

HANDYMAN

To prevent plywood from splitting while cutting, apply a strip of masking tape at the point where you plan to start sawing.

Prevent moisture damage to shop lumber by placing lumber on a couple of old tires.

To find the length of lumber you want from your storage pile, mark foot lengths (1 ft., 2 ft., etc.) on wall or storage shelf.

Find wall studs by running an electric razor along the wall. The razor tone will change at studs.

Store separated nails, screws, bolts, etc. in baby food jars. Jar lids can be nailed to a board or under a shelf for hanging.

Use clamps when gluing objects for better holding power. Clothes' pins will work for small objects.

If taking an item apart that has many small parts, lay parts on double tape to avoid losing them.

When using a double edge razor blade, cover one edge with cork to protect fingers.

Sharpen razor blades by using the striker on a matchbook.

Keep a record book of when home repairs are done, cost and by whom. This is helpful if you sell your house, and in some cases, for tax returns.

Remove old contact paper by heating the paper with your hair dryer.

Label the inside of your fuse box, in case you need to replace a fuse, or need to turn off the power to a certain room or appliances.

Put a piece of masking tape or cellophane tape over drywall plaster before nailing to avoid plaster from chipping.

When installing paneling, paint a one-inch strip the same color as paneling between joints. If joints come apart, they won't be as noticeable.

For nailing small nails, place the nails between the teeth of a comb.

If the landlord tells you no nails in the wall, use a sewing machine needle for hanging pictures. The needles will hold up to 30 pounds.

Quickly patch nail holes with toothpaste.

On colored walls after patching nail holes, color with water color paints to blend in with wall color.

To avoid marring your walls when removing a nail, place a piece of wood or magazine under hammer-head.

Place adhesive tape around the center of the picture wires to keep pictures from sliding on hanger.

Wrap masking tape (sticky side out) around toothpicks, then place near the bottom back side of frame. This is another way to keep

pictures in place.

Unfinished picture frames can be stained with shoe polish. Use two coats, and after drying, wax with a good paste wax. Brown shoe polish will have a walnut glow, oxblood emulates a mahogany, and tan will appear as a light maple color.

Sandpaper will last longer and work better if the paper backing is dampened slightly before wrapping around a block of wood.

For sanding small hard-to-get places, use sandpaper on a popsicle stick or use an emery board.

When sanding small objects, attach the sandpaper to a flat surface and then run the object that needs sanding over the paper.

After sanding wood, pull an old nylon stocking over your hand and rub the wood lightly. You will be able to locate the slightest rough spots.

When drilling hard metal, on the drill point put a drop or two of turpentine instead of oil for lubrication.

Use a small drill bit first for accuracy in drilling.

For plywood shelves, if you don't have a wood molding, use color vinyl tape instead. This will give them a colorful look.

Put magnetic tape on inside of cupboard doors that won't stay closed.

Non-stick vegetable spray can be used to lubricate squeaky hinges, sticky locks, bicycle chains, etc.

Handyman_2004.txt

On door hinges, lubricate the pin with petroleum jelly.
Petroleum jelly won't drip on the floor like oil.

To protect a saw blade, split a piece of garden hose and insert the teeth into it.

Keep ladders from moving by driving spikes through the bottom of small cans, into the ground. Then insert the ladder feet in the cans.

Wrap burlap around the bottom rung of ladder to wipe your shoes before climbing a ladder. This will remove any moisture or mud from shoes.

Attach a rubber strip from an old tire to the top of a ladder to insert tools. Nail the strip to make pockets. Tools can be inserted before raising ladder.

Attach cup hooks to the top of your wooden ladder to hold rags.

Loosen old glue on wood joints by applying vinegar to joints.
Fill a small oil can with vinegar, and apply liberally to joints.

You can secure a loose chair leg by wrapping the loose end with a small strip of nylon hose or thread, apply glue, then reinsert.

Sticky dresser drawers will slide easier if you rub candle wax or soap on the runner on the side of the drawers.

Apply WD-40 on a rusty bolt for easier removal.

A rusty bolt often can be loosened by applying a cloth soaked in any carbonated beverage.

A drop or two of ammonia also will loosen rusty bolts.

Before reinserting a bolt, to avoid future rusting, wrap thread around the bolt and coat with vaseline.

To prevent rust on tools, place charcoal, chalk or several mothballs in your toolbox to attract any moisture. The first two are better choices unless you like the aroma of mothballs.

Check for gas leaks by lathering the pipes with soapy water. Any gas escaping will cause soapy water to bubble.

If your cedar closet no longer smells like cedar, lightly sand the surface. Sanding will restore the cedar smell.

On light switches that control lights that you can't see unless the door is open to that room, dab some red paint or fingernail polish on the on position.

Store leftover scraps of wallpaper by stapling them to your attic wall. If you ever need to make a repair, the wallpaper should have faded the same as the paper on the wall that needs the repair.

Tips on Screws:

Remember that left is loose and right is tight.

Apply soap or wax on screws for easier screwing.

Fill an empty stick deodorant container, (the solid kind that you

roll up as you use) with toilet bowl wax. As you need more wax, just turn the knob.

Longer screwdrivers have more leverage.

If a screw is loose, stick a wooden kitchen match or tooth pick in the hole and break it off, then put the screw back in.

You can also wind a few strands of steel wool around the threads of the screw before screwing it in to keep it tight.

For a wobbly drawer knob, paint the screw with fingernail polish before inserting it.

Or dip screw in glue or putty and it will hold tight.

On home appliances, for screws that keep coming loose, dab shellac under the heads before tightening them, this will hold them tightly in place.

Painting Tips:

When painting a room, jot down how much paint it took for next time. Write this information on the inside of the light switch. The color used also can be written down.

Protect shoes while painting by wearing an old pair of socks over your shoes.

If your paint is lumpy, cut a circle from an old screen slightly smaller than can. Place a screen in the can and let it settle to the bottom. Lumps will be at the bottom of can.

Handyman_2004.txt

Before pouring paint from a can, line the edge with masking tape. When finished, remove tape and rim will be clean for replacing lid.

Store left over latex paint in clean plastic milk jugs. Shake jug before using the next time. Label color, brand, and store obtained from.

A small amount of paint can be stored in small glass jars. Save for touch ups.

If you're not able to finish your painting job, store brushes or rollers that contain paint by wrapping with plastic wrap or freezer wrap and freeze. Allow to thaw 1 hour before using.

Place roller pan in a large plastic bag before adding paint. When your painting job is finished, throw the bag away and your pan will be clean.

To paint stairways that must be used, paint every other step one day and do the other steps the next day.

Paint small objects on a lazy Susan. You will be able to rotate the object while painting.

Remove paint spatters from woodwork with very fine dry steel wool.

Or better yet, before painting apply a coat of lemon oil on woodwork. Paint speckles will wipe up easily.

For tiny touch-ups use a Q-tip instead of a paint brush.

Handyman_2004.txt

Rid paint smell from a room by placing a large cut onion in a pan of water in the middle of the room. The onion will absorb the odor in a short time.

Or add a tablespoon of ammonia in a pan of water and leave overnight to rid paint smell.