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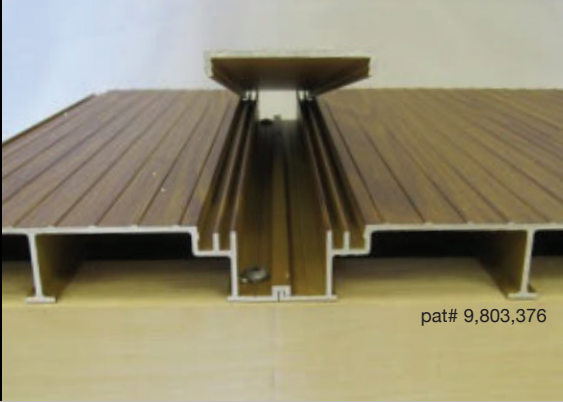
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CONTENTS



FEATURES

24 National Hardware Show Preview



34 Wood Protection for Outdoor Projects

Applying a Penetrating Stain and Sealer

44 A Good Start

Troubleshooting Outdoor Equipment for DIY'ers

EVERY ISSUE

6 From the Editor

55 Advertisers Index

COLUMNS

8 Q & A

12 Tool School Improving the Accuracy of Miter Saws

DEPARTMENTS

52 Quick Fix Temporary Fence

54 Hot Products





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Ever start a home-improvement project and then wish that you hadn't? According to a recent study at ImproveNet.com, 63 percent of people who have attempted home DIY projects said they regretted at least one of them.

The survey of 2,000 Americans exposed some ugly truths about DIY endeavors. One in three people have called a professional to redo their failed DIY mess. Fifty-five percent of people say the main reason they were disappointed with a DIY project is it doesn't look good. When DIY runs over budget, on average, people spend nearly twice what they projected.

According to the survey, the most frequently regretted DIY project in America is installing floor tiles. My guess is that it looks easy to a novice to spread a bed of mortar and then press a tile into place. The truth is that it can be difficult to ensure each tile lays flat and flush with the surrounding tiles, and pattern layout for an entire room can be tricky to plan.

From my own experience, I've learned to take many precautions to avoid future regrets on projects, and I generally do this in the planning stage. My advice is to research an unfamiliar project exhaustively and consider investing in a how-to book on the subject. Mentally run through all phases of the job. Gather all the tools you'll need ahead of time; order extra material to account for errors and waste cuts; and whatever amount of time you estimate it might take to complete the project—double that figure to account for all the hidden or unexpected obstacles you'll inevitably encounter.

Don't forget the project logistics such as material storage and transportation around the jobsite. For example: If your project involves heavy pallets of flooring that can only be moved by forklift, how will you manage the load? If you're excavating a patio site in the backyard, what do you plan to do with the dirt? Troubleshoot the project in advance to avoid regrets on the job.

My last suggestion is to know your personal limitations. In my case, I've never been a fan of heights, and as I've gotten older, I like them even less. This was never more clear to me than when I chose to re-shingle my roof a couple of years ago. Things started out okay—the eaves were no problem, because if I were to fall off the ladder, I'd bang down onto the rear deck of my house only a few feet below. But as I climbed higher, my mind began playing tricks on me. By the time I got to the ridge-line, I felt like I was ten miles above the ground.

My heart was racing, my muscles were locking up, and I was gripping the roof in sheer terror, convinced the force of gravity hated me personally and wanted to pull me down to my doom.

At the time, that was one DIY project I definitely regretted.



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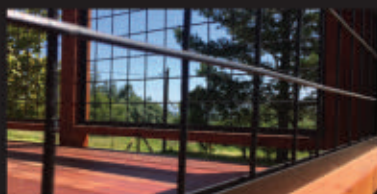
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Q. How do I calculate the amount of siding needed for a house?

A. Siding is typically sold by the square foot, and lap siding coverage is determined by the siding's exposure (the amount that will not be covered or "lapped" by other siding pieces). To figure the square footage of a house, total the sum of all the walls. To calculate a wall, divide it into rectangular and triangular sections. For the rectangles, multiply the width by the height (rounded to the nearest inch). For the triangular areas, multiply the base line (bottom) by the height (distance to peak), and divide by two. Add up the rectangles and triangles to get the wall's total square footage. To ensure you have 10-15 percent of siding material for waste, don't discount the area for windows and doors.

Q. What is the best method to apply sealer to a concrete countertop?

A. Various methods are used to apply sealer to a concrete countertop, and it's always a good idea to refer to the manufacturer's recommendations for your specific product. Generally speaking, you have the choice of rollers, brushes, HVLP sprayers and lamb's wool applicators. Many professionals apply the sealer with a 1/4-in. roller nap. Note that roller naps can leave lint on the countertop surface, so it's a good idea wrap tape over the nap to remove loose fibers before applying the sealer. Remaining lint fibers can be removed from the countertop surface with light sanding.

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Q: I need to replace some flashing on my roof. Is there a trick to shaping the roll of aluminum material to fit?

A: Wearing gloves to protect your hands, you should be able to cut and bend small pieces of flashing on a flat surface with a straight edge. In some cases you'll be able to shape the flexible material freehand, but other times it might help to nail down one edge and bend the piece directly over a stationary straight edge. Clamp the piece over a 2x4 or 2x6 to make long bends. For complicated shapes such as chimney flashing, it will help to have an old piece to serve as a template for making the same cuts and bends in the new piece. Use metal snips to make the cuts.

Q: How do I take measurements for new storm windows?

A: You will need to measure the clear opening of the existing windows. This means when measuring width, measure from jamb to jamb (from the outside of the small wood strips that serve as the window's "stops"). To measure the window's height, measure from the sill to the top jamb (outside the top stop). You should also measure the spot where the top and bottom sashes meet, and purchase a storm window with sashes that correspond to the measurement. At the home store, you might find that the storm windows don't come in the exact size you need. However, the plastic fins around storm windows are made to be trimmed. Use metal snips to cut equal amounts of material off each of the side fins so the storm window fits. **EHT**

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Improve the Accuracy of your Miter Saw

Calibration and Adjustment are the Keys to Success



Photo courtesy Bosch Tools

By Matt Weber

For a skilled carpenter, a powered miter saw is thing of wonder, enabling straight and angled board cuts to assemble trim, flooring, furniture, picture frames, general carpentry and more. However, the saw's ability to make an accurate cut must be routinely checked and maintained, because a little misalignment can cause major headaches for a carpentry project.

The saw must have its bevel and miter angles calibrated (checked for accuracy) before you start cutting. Although often overlooked by inexperienced DIY'ers, calibration

is a critical step because a difference as small as 1° over a 1-in. span will result in a $1/32$ -in. gap in the finished miter joint. Similarly, 3° over 5-in. span gives you a $3/8$ -in. gap. Once you start cutting a lot of misaligned pieces, you will soon notice when you assemble your project that your joints don't fit together tightly because the cuts have been made at an incorrect angle.

CALIBRATE THE MITER ANGLE

A combination square makes a handy tool for confirming the saw

blade's miter and bevel alignment. First, trace a 90-degree cutline down the center of a scrap workpiece that is large enough to match the square sides of the combo square. Make sure your work piece has a very square, straight edge that contacts the saw fence. Flip the square along its ruler edge to make sure it still aligns with the pencil line (confirming that your square is truly 90 degrees).



You can then place the square against the fence and blade to quickly check alignment, which should be sufficient for general construction. There should be no gap between the edges of the square and the blade or fence.



Since even the slightest misalignment can be difficult to see between the square and the saw blade, we suggest you take an



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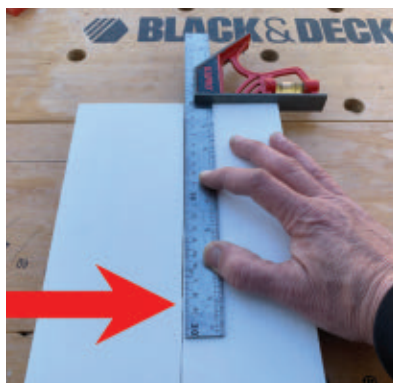
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extra step when calibrating for trim-work or fine carpentry. Take the board you marked, place it on the saw with the blade matching the cutline, then cut then board in half along your marked line. Reassemble the two pieces to see if the cut matches the pencil line. Doing this makes it easier to see the slightest discrepancy in the



angle. If there is any gap between the cut and the line you traced with the combo square, then it is a sign of blade misalignment.

Since tool designs vary among manufacturers, you'll need to refer to your saw's operation manual for specific steps on how to adjust the blade angle. To adjust alignment on the Bosch com-



pound miter saw shown in the photos, I had to loosen four hex screws, move the table so the blade is a perfect 90 degrees to the fence, then retighten the screws. Once the blade aligned with the pencil line when using the combo-square calibration check, I knew I could rely on my saw to cut accurate miter angles.



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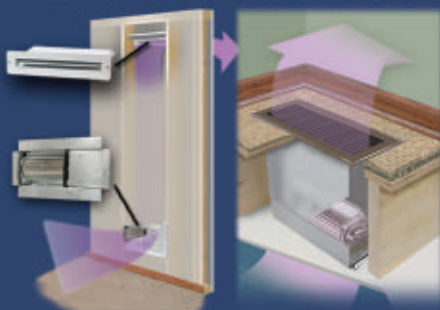
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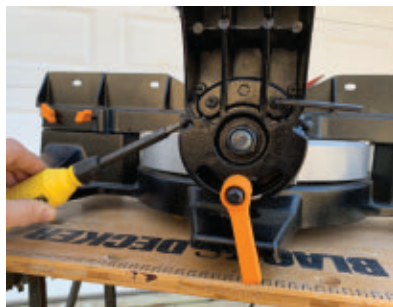
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CALIBRATE THE BEVEL ANGLE

Using similar steps as listed above, you can verify the vertical bevel angle of your saw. In this case, however, you're calibrating the tilt of the blade, and the cutline you're trying to verify is vertical. Therefore, your scrap workpiece should be vertically oriented with the pencil line 90 degrees from the saw table. For rough carpentry, you can simply align the combo square itself along the blade for a quick visual check.



Any necessary adjustments to the blade's orientation will be made using screws or bolts at the bevel post of the cutting head. Refer to your owner's manual for specific details regarding your saw. The Evolution saw shown in the photos required me to loosen several hex screws, adjust the blade angle, then tighten the screws. When adjusting the bevel angle, it might help to have an assistant provide an extra pair of hands, because adjusting the blade tilt against the pull of gravity while simultaneously tightening/loosening the screws can be a tricky feat.

CHECK THE ANGLE POINTER

Miter saws generally have an angle pointer, which is usually a small metal arrow that corresponds with the measurements on the saw base. Most tool designers place these pointers in an out-of-the-way place on the saw, so they don't get knocked around. However, funny things tend to happen around job sites, and pieces and parts that aren't intended to withstand an impact do sometimes get banged around. Any impact to the pointer could



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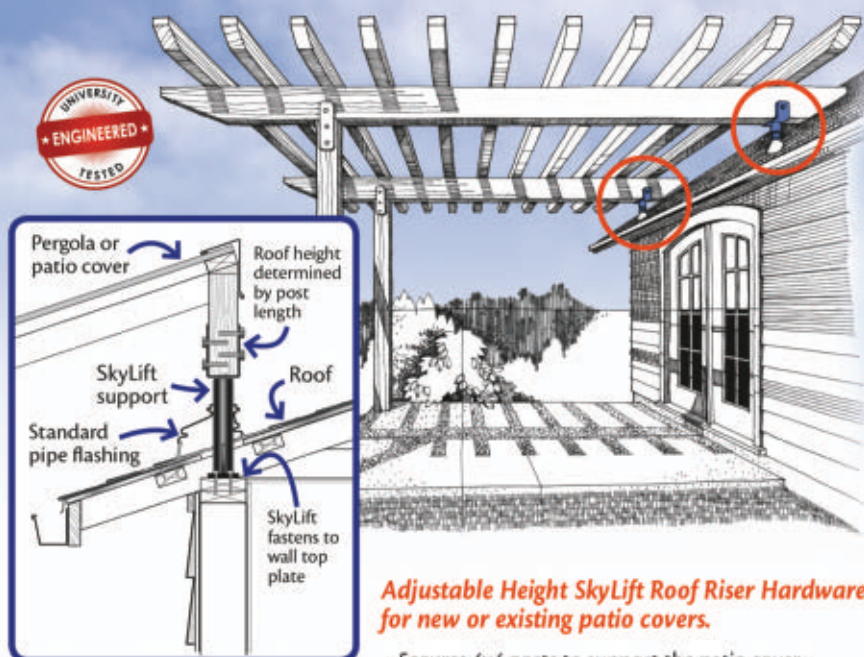
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potentially knock it out of alignment, so it points to one angle while the blade is actually oriented to cut a different one. A problem with pointer alignment likely won't be a common problem, but

you should keep an eye on it just in case. Adjustments can often be made with a simple screwdriver, but if the pointer is bent or misshapen, you should probably replace the part.

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ALIGN THE LASER

Modern miter saws come with all sorts of bells and whistles. Laser sight lines are a common feature designed to increase visual accuracy of the cut. But again, saw designs vary, and these laser devices are sometimes attached to the blade cover and other times attached to the arbor shaft. In



some cases, they can be knocked out of alignment. A bright laser line isn't much help if it doesn't correspond with the true angle of the blade, so you should test the laser alignment using the same combo-square/pencil line procedure detailed above.

KERF INSERTS

Kerf inserts are usually plastic plates that surround the blade when it's lowered into the saw table. The point of the inserts is to close the distance between the blade and the nearest supporting table. The inserts reduce tear-out on the bottom edge of your cross-cuts (thereby reducing the need to repair them). The inserts also help prevent narrow cut-off pieces from dropping down between the saw blade and the opening in the table base.

The kerf inserts should be adjusted close to the blade, but without touching the blade. On the Bosch miter saw shown, I first had to hold the saw head down and push the lock pin to keep it in

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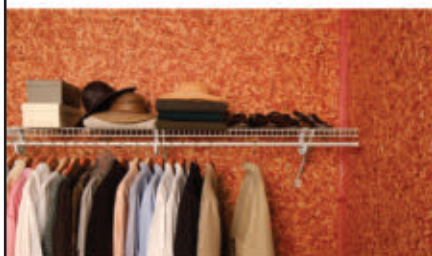


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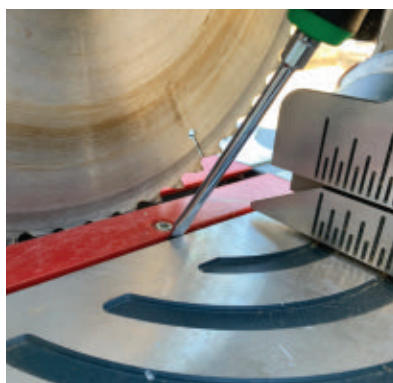
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position. I then loosened the six screws in the inserts using a screwdriver. After adjusting the kerf inserts as close to the blade (teeth) as possible without touching, I tightened the screws to hold the inserts in place. Note: At extreme bevel angles, the saw blade may slightly cut into kerf insert—this why they're made of plastic and not metal.

USE THE BEST BLADE FOR THE JOB

One consideration that DIY carpenters sometimes overlook is the type of saw blade they're using on their miter saws. The quantity of teeth plays a significant role in the blade's performance. For example, blades best suited for rough work like house framing typically have fewer teeth with large gullets for easy chip removal.

When cutting trim, picture frames, or any sort of fine carpentry, a blade with a higher number of teeth generally translates into

WORLD'S FIRST WORM DRIVE MITER SAW

Skilsaw announced its 12-in. Worm Drive Dual Bevel Sliding Miter Saw ideal for cutting crown molding and trim. The saw features worm-drive gearing with a lightest-in-class design, enabling easy, accurate, cutting on any jobsite. The 15-amp dual-field motor is specifically designed to keep the saw motor cool on the job, enabling pros to tackle the toughest jobs. The LED shadow light

casts a shadow to accurately align with the cutline. Adjustable 0 and 45 degree bevel stops allow for quick and accurate cuts right out of the box. Dual bevel cutting capacity for both left and right cuts gives users greater flexibility and cut control. The saw also features an impressive 4x4 cross-cut capacity. Learn more at www.skilsaw.com.





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smoother cuts for finish applications. The type of material is also a factor; for cutting PVC product a carbide-toothed blade with 80 teeth or more will prevent chipping. A blade designed specifically for the application can increase the accuracy of your trim cuts, which helps when mating the joints. A rough cut might require you to sand the cut smooth, but the act of sanding can alter the shape of the cut, so it may no longer fit perfectly during assembly. Spare yourself the frustration on trim projects and use fine-toothed blade intended for trim. **EHT**



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NATIONAL HARDWARE SHOW PREVIEW



Get an inside look at the hardware-store industry by visiting the 2019 National Hardware Show, May 7-9 in Las Vegas, Nevada. For nearly 75 years, the National Hardware Show has been growing and expanding with new exhibitors, new technologies, new inventors and new experiences. It's the main attraction for manufacturers to introduce tools and roll out products for the new year. Here's a product preview of this year's convention.

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www.WolmanizedWood.com



ESTWING SLEDGE HAMMERS

Since 1923, Estwing has designed and manufactured fine American-made hand tools. The hammers and axes are forged in one piece of solid American steel to last a lifetime. Estwing will introduce a full line of Sledge Hammers & Specialty Hammers. By partnering with GROZ Engineering Tools, the new lineup includes Sledge Hammers, Specialty Hammers, Pry Bars, Alignment Bars and Splitting Mauls. Handle types for the Hammers and Mauls include "Indestructible," fiberglass and hickory. The Indestructible lineup is a premium handle in quality and price that includes head types for all applications and end-users: Hard Face (50-55 HRC), Soft Face (30 HRC), Copper, Brass, Machinist's, Tire Bead Breaker and Club. This lineup is touted as the

"World's Strongest Hammer" with its spring steel bar design and vulcanized rubber handle that absorbs impact and vibration. Visit www.estwing.com or booth 7831.

IMPERIAL BLADES

Imperial Blades is an American manufacturer that provides high-quality, innovative Oscillating Multi Tool and Reciprocating Saw blade products. Imperial's new 4-in-1



Drywall Blade tackles all your drywall projects. The blade features a Dagger Blade for exceptional control with detailed cuts; a Depth Gauge for precise cutting depths; Piercing Tips for easier



starts; and Shaver Notches to remove excess with ease. Also available are new sealant cutters and scraper blades: Rigid Scraper, Flexible Scraper, Flexible Mushroom Scraper, Tapered Sealant Cutter, 3-in-1 Multi-Knife Blade, and Straight Sealant Cutter. Visit imperialblades.com or booth 7235.

INSTATRIM SELF-ADHESIVE TRIM STRIPS

InstaTrim adhesive trim strips have patented, self-centering wings to ensure uniform positioning on any surface. The flexible material comes on a roll for easy use (also available in bulk rolls), and no special tools are needed. You simply peel and stick. The odorless adhesive remains intact with no curing time necessary, and its long-lasting professional finish is durable and low maintenance. It's an easy solution for uneven baseboards, imperfect wall corners and sloppy paint jobs. Use InstaTrim instead of traditional caulk for kitchens, bathrooms, doors and



windows. Custom colors are available. Visit instatrim.com or booth 5406.

SIKA POST FIX FENCE POST MIX

Sika Post Fix Fence Post Mix is a two-component, mix-in-the-bag expanding foam for supporting non-structural posts such as fence, mailbox, and sign posts. The simple application only requires the user to roll, mix and



pour. It sets in as fast as 3 minutes with high strength and resistance to uptake of water, sealing and protecting the base of post. It is compatible for use in cold conditions without the need for additives. Visit usa.sika.com or booth 4721.

FIELD-ADJUSTABLE RAFTER HANGER

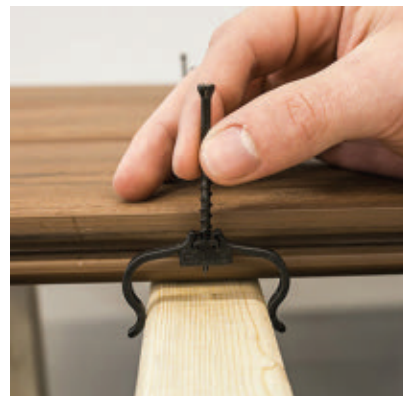
Simpson Strong-Tie launched the patent-pending LSSR slopeable and skewable rafter hanger. It's the first product of its kind designed to allow retrofit installation after rafter systems have been assembled in place, helping contractors accelerate



job sequencing for improved productivity. The field-adjustable LSSR features an enhanced flange design allowing for skew adjustments from 0° to 45°. It's easier to install than predecessor rafter hangers, and features an easily adjusted swivel stirrup that attaches to both sides of an I-joist for a stronger connection. Visit strongtie.com/LSSR or booth 7633.

CAMO DECK FASTENERS

CAMO has engineered a family of deck board clips that are so easy to use, they cut your installation time by more than half. The EdgeClip was designed for traditional 90-degree decking. Unlike typical top-down clips that require pre-installation, you simply attach the legs around the joist, then slide the clip into the groove. No pre-drilling is required. Simply slide the next board into place. For angled decks, use the



EdgeXClip: Simply squeeze the wings and insert in the groove. Attach the next board and drive. You're then ready to attach the clip using the patented Never-Miss Guide included in every pail. The Never-Miss Guide directs the drill bit onto the screw head for fast installation.

Also on display at the Hardware Show is the CAMO Drive—the fastest and easiest way to attach CAMO fasteners to any deck surface. Get off your knees and install decking up to 5x faster. This stand-up tool is so easy to use and versatile. First, you attach your favorite



drill to the CAMO Drive. Second, simply select one of three most popular fastening methods, the new CAMO EdgeClips, CAMO Edge screws or the new CAMO Face screws, then attach the corresponding guide and drive. Visit www.camofasteners.com or booth 7849.

GORILLA HEAVY DUTY CONSTRUCTION ADHESIVE

Gorilla Heavy Duty Construction Adhesive is a tough, versatile, all-weather adhesive. The 100-percent adhesive formula provides a long-lasting, heavy-duty bond. Marketed as "All Surface, All Purpose," the gap-filling, durable, 100-percent waterproof adhesive formula is perfect for indoor and outdoor projects, holds in 30 seconds, and bonds virtually anything including subfloor, mirrors, trim, drywall, landscaping and more. The Gorilla Glue Company has expanded its product line to include Gorilla Tape, Gorilla Super Glue, Gorilla Wood Glue, Gorilla Epoxy, Gorilla



Construction Adhesive and Gorilla 100% Silicone Sealant. Visit gorillatough.com or booth 4715.

WORX 20-VOLT JIGSAW

The compact new Worx 20V Jigsaw weighs only 5.3 lbs. and is highly maneuverable. Plus, the saw uses standard T-shank jigsaw blades, which are widely available at hardware stores and home centers. Not only does it cut wood, but accepts a variety of blade types to also cut PVC pipe, plastic, fiberglass, aluminum, copper and thin steel. The 20V jigsaw has a no-load speed of 0-2600 strokes-per-minute (spm) with a blade stroke length of 15/16 in. The saw's cutting capacity is 3-15/16 in. in wood, 25/32 in. in aluminum and 25/64 in. in steel. Its bevel cutting capacity is 0-45°. The variable-speed jigsaw is powered by a 20V MAX lithium 2.0-Ah battery. The saw features a three-position switch to choose cutting performance levels from fine to rough cutting with three orbital settings. This cordless model provides unrestricted use and is not hampered by a power cord. The handle has a rubber overmold on top for comfort and control, and an easy-access on/off trigger with lock-off button prevents accidental start-ups. Visit worx.com or booths 7806 and N101.





ADJUSTABLE FOLDING SAWHORSE

The XDD 34-in. Adjustable Folding Sawhorse is made of all steel construction and finished with a yellow powder-coat finish. The legs adjust from 22 to 34 inches for easy leveling on uneven surfaces, and the entire horse folds down when not in use for convenient transporting and storage. A pair of the adjustable sawhorses will support up to 1000 lbs. XDD Products is an international based company specializing in tool storage and organization with a full line of tool chests and cabinets, and other hardware products. Visit booth 6217.

JLX 24" PROGRAMMABLE DIGITAL LEVEL

Johnson Level's most robust and accurate digital level, the JLX 24-in. programmable digital level (model 5700-2400D) has the accuracy and durability required for professional applications. It features pre-programmed ADA compliance, drainage and roof pitch modes that simplify measurements for the most common digital level applications, but it can also be easily customized to meet your needs. This level is

easy to use—it features simple, three-button operation, and its dual backlit LCD displays on the top and front put the information where you need it. Both displays automatically invert when you are taking overhead measurements. The level's IP65 construction provides complete protection against dust and water. It also comes with a non-marring wall grip, and its crystal-clear vials were designed to never fog, leak or crack. The included soft-sided case keeps your level clean and safe when not in use. Visit Johnson level at www.johnsonlevel.com or booth 6323.

CANGUN1

SafeWorld Int'l. offers the CanGun1 premium spray can tool that features the world's first FullGrip trigger with a 3:1 leverage advantage. The CanGun1 makes spraying the contents of virtually all standard spray cans of paint, lubricant, adhesives, etc. considerably easier, while providing professional results every time. The patented pistol-grip accessory easily snaps onto standard aerosol spray cans, transforming them into pro-style spray guns with unprecedented control for hours of pain-free spraying.



The exclusive ergonomist-tested and arthritis-friendly design also makes it suitable for use while wearing gloves. The reusable CanGun1 is made in the USA with 80-percent recycled non-toxic plastic and recyclable packaging. Visit www.cangun1.com or booth 4909.

ARROW FASTENER T50 STAPLE GUN

Arrow's iconic model T50 is America's best-selling staple gun. Made in the USA, it features an all chromed steel housing, jam-resistant mechanism, powerful coil spring, staple viewing



window, and steel working parts hardened in a 1,500-degree furnace. The Arrow T50 has become legendary for its blend of functionality, dependability and sheer ruggedness. Additionally, Arrow Fastener will sell and service four classic American hand tool brands—Arrow staple guns and rivet tools; clamp products from Pony and Jorgensen; and Goldblatt masonry, concrete, drywall, tile, and painting tools. Visit www.arrowfastener.com or booth 6608.



DEWALT AND STANLEY WET/DRY VACS

Alton Industries will exhibit the DeWalt line of wet/dry vacs and air movers, as well as the new Stanley 3-Gallon Wet/Dry Vac (SL18910P-3). The new Stanley model delivers 3 peak horsepower, a 3-gal. poly container, top handle for easy carrying, and on-board attachments. Accessories



include a 1-1/4-in. x 4-ft. hose, a 3:1 crevice nozzle, gulper nozzle, foam filter, and a non-woven filter with clamp ring. Visit altonindustries.com or booth 6220.

HANDY PAINT PAIL

The HANDY Paint Pail 2500-CT was designed to make your painting projects a breeze. Ruggedly constructed for both professional and do-it-yourself painters, the HANDY Paint Pail will withstand years of use, is solvent-resistant, and works with any paint or stain. With its disposable liners, the HANDY Paint Pail is easy to clean and makes wash-ups fast and effortless. Features include a



magnetic brush holder, adjustable strap and paint scraper. Visit www.bercomincorporated.com or booth 5330.

TRIMACO PROTECTIVE PRODUCTS

The paint supply company Trimaco offers a full line of products for comprehensive protection of your next remodeling project. Rather than simply draping a sheet over something to protect it, the best practice is to seal the edges to prevent dust, debris or paint from getting where you don't want it. Trimaco's Easy Mask Tape & Drape Pre-taped Masking Film can protect areas where you want to catch drips and overspray. Tape is pre-applied along one edge of a high-density masking film, and a

special coating helps it cling to the protected surface—even in windy conditions or with spray applicators. For larger jobs, you can apply Tape & Drape masking film with the Easy mask QM5000 PRO, a handheld tool that makes it fast and easy to apply rolls of the film. Also available are drop cloths, folding mats and dust-containment systems to protect the home during remodeling jobs. Visit trimaco.com or booth 4634.

STRIKER FLEXIT HEADLAMP

Entering the market in 2019 is Striker's brand new FlexIt Headlamp, which eliminates the tunnel vision associated with traditional designs. Side-mounted flood LEDs allow the user to not only light up their focal point, but to also illuminate their entire peripheral view. Direct that light exactly where you want it with the positionable spotlight that rests in the comfort-fit head strap. The FlexIt Headlamp joins the already extremely popular FlexIt Series of hands-free lighting as another great option for a more versatile light. Stop by booth 7525 to check





out the new FlexIt headlamp along with the full line of innovative best-sellers, from the TriLight Motion Activated Ceiling Light to the Ultra-Sonic Garage Parking Sensor. Visit strikerconcepts.com.

FORNEY EASY WELD

Forney Industries has been a leader in the metalworking industry for over 80 years. This year at the National Hardware Show, Forney's booth will spotlight auto-darkening welding helmets, abrasives, and one of the company's recent innovations; the Forney Easy Weld line of machines. Carefully designed for any do-it-yourselfer, auto enthusiast, metalwork artist or hobbyist, Forney created the Easy Weld line with the hope that anyone can feel like an expert

welder, even when they're just beginning. The Forney Easy Weld 140 FC-i is a particularly notable machine. This welder is a flux-cored inverter machine, portable and incredibly user-friendly. Forney's booth will also feature the Forney Easy Weld 20 P Plasma Cutter. The 20 P is easy to use, generator-friendly, and features drag torch technology for precise and aesthetically pleasing cuts. Another thing worth seeing is Forney's top-of-the-line abrasive products. Among the most popular products in this category are the double-sided flap discs, which not only save users time and money, but simplify the finishing process by allowing two process applications to be completed at once. Visit booth 7425 or www.forneyind.com.



CHALK-TIQUE BY HOWARD PRODUCTS

Howard Products improves the process of creating chalk-style paint by using a unique Powder Additive for turning any water-based paint into a durable chalk-style paint. The Chalk-Tique Powder Additive enables anyone to make chalk-style paint from any leftover paints they have on hand or any desirable paint color from their local home-improvement store. Once mixed with water and then added to paint, the chalk-style paint is easy-to-use, durable, and can adhere to almost any surface.



Howard Products has also created a Light and Dark Chalk-Tique Paste Wax. This uniquely blended paste wax is the perfect follow-up to any project that has been chalk-painted. The Dark Paste Wax will slightly darken the paint and help create a "distressed" looking, aged patina. The Light Paste Wax helps seal, finish, and protect the newly painted surface without darkening the paint. Chalk-Tique Paste Wax adds a natural-looking satin wax finish that helps protect and beautify your new chalk-style painted surface. Visit booth 5519 or www.howardproducts.com.

QUICKCUT SAW GUIDE

BORA Portamate introduces its new QuickCut circular saw cutting guide, an all-in-one tool designed to achieve precise measurements and cuts each and every time. The QuickCut is billed as “the Swiss Army Knife of cutting guides,” with four preset angles for guiding your circular saw in making accurate and repeatable cuts for any project. It includes both Imperial and Metric rule, allowing for a quick switch in measuring methods without searching for a separate tool. Crafted for all types of projects, the QuickCut measures 14 inches on the guide rail for making long, straight cuts. It's built with a strong aluminum extrusion and a large grip handle for extra comfort and precision. Save project time with four common preset angles and conveniently placed ruler marks. Visit www.boratool.com or booth 8258.



MIGHTY MULE AUTOMATIC GARAGE DOOR OPENER

The new Mighty Mule Automatic Garage Door Openers are easy to install and simple to manage from anywhere. With super-quiet belt operation, a slim design, and Mighty Mule's easiest setup ever, the new openers present a good-better-best selection with several new enhancements. Each new opener incorporates a slim design enabled in part by the space-saving built-in LED lighting, and the lighting is protected with a lifetime warranty. Additionally, Mighty Mule's smart technology allows for remote control anywhere with a Mighty Mule MMW200 wall station, and is compatible with Amazon Alexa, Google Assistant, and IFTTT control. The top-of-the-line MM9545M model includes one MMW200 wall station, two transmitters, a MMK100 Keypad, 7-ft.

Belt Rail, and built-in battery back-up. It also includes a 1-1/4 HPe (horsepower equivalent) DC motor with a steel reinforced belt drive for super quiet operation. Visit www.mightymule.com or booth 6631.

METALTECH 4-IN-1 SCAFFOLD BENCH

The new 4-in-1 Multi-Purpose Scaffold Bench from MetalTech (sold exclusively at the Home Depot) has large locking casters that enable you to roll it right where you need it and adjust the height of its wooden work platform up to 6 feet. The bench has an 1,100-pound capacity, and the deck allows for a stable footing and a large standing space of 29-by-72 inches. When configured as a workbench, the included rails and attachment brackets can be used to install any brand of miter saw or table saw, along with accessory outfeed roller supports that attach to the end of the



bench. The bench can also be configured as a two-shelf storage unit for the garage or workshop. The included storage shelf includes a ventilated metal grid and side braces (200-lb. capacity) that can be adjusted to any rung height along the ladder sides.

Weighing 161.5 lbs., this durable steel bench is solidly built and easy to assemble, requiring no tools. The shelves adjust with handle-pull cotter pins, which simplifies assembly and day-to-day operation. Visit www.homedepot.com or booth 5624.

YARDFORCE LAWN AND LANDSCAPE EQUIPMENT

The Yardforce YF120vRX 120v Lithium-Ion technology produces the power and run-time of gas engines without noise and emissions. Check out the 22-in. self-propelled 3-in-1 mower, complete with two batteries and a fast charger. Yardforce also offers cordless innovations in pressure washers and blowers for greater productivity and ease-of-use. Visit booth 12629 or www.yardforceusa.com.



BLACK JACK ETERNA-KOTE SILICONE ROOF COATING

Black Jack Eterna-Kote Silicone Roof Coating is formulated to deliver superior waterproofing protection to your roof surface. Simply put, Eterna-Kote Silicone holds up in areas where other coatings fail, even withstanding ponding water. This high solids, rubberized coating forms a chemical bond to the roof surface, providing incredible adhesion and long-term waterproofing protection.



Although Extreme DIY'ers appreciate a good challenge, application is easy. Eterna-Kote Silicone is quick setting and rain safe in 60 minutes. Eterna-Kote can also be applied in a wide range of temperatures for a broader application window, giving you more opportunities to get your coating project done.

Black Jack Eterna-Kote dries to a bright white finish, delivering excellent UV resistance and keeping the roof surface cooler. Additional benefits can include reduced interior temperatures and less stress on HVAC systems. Eterna-Kote Silicone offers a lifetime warranty. For more information about Black Jack Eterna-Kote Silicone Roof Coating or Black Jack Silicone Roof Patch for repairs, Visit www.blackjackcoatings.com or booth 5021. **EHT**





WOOD PROTECTION FOR OUTDOOR PROJECTS

By Matt Weber

Wood remains the top building material for exterior projects because it has a lot going for it. It's affordable, easy to work with, versatile, and maintains a natural look that blends with the outdoor surroundings. But wood requires maintenance and occasional recoating to keep it looking good and performing well.

No matter what type of wood you have, whether it's pressure-treated lumber, cedar, cypress, redwood or even a high-end exotic hardwood, staining and sealing outdoor wood is the best way to protect it from the elements. For structures such as decks, fences, pergolas, and even outdoor furniture, I usually coat the wood with an oil-based preservative stain/sealer.

An exterior-grade penetrating stain/sealer is a water-repellent preservative that includes a "mildewcide," and some products contain ultraviolet light absorbers that protect from sun exposure. The resins penetrate the wood pores to provide pigment and block out the damaging effects of UV rays and water damage, while allowing the natural woodgrain and texture to shine through. The wood will have a different color tone after application but will feel the same to the touch (unlike the glassy feel of a film-forming sealant).

I prefer an oil-based finish because the tiny particles fuse together chemically into one large sheet-like substance, which achieves a hard, durable finish.

Applying a Penetrating Stain and Sealer

Photo courtesy Armstrong-Clark



After application of a quality stain/sealer, water should bead off the wood surface during rain.

I recently recoated a deck and fence, where the stain had faded and mildew was developing.

But even a quality oil-based finish will eventually need a new maintenance coat. If you plan to stick with a similar color of penetrating stain (and the wood is in decent condition), then a thorough cleaning might be all the prep work required for a fresh maintenance coat. Refer to the stain/sealer manufacturer's recommendations for best practices.

PREP WORK

Prior to applying the stain, heavily soiled wood surfaces can be pressure-washed to remove stubborn grime or gray, dead wood cells, but the high-pressure water stream can cause the surface to fuzz or splinter. The roughened surface can pose a "touch" hazard for areas such as deck surfaces where people may walk barefoot.



When using a power-washer, limit the outlet pressure to no more than 1,000 or 1,200 PSI.

If pressure-washing isn't necessary, and you only need to remove dirt and mildew, a thorough wash with bleach might be sufficient, but the choice in bleach is important.

Whereas chlorine bleach does an excellent job of killing bacteria and viruses, and will remove superficial mold, it has not been proven effective in killing mold on porous surfaces. This is because the mold's enzyme roots grow inside the pores, and chlorine bleach cannot penetrate the porous material due to its ionic structure. This means the mold problem will likely soon return. Chlorine bleach also damages the lignin in the wood, which is how the wood is bonded together, and this will make it more prone to aging and splintering along the surface. Chlorine bleach can also



The moss growing on the face of this fence board was one of many strong indications the wood needed some maintenance.

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To clean the wood surface, I used a scrub brush and a mixture of oxygen bleach.



I mixed the oxygen bleach with water and applied it with a pump-up sprayer.

SIMPLE FENCE REPAIRS

When applying a maintenance coat of stain/sealer to an outdoor structure, you're likely to find a few areas in need of repair. Since wood tends to move in response to changes in temperature and humidity, boards can twist and bend over time, putting stress on fastener connections. I came across a few of these yawning joints on a recent fence-staining project, where the boards had bent over the years and refused to bend back the way I had originally installed them. In some cases, the easiest way to address these problems is to bridge them with a piece of metal hardware fastened with exterior-grade screws to the mating sides of the joint. Your local hardware store will have a variety of hardware plates in various shapes and sizes. For the fence I used a couple of flat plates, plus a right-angle plate at a corner connection. If you don't like the look of the metal on your wood fence, you can always cut a 1x block stained to match the wood, then fasten it over the metal plate.



cause some deck stain/sealers to fail, removing the color tone and even some of the wood's natural color.

A better alternative is to use oxygen bleach. As found in laundry detergent, oxygen bleach cleans fabrics without disrupting the color or damaging the material. Oxygen bleach can usually be combined with water, applied to the wood and allowed to sit for 10 or 15 minutes, then it can be easily rinsed from the surface with a garden hose. Oxygen bleach can clean the wood without damaging the fibers or harming the surrounding vegetation, which eliminates the need to use plastic or drop cloths for protection.

APPLICATION

Once the wood has thoroughly dried from the preparatory clean-

Apply oxygen bleach thoroughly, coating all sides and edges of the project. After 10 to 15 minutes, rinse the bleach off the surface and allow the wood to dry.

ing, you can apply your choice of stain/sealer.

No matter what product you select, always thoroughly mix the stain prior to application. The solids tend to settle on the bottom of the stain container, and mixing will blend them evenly into the sealer to ensure a consistent color tone throughout the project.

For both horizontal and vertical structures, brushing is the best method for stain/sealer application because the bristles push the product evenly into the woodgrain



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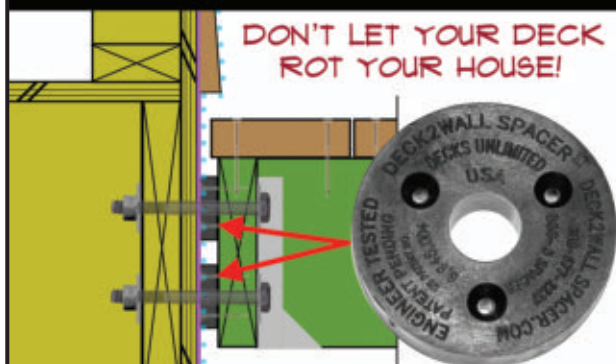
The **Squeeeeeeek No More®** kit stops floor squeaks through carpeted floors using a special screw that passes safely through the carpet. When used on hardwood floors, the screw breaks 1/5 of an inch below the surface of the floor. A small hole is left that can be easily concealed with wood filler.



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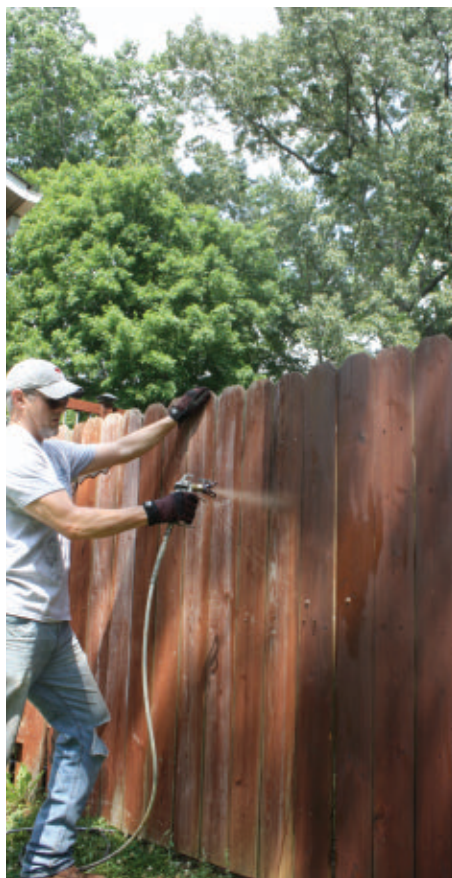
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WOOD PROTECTION FOR OUTDOOR PROJECTS



Armstrong-Clark is a brand of penetrating stain/sealer I use often because it seals the wood well and can be applied in direct sunlight.

I applied the stain/sealer to the wood surface with an airless sprayer. If using a sprayer, hold the nozzle about 10 inches from the wood and move it in a fluid motion parallel to the work surface.



Be careful with the overspray. Use plastic sheeting and paint shields as needed to keep stain off surrounding structures.

YELLAWOOD FOR OUTDOOR PROJECTS

Pressure-treated pine is a mainstay for outdoor projects and structural fixtures. Used by builders, contractors and DIY'ers alike, its sustainability and beauty differentiate it from all other materials. And, unlike composites and other alternatives, pressure-treated pine brings with it an advantageous price point homeowners appreciate. Here are other benefits to consider when choosing materials for your next project.

Naturally Beautiful—YellaWood brand products are made from Southern Yellow Pine, which doesn't need factory-applied enhancements to make it look like wood because it is wood. It has history, texture and distinction already built in. Plus, homeowners can change the color of their deck at will. In one weekend consumers can give their deck a completely new appearance.



Economical—Decks crafted from treated pine or other natural wood consistently provide a high return on investment. Rated well by contractors and DIY'ers for its quality, YellaWood brand pressure-treated pine provides a wide array of products through a vast network of dealers, allowing builders to create incredible structures with a budget-friendly product.

Broad Options—With YellaWood, you have access to numerous options representing a wide range of budgets and products. Available in many grades, customers can choose between everything from a rustic appearance to an almost clear finish. And, since YellaWood brand products are available in several retentions, projects can range from decks, their substructures and handrails to treehouses, fences and docks. Visit www.yellawood.com.

to increase absorption. Using a sprayer or roller can apply the stain more quickly, but both of these methods leave much of the stain on the surface without adequate penetration into the pores. If the product doesn't adhere well it can wear away unevenly, so you should still back-brush it into the woodgrain for the most consistent appearance and best protection.



For the best stain/sealer penetration into the wood grain, I recommend always back-brushing the product into the surface, even if it's initially been applied with a sprayer or roller.



Be prepared to "think outside the box" to address the needs of your project. On the shadowbox fence I was staining, I had to chop off the sides of a scrub brush so it would fit between the alternating fence boards and access the entire wood surface for back-brushing.

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After modifying the head, the brush slipped easily between the fence boards.

If you're recoating an existing project, a single thorough coat of new penetrating sealer should be sufficient to renew the look of your project and defend from the elements for several more seasons in the harsh outdoors. **EHT**

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oxine copper to treat end cuts. In fact, Outlast Q8 Log Oil is the only deck stain end-cut product on the market, so you can achieve your desired wood color along with the required protection in a single application. Choose from six color tones, including Natural Base, Light Gold, Medium Gold, Medium Reddish Brown, Dark Brown and Barn Gray. You can learn more about end-cut preservative treatment at www.outlastcta.com.



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A GOOD START

By Matt Weber

*Troubleshooting
Outdoor
Equipment
for DIY'ers*

Most of us have experienced the frustration of repeatedly jerking on a lawnmower's pull cord while the machine just sits there stubbornly refusing to start. This same problem can show up with practically any small gas engine, from trimmers and chainsaws to blowers and pressure washers. This article explains how to troubleshoot common small-engine problems and how to prevent future problems with better maintenance.

FIRST STEPS

If your outdoor equipment won't start, make sure the engine is filled with fresh gas. Old gas can cause problems starting. If you have last season's gas in your mower, drain your fuel tank and fill with fresh gas.

Other possible causes include a loose, dirty or disconnected spark plug in your lawnmower. Check it out, clean off debris, re-connect

and tighten the plug.

In some cases, you might need to replace it completely. Weak or bad spark plugs lead to problems with cold-starting or misfires during acceleration. Without healthy plugs, your engine can't sustain maximum power and will suffer a drop in fuel economy. Over time, deposits can form on spark plugs from interaction with the air-fuel mixture, which can lead to pre-ignition of the fuel and a jerky,

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inconsistent supply of energy to the engine. Also, extreme temperatures, debris, and normal wear and tear can cause the spark plug's gap to expand, which lessens the plug's effectiveness.

Spark-plug removal is a simple procedure, but some mower designs require a socket extension to reach it with a special spark-plug socket.

If the air filter is dirty, clean or



As spark plugs age, built-up deposits and an expanding gap can decrease their performance.



Removal and replacement of the plug might require a wrench extension and a special socket.



A dirty air filter should be cleaned or replaced.



On the mower shown, the air filter housing had to be removed to access the carburetor. Unscrew the two bolts that mount the carburetor to the engine.

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replace it. If you suspect fuel isn't reaching the engine, tap the side of the carburetor to see if it improves the flow of gas. If this doesn't work, you might need a new fuel filter, or need to give the carburetor a cleaning.

CLEANING THE CARBURETOR

Cleaning a carburetor can greatly improve engine performance and often solve other fuel/air related problems. If an engine sits for any certain period of time without having the fuel drained, the carburetor can suffer damage, cause poor fuel economy, or even keep the engine from running at all.

You'll find the carburetor attached to the side of the engine, and you can identify it by the fuel line that connects to it. On the Husqvarna mower



Remove the throttle cable and any other connections from the carburetor.



Take digital photos to guide replacement of the various components.

shown, I first removed the air filter to access the carburetor.

Clamp or plug the fuel line to avoid leakage. Use pliers to compress the spring clamp and slide it backward onto the fuel line, so you can pull the end of the line off the carburetor nipple. Expect

some residual fuel to leak out the end of the tube.

Use a socket wrench to remove the two bolts that mount the carburetor to the engine.

If the gasket is damaged, replace with a new one when you reinstall the carburetor.



Here's the intact carburetor covered with gunk and debris.



The carburetor will be sealed to the other parts of the mower with gaskets, so look for damage to the gaskets as you remove it.

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Unhook the throttle cable from the carburetor, along with any other associated connections.

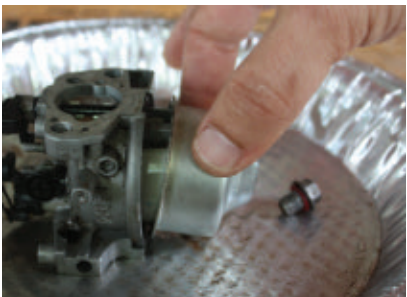
DIY Tip: Make reassembly easier by taking photos of the carburetor before removing and disassembling it. Take photos from several angles to provide a visual reference to help guide reinstallation of the various parts.



To remove the fuel line, use pliers to slide back the clip, pull the tube's end off the carburetor nipple, and clamp it so fuel doesn't leak out.



Slide the carburetor off its mounting pins, then scrub off all exterior dirt and grime



Disassemble the carburetor in a pan. First, remove the screw that holds on the bowl, then take out the interior parts, taking photos as you work.



Use a can of Small Engine Carb Cleaner to wash all the parts. A thin-gauge wire (such as a bread tie) can be used to auger out the holes and passages of the carburetor.



Spray the cleaner into every opening. Soak the components thoroughly.

To clean the outside of the carburetor, an old toothbrush makes a good tool for scrubbing off dirt and surface grime.

Next, use a screwdriver or wrench to remove any screws or bolts that hold the bowl onto the carburetor. A carburetor will have several small parts, so you should collect them all in a bowl or pan. Although carburetors vary somewhat in design, they usually consist of a bowl, float, needle, seat, rubber O-rings, etc. Pay attention to the fitment of these parts when dissecting the carburetor. Note: You might be able to find a carburetor rebuild kit that matches your model, and the kits will have replacement rings and gaskets.

Once the carburetor is completely disassembled, thoroughly spray all the holes or openings with

Small Engine Carb Cleaner, which should be available at your local hardware store. The carburetor needs to blend air and gas in precise amounts, and any small amount of blockage can impede its performance.

In addition to using the chemical cleaner, I recommend also threading a thin-gauge wire through all the little holes and passages of the carburetor. For the wire, a common bread tie works well (after using a lighter to burn off its paper wrapping). After the wire, spray all parts again with the cleaner to force out any grime or debris you've dislodged. Allow the cleaner to remain on the carburetor so it has time to dissolve any residual blockage. Do the same for the smaller components. Soaking the parts for an hour is not unreasonable, and I recommend respraying all surfaces several times for good measure.



Use the wire in every opening and passage to force out any unseen blockage.



The carburetor will have lots of holes and openings to mix the air and fuel.

After cleaning is complete, rinse off all parts with water and dry them completely with compressed air. Reassemble the carburetor with fresh gaskets, referring to the photos you took, and reinstall it onto the mower.



Reassembling the carburetor is the reverse of removal, but you should replace any deteriorated gaskets or other components. Carburetor-rebuild kits usually include parts for several models, so you won't use all of them.

PREVENTIVE MAINTENANCE

The reason the carburetor was all gunked up is due to the leftover fuel in the engine during storage. To protect gas-fired equipment, you should prep the fuel systems of the engines. Although some manufacturers recommend draining the fuel tank and carburetor prior to storage, doing so might make it more difficult to start when you take it out of storage. The fuel system must be addressed, however, because alcohol-blended fuels can attract moisture that leads to separation and formation



Store your equipment using a fuel stabilizer to avoid carburetor problems in the future.

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A GOOD START

of acids during storage. Acidic gas can damage the fuel system while in storage. Moisture can trigger corrosion in the tank, fuel lines, carburetor and cylinders.

This is true for lawnmowers, blowers, chainsaws and other gas-powered equipment. The problems arise in part because it's nearly impossible to get every drop of fuel out of the system, and when oxygen attacks, the remaining fuel droplets can create a gummy residue that clogs parts of the carburetor, which prevents the engine from starting and requires cleaning the carburetor. Fuel system plastics and rubbers are designed to live in fuel, and these components can become brittle and crack when exposed to air.

To avoid damage to the system, use a quality fuel stabilizer and fresh fuel any time the equipment will be sitting idle for an extended time. This is not only true for winter storage, but for any gas-driven equipment that sits up without frequent use, no matter what season it is.

Adding fuel stabilizer to old fuel will stop it from degrading further, but the fuel may already have broken down (gas lasts only a few months before going bad). For long-term storage, fill your tank 95 percent full with fresh, stabilized fuel. This leaves a little room to prevent the fuel from expanding and spilling in warm weather, but reduces the risk of water vapor that can condense and contaminate the fuel.

After adding the fuel stabilizer, run the engine for a couple of minutes to circulate the stabilized fuel into the carburetor and fuel lines. That's all it takes to prep your power equipment's fuel system and avoid having to clean the carburetor in the future.



Clean and lubricate your equipment on a routine basis to keep it running in top condition. The Husqvarna mower shown has a garden hose inlet that makes it easy to wash out the deck.

REPLACE THE OIL

Replace old oil seasonally. Run the engine for a few minutes to warm up existing oil so it will drain more easily. Stop the engine, remove the drain plug and empty the old oil (tilt the equipment back to get it all out, if necessary). Replace the plug and refill the engine with oil recommended by the product manufacturer. Properly dispose of the drained oil.

OUTSIDE THE ENGINE

In addition to prepping the fuel system for your outdoor power equipment, routinely clean the housing and outside of the engine. An engine clogged from accumulated trash runs hotter and shortens engine life. However, avoid using a garden hose to clean equipment unless the electrical system, muffler, air filter and carburetor are covered to keep water out. Water in the engine can result in shortened engine life.

Remove all dirt, grease, leaves, etc. that can contribute to rust. Lubricate all moving parts. Inspect moving parts for damage, breakage and wear. Replace if necessary.

Check for loose belts and missing or damaged parts. Examine all cables, brakes and wheels for signs of wear and damage. Make sure no safety features or guards have been disabled or removed. If you find anything concerning, replace the parts.

Replace the air filter every season, servicing it more often under dusty conditions. To clean an air filter, remove its cover, carefully remove the cartridge, and gently tap it on a hard, flat surface.

For lawnmowers, clean the underside of your mower deck by scraping off built-up grass and trash. This chore should be done after each mowing, but most definitely before winter storage. Keep finished surfaces/wheels free of gasoline, oil, etc. **EHT**



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Temporary Fence

Partitioning your Yard for Maintenance and Repair



By Larry Walton Photos by Mark Walton

Out here in cattle country, the ranchers and dairymen often partition off their pastures with temporary fences for rotational grazing, which increases production while giving unused parts of the pasture opportunity to recover. We can take a page out of

the ranching playbook by temporarily fencing off a portion of lawn for repairs and maintenance. For the most part, our kids and dogs aren't grazing on the grass, but they can damage areas of new growth and get into more mud than usual while repairs are going

on. Also, we will probably want to use some chemicals, and a temporary fence can keep our offspring and their canine companions safe.

We found a 100-ft. roll of high-visibility green safety fence at the home-improvement store for under \$50 (we could have gotten it cheaper in orange, but being Duck fans, we wanted to avoid an Oregon State Beaver color).

We already had lots of bamboo on the property for fence posts. Also among the random stuff I keep on hand were a supply of fence staples and some zip ties (aka cable ties). Additionally, we found tent stakes useful for sealing the bottom of the fence to the ground to discourage dogs from taking the "under" option.

One of the primary considerations when planning how to divide the lawn is access and traffic flow. We have gates to access the lawn from both ends of the house for doing yard work, so we terminated the fence at the house near the dog door. This allowed the dogs direct access to their side of the yard through the dog door, and when we wanted to switch sides, we could move the end of the fence to the other side of the dog door.

Keep in mind that the fence does not have to go in a direct line or remain square across the yard. If your access point is at one end of the yard, you may want to get more of the repair area by taking an angle. Your fencing route should also avoid landscaping features where sealing the bottom could get complicated. Also, be mindful of irrigation lines when setting the temporary fence posts.

STEP BY STEP



We found this 100-ft. roll of safety fence at our local home-improvement center. It is strong, flexible and can be easily stored for reuse.



Because of our siding design, we could remove a batten board to access attachment points for our fencing, which allowed us to staple to the house without worrying about extra holes. Depending upon your situation, you could also use a fence post at the house, or pin the end of the fence to the house with a furring strip. The idea is to make it secure while avoiding a big repair when the fence is removed.

Because the fence is temporary, you can leave some extra material on the ends and add fasteners



where it makes sense to allow for angles where you are following the slope of the ground, coming down off a deck, or going over or around landscaping features.



After drilling holes in the ground with an old spade bit (slightly smaller than the diameter of the bamboo), we drove our temporary posts into the ground. The posts do not need to be perfectly straight or plumb.



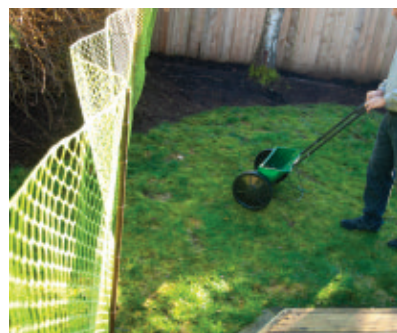
We drilled holes near the top and bottom of each post to accept a zip tie for attaching the fencing. We did this rather than going

around the post with the zip ties so the dogs couldn't slide the fencing up the posts.



We let some of the fencing lap out onto the ground to avoid any tempting openings for the dogs. We also fastened the bottom of the fencing to the deck in places and staked it to the ground where we had concerns about escape routes.

Our temporary fence allowed us to go through several steps of lawn repair including killing moss, filling in low spots with lawn base soil, and planting new grass.



When the one side was healthy enough for animal use, we switched the house-end of the fence to the other side of the dog door and finished the repairs on the other half of the lawn. The fencing was easily rolled up for storage when the job was done. **EHT**

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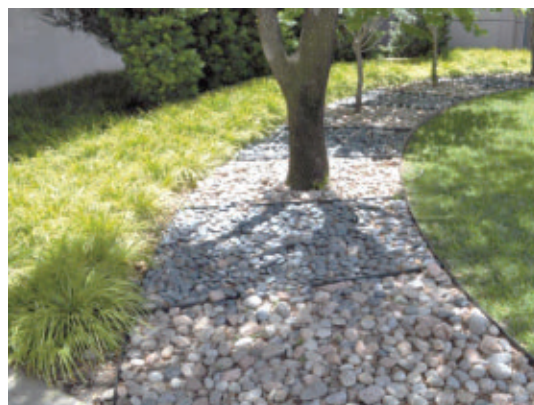
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