply glue at the miters.



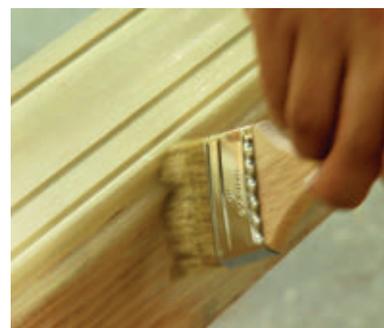
Carefully fasten the joints with small finish nails or an air-driven pin nailer.



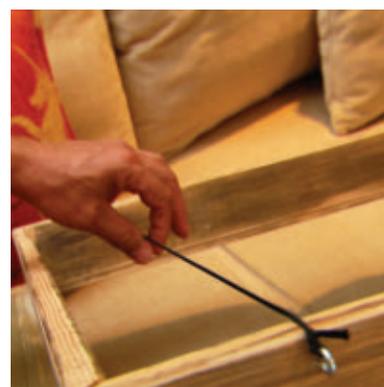
Apply felt strips to the inside of the box.



Apply your finish of choice.



Screw eyehooks to the rear of the box.



Fasten a band to the eye-hooks to hold the frame onto the TV.

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**TODAY'S HOMEOWNER**

Danny Lipford is a leading home-improvement expert, friend of *Extreme How-To* and fellow Alabama resident. He hosts an Emmy-nominated, weekly, nationally syndicated TV show, *Today's Homeowner with Danny Lipford*, which is now in its



17th season on over 200 stations nationwide. In 2009, he became the host of the weekly, nationally syndicated *Today's Homeowner with Danny Lipford* radio show. And, on top of all these activities, Danny has contributed this cool carpentry

project to the latest issue of *EHT*. Keep up with all of Danny Lipford's home-improvement tips and techniques at [www.todayshomeowner.com](http://www.todayshomeowner.com).

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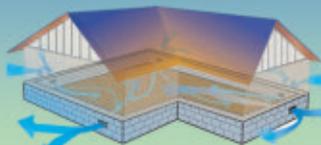
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*Building  
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# OPEN RAIL REVIEW

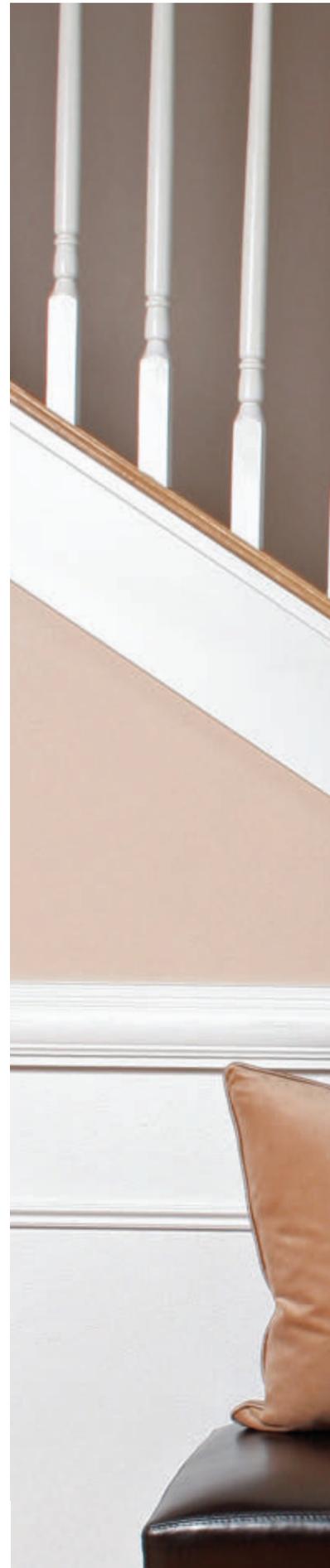
By Larry Walton, Photos by Mark Walton

If you've ever seen a saloon gunfight in an old western movie, it more than likely involved a couple of cowboys falling through a handrail. In their search for revenge, the next of kin should begin with the carpenter whose guardrail couldn't withstand some rousing piano music let alone the lean of a wounded cowboy. We must build better open rail systems if we are going to keep cowboys and our own family safe.

Open rail balustrades often occupy prominent positions front and center where guests are greeted, which is why the intricate woodwork they require are well worth the time and expense. They also perform very important safety functions.

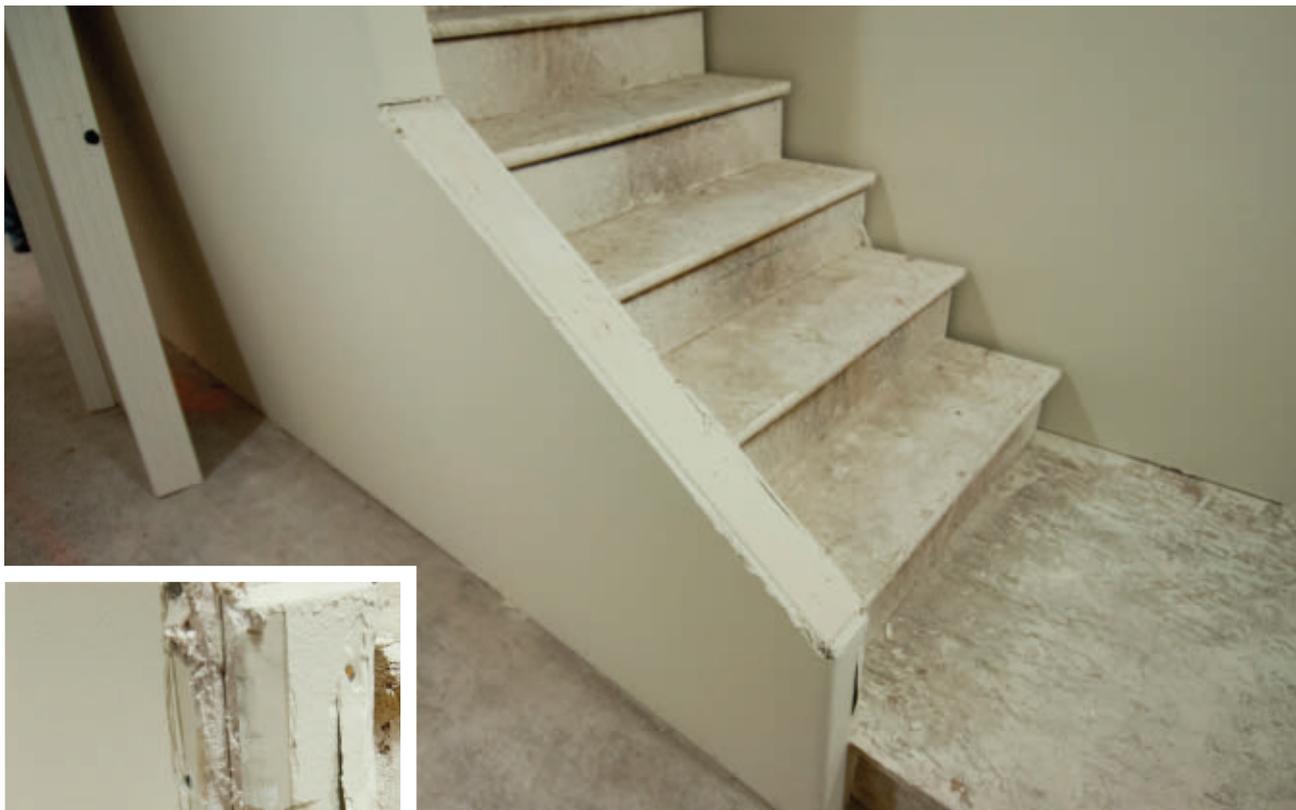
Open rail systems come in lots of styles and sizes. In broad terms, the systems are either open tread (where balusters sit directly on the tread) or knee wall (where balusters sit on a little curb wall that covers the ends of the treads). Both of these styles can be over-the-post systems, which provide an unbroken handgrip throughout all of the landings and turns of the staircase. Or they can be post-to-post systems, which end each rail section at a newel post and resume on another side of the post.

Regardless of the style, there are important safety standards that open rail balustrades must meet. These have to do with strength to prevent failure, rail-size guidelines to provide usable grip, opening sizes to stop little heads and torsos from passing through, and proper elevations that prevent bodies from falling over the top.





# OPEN RAIL REVIEW



With these major considerations addressed, there are plenty of stylistic options to consider in newel post designs, rail shapes and baluster types. Rails can terminate into a wall, into a rosette or into a half-newel fastened to the wall. Balusters can be doweled at the base on a flat wall cap or sit in a plowed shoe rail, which itself can sit on the wall cap or be suspended parallel with the handrail. Baluster tops can

*The project shown in this article is a simple handrail system that makes a great primer on open rails. The knee wall requires that all of the balusters are the same length. The one newel post has a good location to be strongly anchored into the face of the knee wall and into the riser of the landing.*

*We had to remove drywall and corner bead from the end of the knee wall. Drywall can break down over time and get too squishy for anchoring a newel post in this location.*

be in a plow on the underside of the rail or they can act as dowels that penetrate the drilled bottom of a rail.

In many ways, our featured project is about as simple as an open rail balustrade can get. This post-to-post balustrade (with only one post) has square balusters, a plowed handrail and a shoe rail built on a knee wall.

When it comes to baluster spacing, be sure to make it according to code. This generally requires spacing tight enough that a 4-in. ball must not be able to pass through at any point.



*After getting to bare framing at the end of the knee wall, we measured the thickness of the knee wall in several places to determine the width of our wall cap.*

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# OPEN RAIL REVIEW

## LAYOUT

I use two methods to calculate baluster layout. In Method One, you can calculate the baluster spacing by measuring the level run, and dividing it by the desired spacing

plus the thickness of a baluster (e.g. 4" space plus 1-5/16-in. baluster = 5-5/16) to get an estimate of the number of balusters. Then, multiply the number of balusters by the hypotenuse

of a rake cut of a single baluster and subtract that number from the total length of the rail (measured on the rake or along the bottom). This is the total space filled by the fillet blocks. Divide this total by the number of fillets, which is the number of balusters plus one. This gives you the fillet lengths.

For an odd number of balusters, start installing with a baluster at the center. For an even number of balusters, start at the center with a fillet. Use the fillets to space the next baluster. Keep testing the balusters as you go to see that they are plumb and adjust as needed.

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After taking a rough measurement for the length of the knee wall and the knee wall face, we ripped the wall cap material to width on the table saw and cleaned it up with a planer, sander and router.



A jigsaw was used to cut the bevel at the top end of the wall because it had to match the drywall corner bead on each side. For most of our staircases this angle is about 37 degrees.



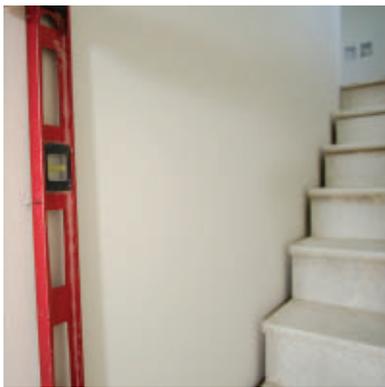
After fitting the wall cap to the vertical wall at the top end of the knee wall, we tacked it into place and used a level to mark where the bottom edge of the wall was plumb with the front face of the knee-wall framing.



Cutting a notch in the nose of the landing made room for the vertical wall piece.



We cut the end of the wall to bisect the angle where the knee-wall face meets the wall cap. The cut is usually about 27 degrees. You can cut some scrap material to test the angles ahead of time.



We started the handrail layout by finding plumb from the edge of a stair nose and marking the wall (and the level) where the top of the handrail will be—usually about 37 inches (Check your code requirements).

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# OPEN RAIL REVIEW

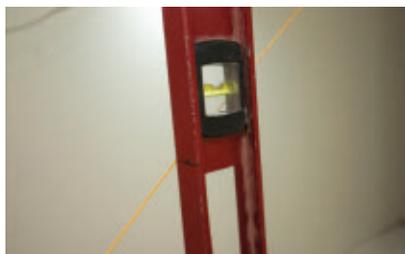
In Method Two, I estimate baluster spacing, try it with some scraps to see if the spacing measured on the run (level) is close to the maximum allowed by code. I make adjustments, mark

the top edge of each baluster location at even increments, set the balusters and manually adjust each fillet to fit. If you cut them a little oversize, you can hold each fillet alongside where

it lives, mark it and cut it to fit. This actually goes pretty quickly and there are no surprises when you get to the end of a run with too big or too small a space at the newel or the wall.



*One trick is to put a nail in the wall at the top-of-the-handrail mark and pull a string to the mark on the level as it is held plumb on the stair nosing at the bottom of the open rail run.*



*While one person holds the level plumb at the edge of the stair nose, a second person moves the string up-and-down until it intersects the mark on the level. Once at the appropriate elevation, fasten the end of the string to a nail at the floor or wall.*



*In our case, the handrail layout line terminated in the wall so we put a finish nail at a very steep angle up into the wall to make an anchor point for the end of the handrail layout string.*

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# OPEN RAIL REVIEW

Here is an overview to complete this project:

- Determine the rail height to meet code requirements as a guard rail.
- Mark two points that determine a straight line that is parallel to the rake of the stairs and is at rail height.



We used a torpedo level to transfer the handrail layout from the string to the center of the wall where the top of the handrail would terminate.

## PLUGGING COUNTER BORE HOLES



We used this plug cutter to cut plugs for the newel post with matching material.

It's a bit tricky to learn to use this type of plug cutter without a drill press, but it can be done freehand.

After cutting the plugs, we used a small screwdriver to snap them off as deeply inside the hole as possible.

When gluing the plugs into place, we turned the grain the same direction as the newel post and drove them in almost flush. We wait for the glue to dry before sanding the plugs flush with the newel post surface.

After the glue in the plugs dried, we sanded them flush with the face of the newel post.



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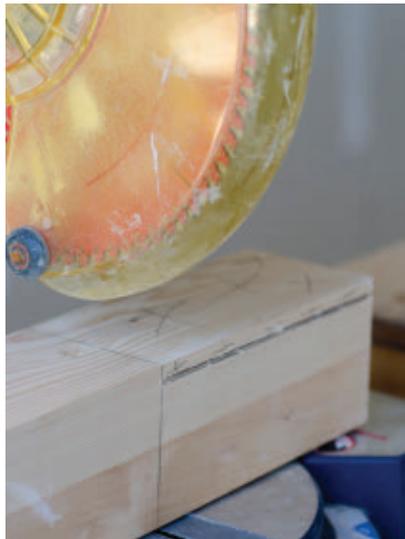
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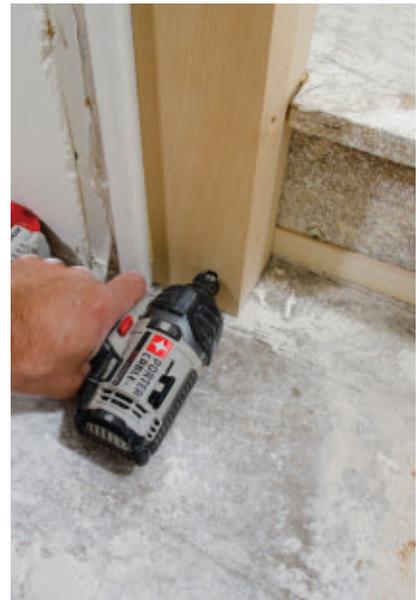
We stood the newel post in place at the end of the knee wall and used a torpedo level to mark where the handrail would intersect the newel post.



We measured from the mark on the newel post up to the desired intersection point (where we wanted the handrail to terminate), which indicated how much to cut off the base of the newel post.



After cutting the newel post to the proper height, we marked where the top of the landing intersected the post and then how much needed to be cut off so the post could slide over to the center of the knee-wall face. We cut the extra wood out of the newel post with a combination of miter saw, table saw and chisel.



Wood glue was applied to the newel post where it would touch the knee wall and the landing riser. We positioned it by checking for plumb in both directions and fastened it into place through counter-bored holes into both the knee wall and the landing riser.

## FINE-TUNE KNEE WALL FRAMING



We made this jig of 1x4 by ripping the vertical piece so it matches the top of the knee wall framing plus the thickness of the wall cap.

We used a small scrap of wall cap material to test the knee wall in relation to the jig to see if it ran parallel to the stair nosings.

On all of our jobs you will find a supply of these flat shims that are 1.25" x 3.5" of varying thickness.

We used the jig and a scrap of wall cap material to determine which flat shims to use.

We used 1/4" crown staples to fasten the flat shims to the knee wall framing.

We then used a straight edge to bridge between the flat shims at both ends of the knee wall. The gaps between the wall framing and straight edge were filled at 16-in. increments. The result is framing that is flat and parallel with the stair nosing.

We also used the jig to mark the top edge of the stair skirt, which will serve as the trim board along the inside of the knee wall.



# OPEN RAIL REVIEW

- Cap the knee wall so it is parallel to the rake of the stairs with a vertical face that is plumb.
- Use the handrail layout line and the face of the knee wall to determine the length of the newel post.
- Cut and solidly anchor the newel post so it is plumb in both directions.
- Fit and attach the shoe rail and handrail.
- Install the balusters spaced to code requirements and cut to fit the shoe and hand rails when installed plumb.
- Cut and install fillets and trim boards.
- Fill, spackle, sand, caulk, prime and paint. **EHT**



After fitting the handrail, we tacked it into the newel post at the bottom and counter-bored for a long screw where the rail meets the wall. Driving a long screw through the rail and into the framing is an important detail to make a strong connection.



With top of the rail anchored, we returned to the tacked-in-place bottom of the rail and more solidly attached it to the newel post with a long screw through the plow and into the newel post.



The shoe rail was nailed with 2-1/2" finish nails in the center of the knee wall. We often use a piece of scrap material as a pattern to test the angles and the lengths of the rails before cutting the rails. Unlike a lot of other material on the job, you usually don't have additional rail on the jobsite to cover for a bad cut.



A scrap of material was used to test-fit a baluster, which allowed us to get the correct angle and lengths. Be sure to test the baluster pattern at both ends of the balustrade. A minor difference in knee-wall or rail-rake angle can affect the baluster length from one end to the other.



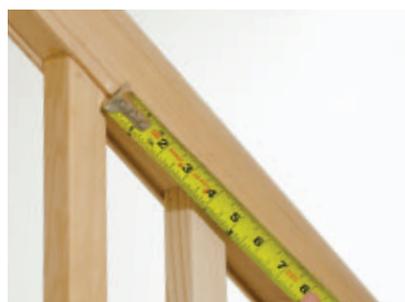
We used the end cuts from a few balusters to test the baluster layout by standing them in the shoe rail.



We used a 2' level to test each baluster at its location before gluing and nailing them into place.



After gluing the top and bottom of the baluster and fitting them into the rails at the layout marks, we used 1-1/4" finish nails to toenail the balusters from the obtuse side.



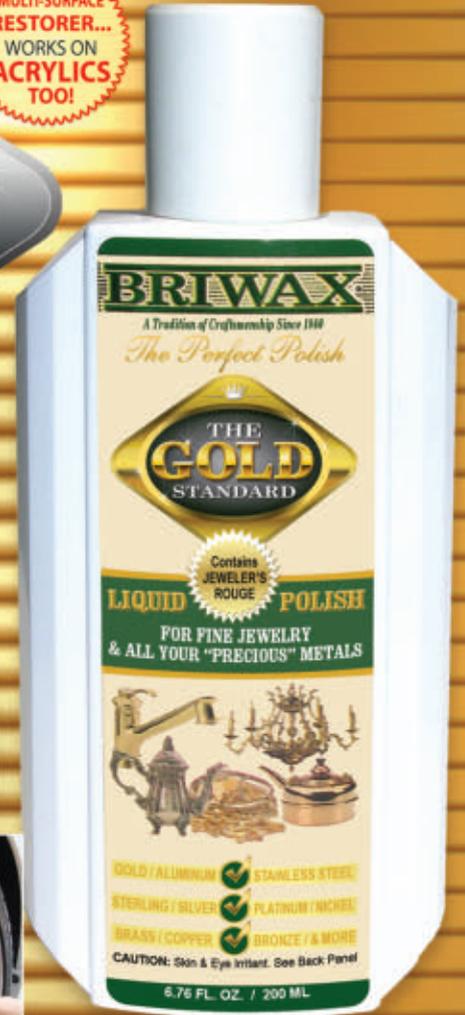
We measured the fillet lengths to get an estimate of how long to cut the fillets and then cut them about 1/8" longer than needed.

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# OPEN RAIL REVIEW



We held the fillets up flush with the bottom of the rail and marked where they overlapped the next baluster, then trimmed them to length. It's a good idea to number the backside of each fillet and put a matching number inside the plow where the fillet belongs on the rail.

When a fillet fits perfectly, we glue the backside, put it in position and nail it at the obtuse angle end.



Notice that the stair skirt covers the drywall at the inside of the staircase and is fit to a 1/4" reveal on the knee wall cap.

## Finally! A tool that relieves headaches.

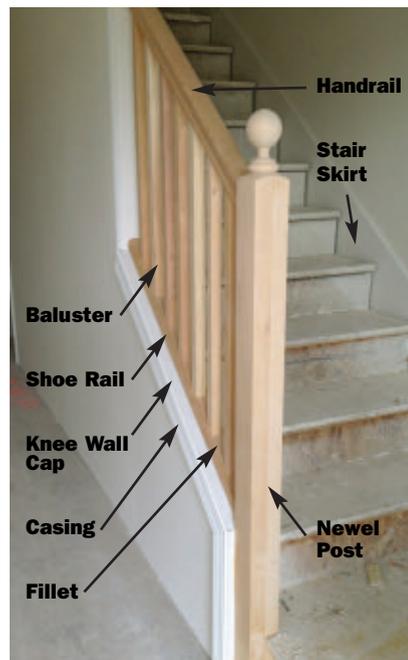


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With all of the woodworking pieces in place, the trim on the outside of the knee wall, and the stair skirt on the inside of the knee wall, it's time to fill the nail holes and caulk the seams in preparation for paint.

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# TRANSOM NOTE

By Matt Weber

Our latest door-replacement project was a taller order than usual. This particular entry upgrade came with an overhead transom. Essentially an extra window above the door, the transom opens up the living space, and along with the new door's insulated glass option, brings much more natural light into the home. The transom first had to be attached to the pre-hung door for installation, and here's how we tackled the project.

## OUT WITH THE OLD

The homeowner had a few problems with the old metal door. Over time, impact damage to a metal door can result in dents and dings that hard are to ignore, and this door had a few. Furthermore, a previous homeowner had painted the door (improperly), and the afternoon sun that blazed down upon the black paint each afternoon would cook the coating and cause it to peel. Lastly, the homeowner simply didn't like the big dark slab that blocked out the light and the outdoor scenery.

The new door and transom were ordered from



*Replacing  
an Entry Door  
and Transom  
Window*



# TRANSOM NOTE



*The storm door simply unscrews from the jamb. We recycled the old doors at Habitat for Humanity.*

Therma-tru. The pre-hung insulated entry door comes from the company's Smooth Star product line and is made of rugged compression-molded fiberglass with deep, detailed panels. The design creates attractive shadow lines and contours on the door's surface, and the fiberglass resists damage from day-to-day traffic and will never rust or corrode. The homeowner selected "chord" style glass from Therma-tru's many glass options, and used it for both the door and transom.

The old entryway included a storm door, which we unscrewed from the jamb and removed. We then took out the old entry door, which was a little more complicated. Keep in mind any electronics that are associated with the door, such as a hard-wired security system. Disconnect the system and be careful not to accidentally cut the wire. It may help to tape the wire out of the way while you replace the door.

Take the door off its hinges and then back out the hinge screws to

remove the long stud screws that hold the jamb to the framing. Remove screws from the sill as well as the bolts of the door strike. Use a razor to cut loose all caulked joints. Pry off either the casing on the inside or the brick molding on the outside to allow removal of the jamb. If the jamb is still not loose in the framing, then additional fasteners must be holding it to the house. Run a reciprocating saw with a long blade between the jamb and framing to cut through any remaining fasteners. This should free the door so you can tip it out of the rough opening for removal.

We donated the old storm door and metal entry door to our local Habitat for Humanity branch, where they will be reconditioned and repurposed by other homeowners.

## INSTALLATION

The entryway in this project was protected from rain by a deep overhang, plus the jamb was set off the ground on the lip of the mortared house wall. This design



*Disconnect any electrical security system wires.*



*Remove the door from the hinges. Unscrew the hinge screws from the wall studs.*



*Cut the caulking loose on the brick molding.*



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# TRANSOM NOTE

keeps the bottom of the door from exposure to pooling water, but if this is not the case for your door then we recommend installing a sill pan in the rough opening beneath the new door.

Prepare the rough opening by checking all corners for square. Double-check by comparing diagonal measurements. The rough opening should be frame height plus 1/2 inch, and frame width

plus 1/2 to 3/4 inch. Use a 6-ft. level to confirm that the framing and walls are plumb (front to back and left to right). Fix any problems now using shim boards (or by adjusting the studs). Also, make sure the subfloor is level and solid. Scrape, sand or fill as required.

Next step is to assemble the door and transom, which arrive as two separate pieces. Find a very flat work surface to lay down the door, and protect it with a blanket to prevent scratches. Liberally apply beads of sealant between the door top and transom bottom. We used Lexel, which is a liquefied rubber sealant that sticks to virtually anything and remains flexible when it dries. Position the transom onto the door and flush with the jamb. Use an extra pair of hands (or clamps) to hold the seam tight while you screw the two pieces together using metal nailing plates



*Pry off the brick molding.*



*Unscrew the threshold from the subfloor.*

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*Cut away remaining fasteners with a reciprocating saw.*



*Scrape away excess insulation or caulking.*



*Assemble the door and transom on a very flat surface.*

*The transom comes separately and must be attached to the door jamb.*



*Pull the jamb out of the rough opening.*



along the jamb. For a solid connection, fill all the holes in the metal plates with short screws into the mating jambs

Before placing the door, caulk the subfloor using a liberal amount of quality sealant. (Also caulk the rear of the brick molding if it's preattached.) Sit the threshold over the sealant and tip the pre-hung door into the rough opening.

Temporarily secure the unit in place by installing screws in the center predrilled hole locations on both jambs. Use 3-in. screws, but don't tighten them all the way at this time.

The traditional rule of thumb when installing a door is to plumb the hinge-side jamb first (in both directions) so the door swings properly. Use a 6-ft. level

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# TRANSOM NOTE

to check and make adjustments. Place screws at each hinge location, so shims can be placed behind hinges above screws. (The screws prevent the shims from

falling down while adjustments are being made). Slide the triangular shims in or out of the jamb to adjust spacing until the hinge side is plumb and straight. Finish

driving screws tight in the middle first then top and bottom last.

For this particular installation, however, we used the two-part Top Star Shim Screws from GRK Fasteners. This patented two-piece fastener creates a “screw within a screw” to save time and labor when plumbing door jambs, window frames, paneling and built-in cabinets. (See sidebar.)

Once the hinge side is secured, check the door's weatherstrip margins and points of contact. Adjust the frame so the weatherstrip contacts the door surface equally at the top, center and bottom. Secure the lock side jamb with 3-in. screws through the the top and bottom, using shims to make adjustments as needed. Recheck everywhere for plumb and square, then drive all the



*Liberally apply beads of high-quality sealant to the joint between jambs.*



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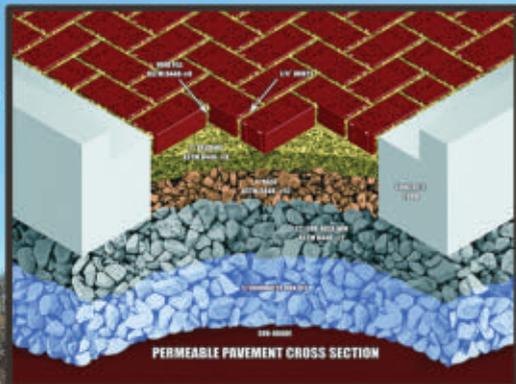
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# WATER STORAGE BELOW

# TRANSOM NOTE

screws tight. Remove the transport clip that keeps the door closed, and open it to test the swing for smooth operation.

Once you're satisfied, drive two 3-in. screws through the top hinge

and into the stud. This anchors the frame to the door to prevent sagging. Close the door and shim behind the strike-plate area.

Predrill and drive 3-in screws through the strike plate into the

lock side jamb. Adjust the strike plate for proper operation, then tighten all screws.

Seal any space or gaps with expanding foam insulation, but make sure to use the low-expanding foam formulated specifically for windows and doors (otherwise the foam may bow out the jamb and interfere with door operation).



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*The jambs are attached at the sides with metal hardware.*



*For maximum rigidity, fill all holes in the metal plates with screws.*



*Apply sealant to the subfloor.*



Tilt the door into the rough opening.



Ensure the door is square and level.



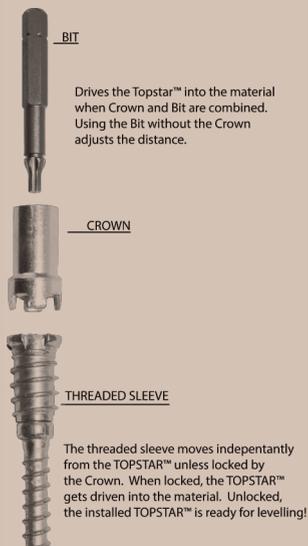
Check for plumb in both directions.



Check all reveals and make adjustments with shims.

## TOP STAR SHIM SCREW

The Top Star Shim Screw from GRK has an ingenious design that you really need to see in action. This patented two-piece fastener creates a “screw within a screw” that reduces labor for the plumb installation of window and door frames (jambs), paneling and built-in cabinets. The Top Star’s inner screw turns independently of the outer portion of the fastener for easy adjustment without shims. First, drill a pilot hole for the screw and then drive the Top Star with GRK’s crown bit through the jamb into the rough-opening frame until flush. Slide off the crown bit to reveal the inner star bit. Use the inner star bit to adjust the jamb in and out of the frame until flush. This system of door installation is much faster than using wood shims to make fine adjustments. Learn more at [www.grkfasteners.com](http://www.grkfasteners.com).



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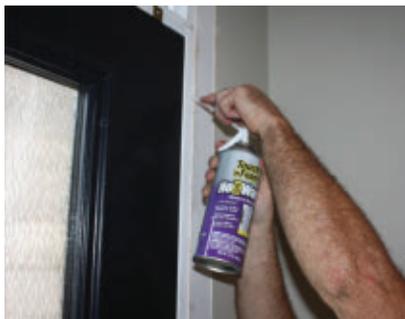
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# TRANSOM NOTE

Install brick molding around the door exterior using finish nails. Caulk all seams, including the bottom sill corners, using quality adhesive.

At the end of the day, the homeowner had a beautiful new entry that will withstand the outdoor elements, allow more light into the living space and add value to the house. Learn more about Therma-tru doors at [www.thermatru.com](http://www.thermatru.com). **EHT**



Seal around the jamb with low-expanding spray foam.



Caulk all joints and seams.



For this installation we used Top Star Shim Screws from GRK fasteners.



Apply brick molding and fasten with finish nails.



We completed the job with fresh mortar beneath the threshold.





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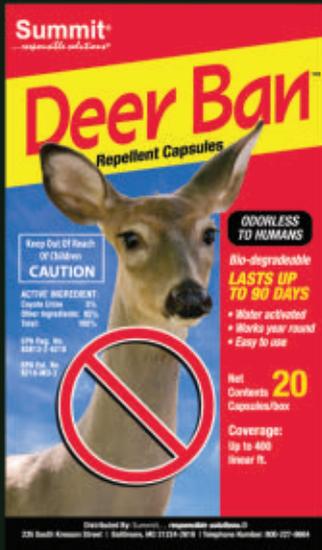
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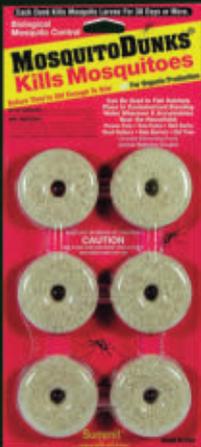
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# HARDWARE SHOW PRODUCT PREVIEW

One of the *Extreme How-To* staff's favorite conventions kicks off May 5th, 2015, in Las Vegas, Nevada. The National Hardware Show is where tool makers from all over roll out the latest gadgets and gizmos for the home-improvement industry. For those who can't attend, we offer a sneak peek at many of the new products that will soon be on display at your local hardware store. And, if you can make the show, this preview should serve as a handy floor guide, directing you to the exhibition booths where you'll discover your next favorite tools.

## CENTIPEDE WORK SUPPORT SYSTEMS

The new Centipede Sawhorse and Centipede Support XL are two innovative, portable work support systems. Each serve as a heavy-duty table or workbench base that sets up in seconds without assembly and folds down into a compact, lightweight unit for easy transport and convenient storage. Featuring a unique steel frame design, the Centipede Portable Work System is constructed of multiple struts that rest directly between the load and ground to support an incredible amount of

weight while keeping the thinnest materials from sagging. Each strut is moved in tandem with steel cross bars flexible enough to absorb impacts and durable enough to ensure long-lasting operation. Polymer P-Tops atop each strut provide a work surface that avoids contact damage between cutting blades and steel struts. Each P-Top is replaceable and accommodates the use of included accessories.

The Centipede Sawhorse has an overall weight capacity of 1,500 lbs. and supports sheet lumber

and table or bench tops over a 2-by-4-ft. area. The Centipede Support XL has an overall weight capacity of 3,000 lbs. and supports materials over a 4-by-8-ft. area. Each kit includes a carry bag, Quick Clamps to keep materials in place and X-Cups for quick setup of traditional sawhorse applications. Visit booth 31102 or [www.centipedetool.com](http://www.centipedetool.com).



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Susan Carter, Provo, UT



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## HYDE PIVOTPRO WATER WAND

PivotPro Water Wands are super-convenient for any kind of cleaning. Simply attach one to a garden hose, add a concentrated soap liquid to the mixing reservoir, then point, shoot and pivot the nozzle to direct the spray as you wash and rinse your truck, your boat, your deck or your home. The latest models feature interchangeable brush and buffing attachments. The attachment arm lets you keep them front and center or push them out of the way as you need. Also included is a much bigger and more functional soap reservoir with a water-to-cleaner ratio adjustment. And, measuring 46 inches in length, the new wands offer



more reach than ever. Hyde's PivotPro Water Wands are available with a single attachment or can be purchased in kits with multiple attachments. Varieties include Outdoor Cleaning, Boat & Auto and Lawn & Garden. These tools will be available online and in stores shortly. Visit the company at [www.hyde.com](http://www.hyde.com), booth 6907 at the National Hardware Show, as well as booth 37121 in the lawn and garden section.

## SKILSAW 10-1/4" WORM-DRIVE SAW

The new Skilsaw 10-1/4-in. worm-drive saw (SPT70WM-22) offers the same powerful performance and hardworking character that has made Skil worm-drives a jobsite standard. Dubbed "Sawsquatch", this is the only 10-1/4-in. worm drive saw designed to cut 4-by material smoothly and cleanly in one pass. From fence posts to framing to ripping or cross-cutting, the new 10-1/4-in. version will get the job done with fewer and faster cuts. The new model has the largest Dual-Field motor, which uses a unique copper winding pattern resulting in increased surface area that keeps the motor cooler. A cooler motor increases the durability of the saw.



# WEEKEND PROJECTS



## GARAGE FLOORS



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- 1 part Epoxy, Easy to Apply
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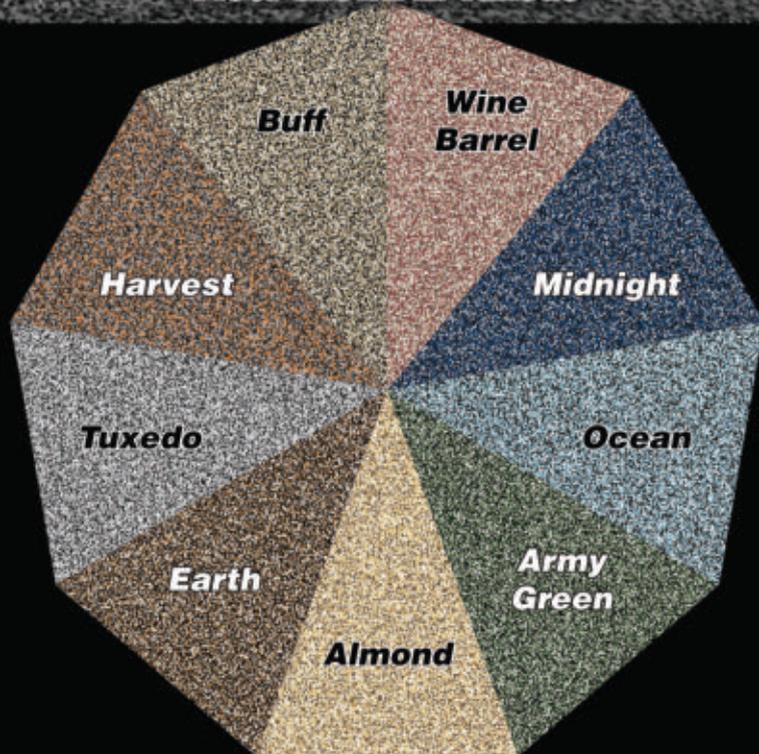
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beauty of granite

**G-FLOOR**

IMAGE

*Floor shown in Tuxedo*

- ◆ Same tough solid-vinyl floor material as traditional G-Floor flooring
- ◆ Easy roll-out installation and maintenance
- ◆ Available in 9 popular GraniteSpek styles
- ◆ Available with two surface textures: Diamond Tread & Ceramic Tile
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MADE IN  
**USA**



The magnesium components keep the saw lightweight and durable, and the well-balanced design makes it easy to handle. The saw includes a Freud Diablo 40T carbide blade and the Stay True Guarantee in which users have 180 days to test out the saw and receive a full refund if not satisfied. Visit [www.skiltools.com](http://www.skiltools.com) or booth N216.

### T-REX TAPE

ShurTech Brands, LLC will launch the new ferociously strong T-Rex Tape at this year's National Hardware Show. This super-durable tape has double the thickness of ordinary tapes, which means that its strong adhesive can stick to even the most rough and dirty surfaces, allowing you to get the job done right the first time. T-Rex Tape also has a UV resistant layer that blocks the sun's harsh UV rays from weakening the adhesive, which ensures it lasts through all types of

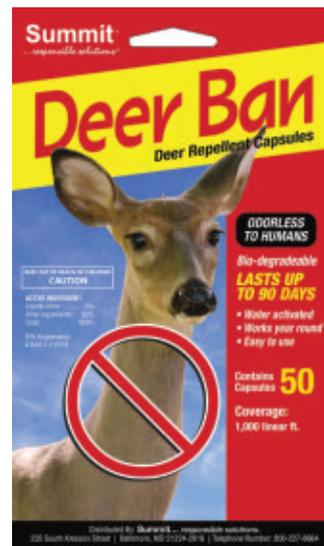


weather and temperatures. T-Rex Tape promises discerning users four times the staying power, three times the holding power and two times the bite over regular tapes. Visit booth 6915 or [www.trextape.com](http://www.trextape.com).

### DEER BAN

Summit Deer Ban repels deer to protect gardens and landscape plants. Deer Ban repellent capsules

keep deer from eating flowers and other landscape plants. Deer Ban uses a unique gel-tablet application to provide 100-percent effective, year-round protection from wildlife damage. Each Deer Ban capsule contains



predator urine that triggers a deer's animal flight response. Just set out the capsules on the ground every 10 to 20 feet around the plants you want to protect. Then water the capsules to release the active ingredient for up to 90 days of protection. When activated by water, the polymer gel releases the scent of predator urine, which keeps deer away. The product is odorless to humans, however, and

your hands never touch the active ingredient. There's no messy spraying, and no mixing or measuring. Visit Summit Responsible Solutions at booth 26054 or at [www.SummitResponsibleSolutions.com](http://www.SummitResponsibleSolutions.com).

### NAILBOSS

Celebrating more than 150 years of quality manufacturing, Mayhew Tools will exhibit the NailBoss deconstruction tool for all restoration and recycling projects. It makes quick, safe work of removing nails, screws or staples up to 1/4 inch in diameter while minimizing damage to the wood. Lightweight, powerful and easy to use, the NailBoss is ideal for professional and DIYers alike, and is available in pneumatic and handheld versions. Visit booth 34050 or [www.mayhew.com](http://www.mayhew.com).



### CHANNELLOCK PROFESSIONAL SCREWDRIVERS

Channellock Inc. is a family-owned and -operated hand tool manufacturer dedicated to American-made craftsmanship since 1886. Known for its iconic Channellock Blue tongue-and-groove pliers, the company recently introduced its Professional



Screwdrivers. The new product line of slotted, Phillips, Torx, multi-bit, specialty and nut drivers were designed and are manufactured in the U.S. to meet the needs of the professional trades and serious DIY'ers. The new American-made professional screwdrivers deliver a better-designed, higher quality tool to customers, while reshoring screwdriver manufacturing back to the United States. The Professional Screwdrivers line includes 46 different tool offerings, including a six-in-one multi-bit driver, all made in the U.S. and assembled in Meadville, Pennsylvania. Each is designed with a four-sided, acetate handle that delivers greater torque than competing drivers with six- or eight-sided handles. Visit booth 32038 or [www.channellock.com](http://www.channellock.com).

### SUREFORCE CLAMPS

Mayhew Tools' SureForce clamps are a new line of mechanical and hydraulic clamps that incorporate patented innovations to provide the highest clamping force available for their size.

The popular screw-type clamps employ ball bearings that reduce



friction. This allows the clamping force to be up to 40 percent greater than other screw clamps, given the same amount of torque. The clamps also have enclosed threads, which prevent debris and welding spatter from reaching the threads. The cast iron jaws and magnetic jaw-set provide a secure grip for round, square or flat metal surfaces. The range includes; Compact, Lever, Ultralight and Hydraulic Clamps, covering a range from 5- to 48-in. openings, and 900 to 4,800 lbs. of clamping force. In addition, Jack Bars with up to 400 lbs. of spreading force with a range of 26 to 126 inches complete the product line. Visit booth 34050 or [www.mayhew.com](http://www.mayhew.com).

### ETERNA-KOTE SILICONE+ ROOF COATING

Eterna-Kote Silicone+ Roof Coating from Gardner-Gibson provides the ultimate in waterproofing protection, delivering a seamless barrier that even stands up to ponding water challenges associated with flat roofs. In addition to waterproofing, Eterna-Kote also boasts eco-friendly features and application advantages, saving time, energy and money.

**Keeps Paint Out.  
Keeps Lines Sharp.®**

FrogTape® is the only painter's tape treated with PaintBlock® Technology. PaintBlock® forms a micro-barrier that seals the edges of the tape, preventing paint bleed. Visit [FrogTape.com](http://FrogTape.com) to see PaintBlock in action, get painting tips and more!

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Keeps Paint Out. Keeps Lines Sharp.

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The product provides excellent chemical, heat and weather resistance with long-term watertight security. The coating is also flexible, stretching to prevent cracks. Eterna-Kote meets Energy Star and CRRC (Cool Roof Coatings Council) standards and is low in VOCs, meeting all national air-quality standards. Eterna-Kote's bright white finish also keeps roofs cooler, resulting in potential energy savings and reduction of peak energy demands. Visit booth 6707 or [www.gardner-gibson.com](http://www.gardner-gibson.com).



125 feet of 5/8-in. garden hose. Features include a 90-deg. solid brass swivel, 18-gauge steel construction, durable powder-coat finish, storage tray and attachable crank handle.

At this year's Hardware Show, Liberty Garden Products will hold a special giveaway that includes the Navigator Hose Reel. The company will also introduce the 234 Liberty Star Hose Butler and 301 Decorative Hose Reel Cart. Visit booth 21088 or [www.libertygardenproducts.com](http://www.libertygardenproducts.com).



### NAVIGATOR ROTATING HOSE REEL

The Navigator Rotating Hose Reel is the first wall-mounted hose reel to rotate 360 degrees. It features four locking positions to help wind and direct the hose to your desired location. This decorative, all-steel hose reel can hold up to

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patents pending



## HEALTHFUL HOME MOLD ABATEMENT PRODUCTS

Alexeter Technologies develops and manufactures rapid DIY testing and remediation products for better indoor air-quality. The company's Healthful Home 5-Minute Mold Test is the most accurate and sensitive

rapid mold test available. This do-it-yourself kit for households is the only mold kit on the market that gives full immediate results to the consumer. Results reveal both indoor air-quality issues and unhealthy mold problems due to water damage where applicable, while avoiding the high cost of hiring mold inspectors and laboratory testing.

The Healthful Home Mold & Bacteria disinfectant and cleaner is a safe and effective way to eliminate unhealthy mold and bacteria contamination without the use of harsh chemicals. A specially formulated state-of-the-art combination of natural ingredients is designed to provide a superior treatment alternative to chemicals and provides a long-lasting residual disinfection. Visit booth 6428 or [www.fiveminutemoldtest.com](http://www.fiveminutemoldtest.com)

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- Allergies



## TG TOOLS KIK FORSTNER BITS

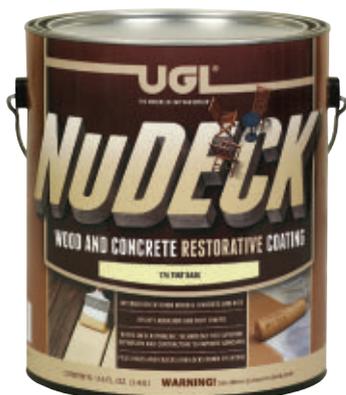
Forstner bits are the best choice for drilling precise, flat-bottomed holes in wood. The radial cutting edges shear wood fibers at the edge and bottom of the hole, creating a smooth bore with an exact diameter. The Kik Forstner bits from TG Tools actually have nine cutting edges, which permit cutting curved paths, channels, routing and milling in wood and plastics. They can cut



on the edge of a block of wood to create channels, and can also be used to create overlapping holes. The Kik bits also come in a nice, dovetailed wooden box to protect the cutting edges. Visit [www.mytgtools.com](http://www.mytgtools.com) or booth 39087.

## NUDECK

Too many times the structure of a deck and patio are in very sound condition, but the surface appearance makes homeowners want to give up and pay the substantial price to replace the boards completely. Not only is this choice not economical, but it certainly isn't "Green". United Gilsonite Laboratory has developed a new coating that is designed to give new life to those tired surfaces.



UGL NuDECK Wood and Concrete Restorative Coating extends the life of a deck and patio with a paintable solution. From the can it creates a new, slip-resistant surface for decks, walkways and patios. The tintable color palette coordinates with UGL ZAR Solid Color Deck and Siding Stain to complement the color of surrounding vertical surfaces such as siding, railings, posts and walls. The product is ten times thicker than paint or stain and fills 1/4-in. cracks and nails holes. It locks down surface splinters and can be tinted in 30 different colors. Visit [www.ugl.com](http://www.ugl.com) or booth 7114.

## GENERAL TOOLS EXPRESS RATCHET DRIVER (70210)

General Tools' new Express Ratchet Driver (70210) doubles efficiency with a dual drive that screws twice as fast as a regular screwdriver. When engaged by holding the driver collar, a patented ratcheting mechanism enables the tip to rotate in the same direction regardless of which way the handle is turned. A convenient slider switch makes it easy to reverse the gear drive direction.

In addition, an ergonomically designed handle provides greater overall control and comfort. The Express

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ORIGINAL STRENGTH  
MADE IN USA

**STRONG • STICKY • WATERPROOF**

Trust Duck® brand duct tape to deliver the quality and strength needed for every project.

**MADE IN USA**

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Ratchet Driver includes 20 hex shank bits, 4 slotted (1/16, 5/56, 3/32, 1/8 in.), 4 Phillips (#000, #00, #0, #1), 9 Torx (T3, T4, T5, T6, T7, T8, T9, T10, T15) and 3 Pozidrive (PZ00, PZ0, PZ1). Visit booth 36007 or [www.generaltools.com](http://www.generaltools.com).

### WORX CLAMPING SAWHORSES

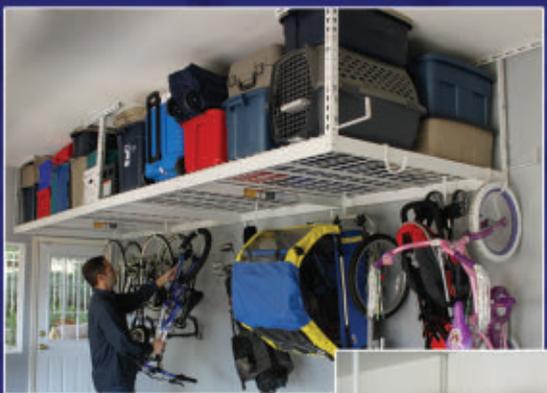
The new Worx Clamping Sawhorses give a new twist to work-support stations with their integration of two 18-in. bar clamps. These sawhorses are constructed with channels to support and secure the clamps. The squeeze clamps hold work materials horizontally or

vertically to help ensure safe cutting operations. The basic design of a beam with four legs has been used for years, but the new Worx work supports are not limited to cutting wood. The bar clamps can secure copper or PVC pipe, 2x materials, 4x4s, sheet goods and other materials for cutting. The Clamping Sawhorses support loads up to 1,000 lbs. The clamps can be used with or



without the sawhorses. Two fixed notched areas at the top of each sawhorse are designed to hold 2x4s to provide a protective layer during ripping operations so the sawhorses don't come in contact with the blade. The lightweight and portable 15.6 lb. sawhorses

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### TOP RATED PLATFORM

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# EGO

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(clamps included) are constructed of high-impact polypropylene. When fully opened, they stand at a comfortable working height of 32 inches with a 27-in. width. When folded or closed, the sawhorses measure 2-1/2 inches deep for easy and compact storage. Visit booth 34031 or [www.worx.com](http://www.worx.com).

## ROLL A BUCKET

With the award-winning new Roll A Bucket, you won't have to lift and move any more paint buckets. Designed by a painter, the Roll A Bucket is maneuvered with a paint roller for steering, the same way that you would use a mop to steer a mop bucket. The caster wheels allow for easy maneuvering over tarps. There is also a brake on one of the wheels. Each Roll A Bucket comes with a custom-designed grid, and is sloped on the bottom so your roller can reach every last bit of paint. Work smarter, not harder, with the Roll A Bucket, available now in 4,000 stores. Visit [Rollabucket.com](http://Rollabucket.com) or booth 7824.



## PORTACOOL CYCLONE 1000

The new go-anywhere, sleek Portacool Cyclone 1000 can lower temperatures by as much as 30° F via the natural process of evaporation. Simply roll the portable Cyclone where it is needed, plug into a standard 110V outlet and experience a cooler space outdoors and beyond. There's no drenching mist or harsh chemicals involved. It cools better than just a fan that has no cooling element, and is cost-effective, operating for just pennies an hour. Visit booth 5524 or [www.port-a-cool.com](http://www.port-a-cool.com).



## FROGTAPE PRODUCTS

Be sure to check out the entire FrogTape family of products, including the brand's newest innovation, FrogTape Textured Surface solution kit. Textured Surface enables homeowners and professionals to



obtain sharp paint lines on surfaces that vary in depth, including orange-peel and knockdown interior wall surfaces. FrogTape is treated with patented PaintBlock Technology, a super-absorbent polymer that reacts with the water in latex paint and instantly gels to form a micro-barrier that seals the edges of the tape, which helps prevent paint bleed. Visit booth 6915 or [www.frogtape.com](http://www.frogtape.com).

## SASHCO

Founded in 1936, Sashco, Inc., manufactures high-performance caulking and log home products in Brighton, Colorado. Sashco is known for innovative products, like Lexel® and Slab®.

Lexel, "The Tough Elastic Sealant For Every Job" is a synthetic rubber elastomeric sealant that is known as the "duct tape" of caulks. It comes in Clear or White; it's paintable; it won't grow mildew when cured; it's formulated for interior/exterior use, and you can use it in any weather, in standing water, and even in freezing temperatures. Lexel sticks to almost anything—even wet surfaces. Lexel has been around for over 20 years thanks to its unique ability to work in extreme conditions.

Slab is a pro-grade repair product for cracked concrete. It sticks, stretches and stays for permanent repairs, comes in gray, and is great for sealing concrete cracks in driveways, sidewalks, patios, steps, and horizontal expansion joints. Slab is easy to clean up with water and easy on the environment. Visit [www.sashco.com](http://www.sashco.com) or booth 39087.





## CONCROBIUM MOLD CONTROL

Concrobium Mold Control is a patented antimicrobial solution that eliminates and prevents mold without the use of harmful chemicals. The innovative EPA-registered product has been used by homeowners, building professionals and mold remediators for more than a decade to eradicate tough mold problems. Concrobium Mold Control is now a "Holmes Approved" product. The "Holmes Approved" Products program was designed to help homeowners choose products that support the health and safety of their home, including improved indoor air quality. "My crew and I have been using Concrobium Mold Control for years. It's the product I trust to get the job done right," says Mike Holmes, Canadian residential home improvement contractor and television show host. Visit booth 6527 or [www.concrobium.com](http://www.concrobium.com).

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Silicone Waterproofing Technology by 

## High Performance SILICONE Roof Coating

Ideal for Flat Roofs with Ponding Water

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- 100% Silicone - Bright White
- Can help lower cooling cost\*
- Best Ponding Water Resistance
- Stretches to resist cracking
- Faster application



[eterna-kote.com](http://eterna-kote.com)

\* This product can help lower cooling costs in buildings that use air conditioning. This product will reduce the surface temperature of the roof, which lowers the amount of heat gain that penetrates through roof surface.



## JERI-RIGG

There are plenty of things to help tie down gear—bungee cords, ropes, lanyards, carabineers and chains—but sometimes there just isn't a solid attachment point.

Jeri-Rigg is your solution. It's an innovative tie-down/anchor point/strap to use in conjunction with securing mechanisms. No more wrapping bungee cords around equipment and attaching the hook to itself. No more poor connections, scratching and slipping. Jeri-Rigg provides a safe connection with a non-scratch, non-slip surface.

It's an easy and simple solution for hanging, holding



and hauling gear and equipment. It's fast, too; within seconds you can fasten it to just about anything, and it can be reused over and over again. With hooks in three sizes and eyes in six sizes, Jeri-Rigg offers campers, boaters, home organizers and construction workers safety, durability and strength.

Jeri-Rigg is tested to hold up to 1,500 lbs., depending on the version and size. The polyester strap and corrosion-resistant metal head can handle the toughest elements. See the product at booth 2949 or visit [www.Jeri-Rigg.com](http://www.Jeri-Rigg.com).

## TG TOOLS CONCRETE BIT

The carbide tip of TG Tools' concrete bits have the "Euro-Form" profile that helps ensure skid-free traction. It bites into the concrete with more positive material removal than conventional bits, and stays sharper longer without burning. Combine this tip with TG Tools' flute design that removes chips quickly and cleanly, even in wet concrete. This is not just a steel shaft with a hip of carbide cemented to the tip. The shaft is made of Chrome

# Stainable Primer™

**What Is Stainable Primer™?**  
Stainable Primer™ is a primer that is made up of micron particles of actual hardwood interlaced with advanced polymers and resins that allow the interlocking adhesion to any hard surface to which it is applied. Stainable Primer™ contains real wood that can be brushed or sprayed on, creating an actual wood surface. Unlike other primers that are only paintable, our product leaves up to 60% volume solids of actual wood fiber; then using any manufacturers' product, just stain and use polyurethane to create a beautiful and durable finish.

**Works Great On:** COMPOSITE DOORS, WALLS, CABINETS, WINDOWS AND DOORS, PAINT GRADE TRIM, FIREPLACE MANTELS, METAL DOORS, FURNITURE, STAIRS & MORE!

**EASY TO APPLY! ECO-FRIENDLY!**

[www.stainableprimer.com](http://www.stainableprimer.com)

# E-Z Edge™

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*Easily and permanently transform your landscape!*

**BEFORE**

**AFTER**

**Easy to Install:**  
Simply slide ends together & insert spikes!

1. Slide
2. Overlap
3. Spike

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from recycled material

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Vanadium steel for toughness and long life. The carbide tip is made of heavier stock than common masonry drills and silver soldered in place. The shoulders of the Chrome Vanadium drill shaft are then precision ground to expose the carbide properly to the material. Visit [www.mytgtools.com](http://www.mytgtools.com) or booth 39087.

### BRIGGS & STRATTON EXI ENGINES

The Briggs & Stratton EXi Engine series means consumers may never again have to change the oil in their lawnmowers. Briggs & Stratton's research revealed that even though most consumers understood the

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# Pipe-bracket Shelving

Galvanized pipe and 2x lumber make beefy "industrial" shelves.



By Matthew Weber

My four-year-old son may be too young for a man cave, but he's big on having a "kid cave." Having outgrown the decorative theme of his baby room (sheep—my wife's idea), he now favors dinosaurs, Godzilla and other "boyish" things like that. To maintain the rough-and-tough aesthetic he prefers, I installed distressed pine flooring in his bedroom and built him a rustic-looking bed frame from reclaimed lumber. When it came time to install some new shelving, I wanted the addition to match the existing décor. My wife found the inspiration for this project on Pinterest: Simple wood shelving supported by galvanized

pipe brackets. Combined with distressed wood and a quality stain, the shelves provide a rugged, industrial look while offering ample storage space.

Here's how I made them.

## MATERIALS

The shelving for this project was cut from simple 2x10 lumber. The 1-1/2-in. thickness of the boards looks nice and beefy on the wall and complements the hefty appearance of the steel brackets. The softwood pine (maybe fir or spruce in your area) is also receptive to distressing the surface, unlike hardwood which is naturally more resistant to showing the

aged texture that I wanted to impart. Another advantage of simple 2-by lumber is that it's inexpensive to purchase.

Price is also something to consider when purchasing your pipe and fittings, because the material cost can vary dramatically from supplier to supplier. Galvanized pipe is available in a range of diameters, and each shelf bracket consists of one 10-in. pipe (threaded on both ends), an end cap and a floor flange. I settled on using 3/4-in. pipe for a strong, sturdy look, and each of my four 30-in. shelves required two brackets. This means I needed eight pipes, eight caps and eight floor flanges, the cost of which can add up quickly. When you realize that both Lowes and Home Depot charge more than \$11 for a single 3/4-in. galvanized floor flange, the sticker price might even discourage your enthusiasm for the project. It did mine.

However, with a little telephone research I found a plumbing supplier nearby that was unaffiliated with the large national chains and offered substantially lower prices. For example, at Long-Lewis Hardware in Birmingham, Alabama, I found those 3/4-in.



*The shelf brackets are built from 3/4" galvanized pipe, end caps and floor flanges.*



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## PROJECT NEXT

floor flanges for only \$3.80 each. By calling around and comparing costs, I was able to cut my expense by roughly a third of the cost.

To paint the pipe brackets I used a black Rustoleum spray

paint (and primer in one) that offers a special hammered texture to the metal finish. You'll also need wood stain in your tone of choice, polyurethane for a protective top coat, and heavy-duty screws to

mount the brackets into the wall studs.

### BRACKETS

The pipes and fittings have matching threads, so they simply screw together for assembly. I recommend assembling the brackets prior to spray-painting to conceal the "active" part of the threads that would otherwise clog with paint. I also recommend washing the pipes and fittings with water and dish detergent prior to painting. The detergent will cut through any grease or oil on the pipe and



The brackets are painted with Rustoleum Universal Hammered Paint & Primer in One.



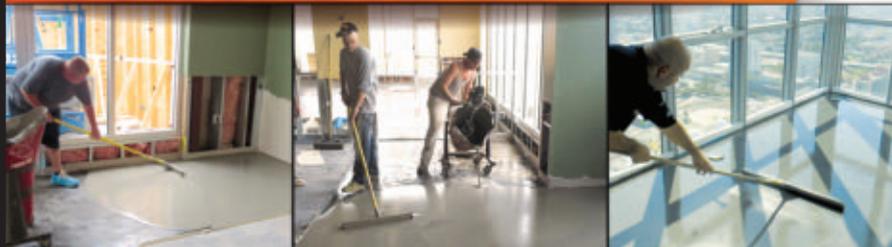
Paint the screw heads to match. I used #10 x 3-1/8" R4 Screws from GRK Fasteners.



I made each shelf 30-1/4" to center between an open bedroom door and a closet.

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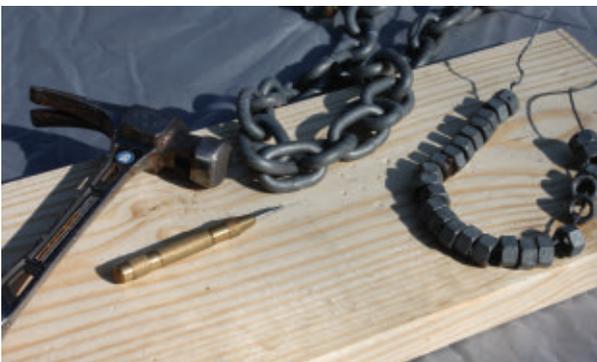
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Support the workpiece and cut it to size with a circular saw.



I used a variety of tools to distress the wood surface for an aged appearance.



Brush on the wood stain then immediately wipe off the excess with a rag.

promote better paint adhesion. Dry them thoroughly then coat with repeat applications of the metal paint, allowing time to dry between coats, until you're satisfied with the look and depth of the finish. The hammered paint texture gives the steel a nice "wrought iron" appearance.

To match the brackets I also spray-painted the heads of the screws, which I drove partially into a cardboard box to hold them at a workable height while I coated them. I used #10 x 3-1/8-in. R4

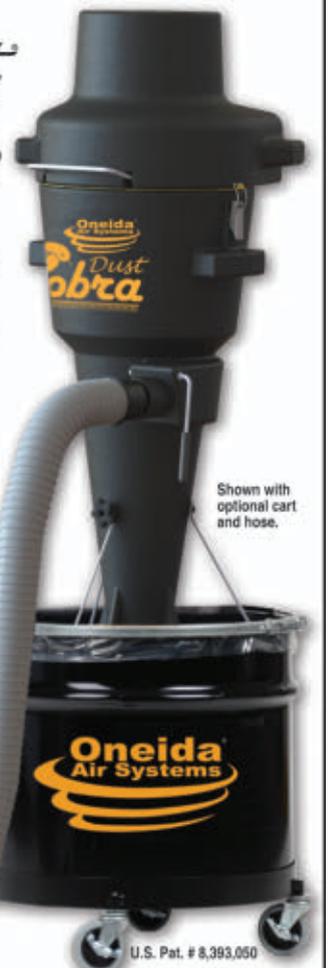
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screws from GRK Fasteners, which have the length and strength to fasten securely into the wall framing and support the shelves.



*I used a combination of cherry and dark walnut to get the color tone I wanted.*

## SHELVES

The width of your shelves is completely up to you and the design of your home. I went with 30-in. rectangular shelves, which I cut with a circular saw, to position between a bedroom door and a closet. Remember to support the cut-off piece with a roller stand or other work surface so the wood doesn't tear out as you near the end of the cut.

With the shelves cut to size, I then distressed the surface with a variety of tools to give the wood the appearance of age and damage. I hit the boards with a heavy trucker chain to give it dents and dips. A handful of 1/2-in. nuts threaded over a heavy-duty wire can be used to whip sharper dents and dings into the surface. A simple punch tool can provide



*My wife and I used painter's tape to represent the shelf locations as we experimented with placement.*

pinholes reminiscent of worm or insect damage. And when used sparingly, the waffle face of a framing hammer can create an interesting relief pattern.

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Once you're happy with the extent of the damage, apply a quality wood stain to the surface. I chose a dark walnut tone combined with cherry to give the wood an older, woody color tone. My

tactic is to brush on the stain to cover the shelf on one side, then immediately wipe off the excess before it dries as a thick coat. Then flip and repeat for the other side and edges of the shelf. The

tiny holes, scratches and low relief from the distressing process drink up the stain at a greater rate than the flat wood surface and achieve a high color contrast for a weathered, "ancient" effect.

Once the stain has completely dried, apply a couple coats of polyurethane in your preferred finish (I chose satin).



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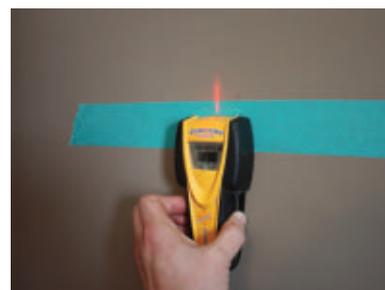
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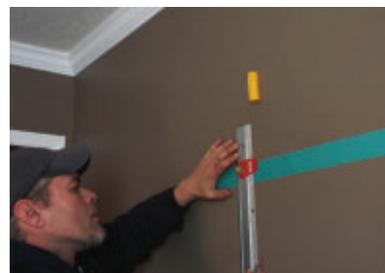
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*Locate and mark the studs. I make pencil marks on the painter's tape to keep the walls clean.*



*Measure and mark the shelf-bracket locations using the top, center screw holes as your reference points. Decide the location of your top and bottom shelves then divide the remaining space equally to determine placement of the middle shelves.*



*Locate each pair of the brackets the same distance apart and perfectly level.*

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*Drive screws at least 2" into the studs.*

### INSTALLATION

The combined weight of the shelves alone, even before you place anything on them, is substantial enough to rip out of the drywall if improperly installed. I recommend only installing these shelves over wall studs, with two screws per bracket driven at least two inches into the solid wood.

Locate the wall studs with an electronic stud finder and mark their locations. Each galvanized flange contains four screw holes. Orient the flanges so two of those holes fall vertically along the center of the studs. These two stud screws will support the shelf weight, while the other two screws will miss the stud and are basically just decorative in nature.

Placement of the shelves is also a personal preference. How many shelves do you want? Do you want the lowest to be located three feet off the floor, or four? How far from the ceiling should the top shelf be mounted, and how much distance should remain between each shelf? Many of these answers will be determined by any existing obstacles you have to work around, as well as the size of the items that you'll store on the shelves.

To provide a visual guide for our shelf placement, my wife and I experimented with painter's tape that we stuck on the wall (and repositioned many times) to represent where the shelves would be mounted. After a little trial and error, we arrived on a plan that made sense for our home.

When installing, measure carefully and use a level to double check your placement and ensure the shelves will sit flat.

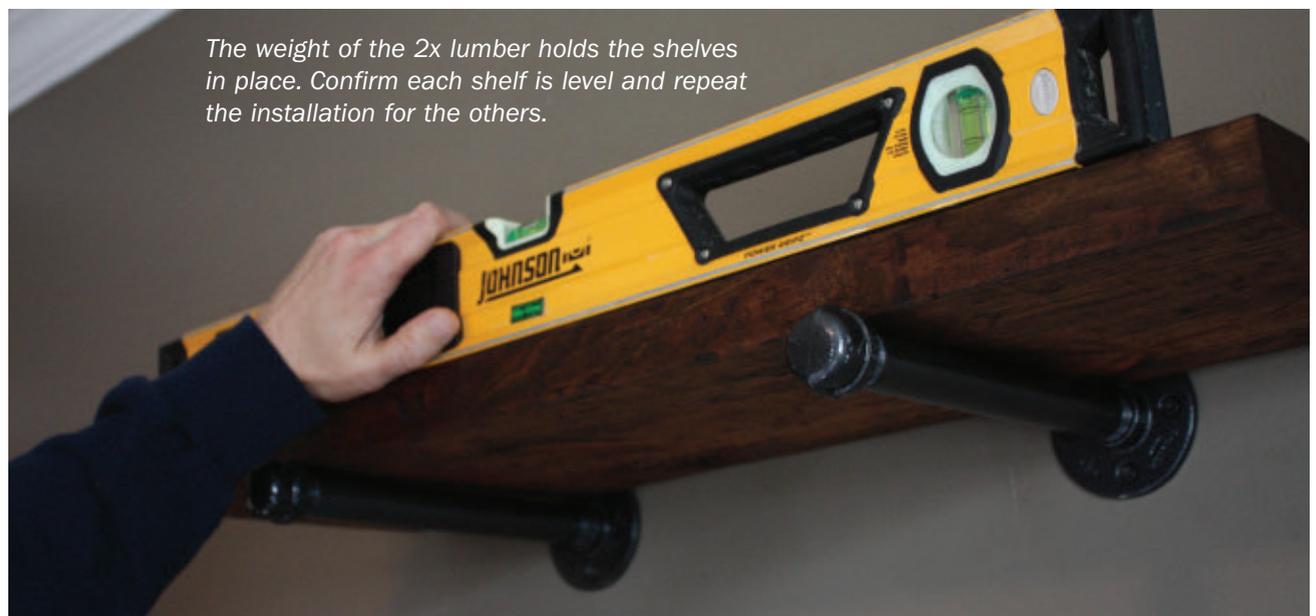
Certain "rules of thumb" exist in interior décor that you may or may not want to consider for your project. For example, it's generally accepted that vertically stacked shelves look best when spaced equal distances apart. We agreed with this rule and applied it to our project.

Here's another gem: odd number grouping. Considered a "fail safe technique" to decorate an interior, especially when arranging home accessories, this commonly accepted standard suggests that grouping items in an odd number (threes, fives, sevens) will make each piece stand out for a well-organized display. Some people would tell you that even number groupings, such as a pair or group of four, tend to make the group look cluttered.

We threw this "rule" right out the window in the name of total anarchy and decided that four shelves struck the right balance of form and function for my son's room. Bring on the haters.

### FINAL THOUGHTS

This is a fun weekend project for DIY'ers in search of some hearty rugged shelving. You can knock it out in a day, as well as add to or change the design to reflect your personal taste. Consider the standard rules of interior décor when designing your shelving, but also remember that any of those rules can be broken—because when it comes to your home, you're the boss. **EHT**



*The weight of the 2x lumber holds the shelves in place. Confirm each shelf is level and repeat the installation for the others.*

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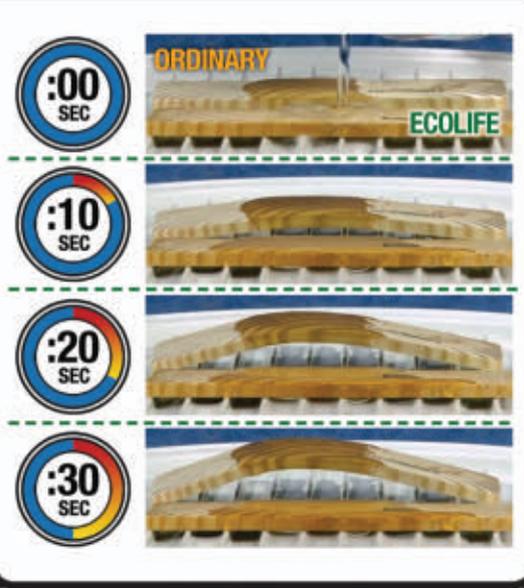
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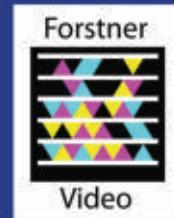


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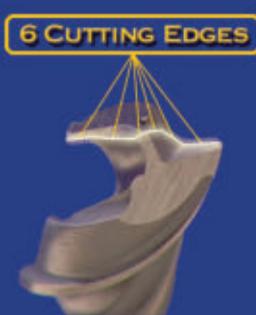
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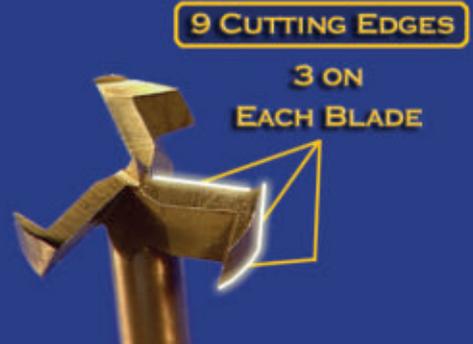




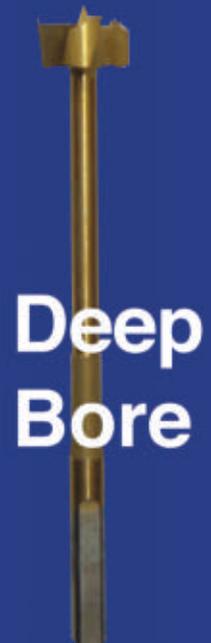
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