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The Enthusiast's Guide to Home Improvement

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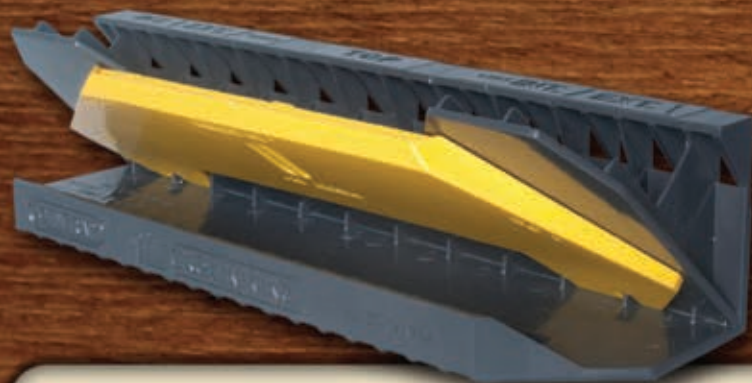


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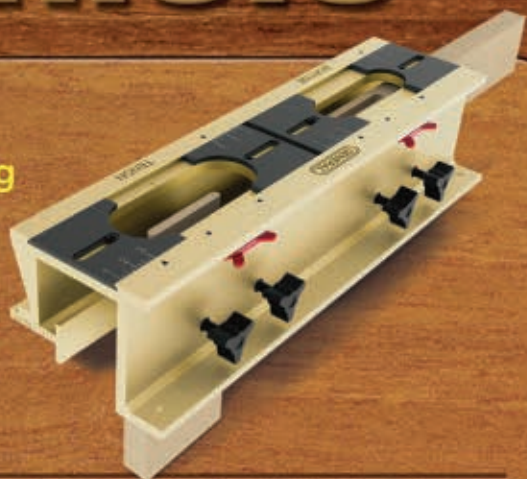


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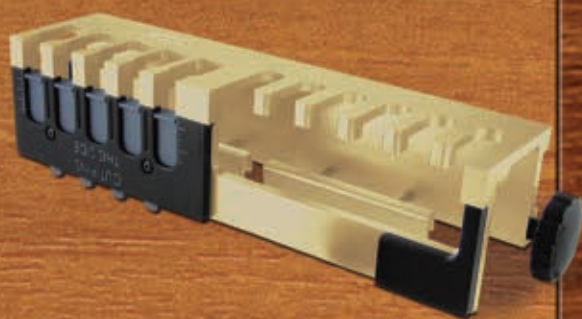
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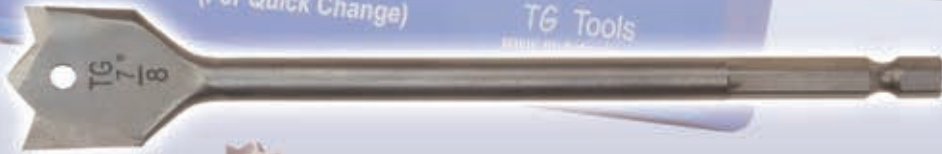
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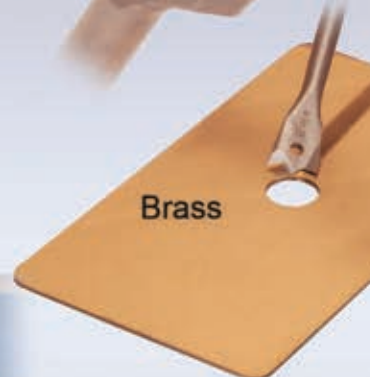
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# CONTENTS

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## FEATURES

### **40** Roof Top Deck Construction

Rebuilding a Rotted Deck on a Flat Roof

### **62** 15 Tips for Tile Installation

When it's time to hit the hard stuff—tile—keep these tips in mind for a successful installation.

### **74** 2013 National Hardware Show Preview

Sneak a Peek at the Big Convention



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# CONTENTS

## EVERY ISSUE

- 8** From the Editor
- 87** Advertisers Index

## COLUMNS

- 10** Q & A
- 14** Tool School  
Circular Saws 2013
- 30** Material Market  
Installing Urethane Column Wraps

## DEPARTMENTS

- 80** Quick Fix  
Open Sesame
- 84** Hot Products



Cover photo copyright Larry Malvin/123RF

An advertisement for DRYLOK Masonry Waterproofing. It features a man in a blue shirt and jeans standing with his arms crossed. Above him are three cans of UGL DRYLOK: Designer, Extreme, and Latex Base. The background is a brick wall with a lightning bolt graphic. Text includes: 'STOP DREAMING AND START LIVING', 'Does your living space stop on the ground floor because your basement is damp and uninviting? Reclaim that 1/3 of your home with DRYLOK® Masonry Waterproofing. Your basement can be a playroom, laundry room, workshop and more in one weekend.', 'STOPS WATER', '3 PROVEN FORMULAS INDEPENDENTLY TESTED', and 'DRYLOK BRINGS LIVING TO THE NEXT LEVEL'. At the bottom, it says 'Visit DRYLOK.COM for inspirational photos, how-to videos and brochures'.

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This issue of *EHT* should hit the newsstand right around the deadline to file your federal income taxes. Whether you're paying the piper or you're lucky enough to get a refund, the process of filing can be less than thrilling. I'm convinced that I can generally put my income to better use than some bureaucrat, so I file my own taxes to keep a close eye on the bottom line. For homeowners, it's smart to know what deductions can work to your advantage.

The tax code seems to change with the seasons, but energy-efficient home improvement credits have been reinstated by congress until the end of the year. Homeowners can earn up to \$500 in tax credits with the purchase and installation of qualifying products through Dec. 31, 2013. The credit is available to homeowners who added Energy Star-rated HVAC systems, roofs, windows, water heaters, doors or insulation to their homes last year or plan to do so this year. "Energy Star" is a product qualification indicating strict energy-efficiency standards set by the EPA and US Department of Energy.

To take advantage of the tax credit, be sure your projects are properly documented. You'll need to save receipts and the Manufacturer's Certification Statement for your records. The Certification Statement is a signed statement from the manufacturer certifying that the product or component qualifies for the tax credit. Manufacturers should provide these certifications on their website. You don't have to submit a copy

with your tax return, but you should keep a copy for your records in case the IRS ever comes knocking on your door.

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**Q.** I need to move some electrical lines to make room for built-in bookshelves. Can I get away with tucking the lines beneath one of the shelves with cable staples, or is that against electrical code?

**A.** You should always check with your local code official to determine what is acceptable in your area. However, a safe rule of thumb, and mandatory requirement in Extreme How-To's neck of the woods, is that the cables cannot be left exposed because they could potentially be damaged due to accidental impact, which is a safety hazard. The cables must be protected by some sort of partition such as wallboard. If you'd like to route the cables beneath a shelf, then consider using wire molding designed for corner applications, which creates a plastic channel with a small trim profile that can conceal and protect the wires in an orderly manner.

**Q.** I've noticed some cracks in the block retaining wall adjacent to my driveway. Is this a sign that the wall is failing?

**A.** The answer depends on the nature of the cracks you're seeing. Small shrinkage cracks in the mortar or binding material are typically harmless because they don't penetrate the entire depth of the wall. However, vertical cracks that appear open toward the top of the wall and narrow at the bottom may indicate a problem with settlement of the soil. Horizontal cracks may indicate too much pressure at the rear of the retaining wall. When a retaining wall fails, the cause is usually poor drainage. Make sure the wall is standing vertically or sloping toward the embankment. If the the wall is bowed or heaving forward, then it has a problem with pressure from water, the earth or both that can eventually lead to collapse. If this is the case, the wall should be repaired to prevent further damage.

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**Q:** I like the look of floating shelves for my kitchen. How do they mount to the wall without shelf brackets?

**A:** Floating shelves are basically made of flat, hollow boxes that have no visible mounting hardware. Depending on the method of construction, the hollow shelf mounts to either metal rods or a wooden cleat that fit inside the rear of the box and supports it from within. The rods or cleat are fastened securely into the wall studs for the best holding power.

**Q:** I seem to have low water pressure in an upstairs faucet. How can I fix this?

**A:** If the water performance is a problem only at one faucet, then it is more likely a “low flow” problem than a “low pressure” problem. Pressure is the amount of force that pushes the water through your pipes and is measured in pounds per square inch (psi). Flow is the amount of water that passes through an outlet such as a faucet and is measured in gallons per minute (gpm). You can check the home's water pressure by screwing a pressure gauge onto the hose bib located closest to your water main. Turn on the bib, and if it reads between 55-75 psi, you don't have a pressure problem. You should also check to see if you have a pressure regulator (PRV). If you have a PRV and the pressure is too low, you can try to adjust the PRV. If the pressure is okay, then you likely have some sort of blockage restricting the water flow to the faucet. The problem could be in the pipe, but is usually as simple as a clogged faucet aerator. Calcium and/or rust from the water heater or galvanized pipe can build up in the aerators and reduce flow to the fixture. In this case, remove the aerator, clean it and reinstall. **EHT**



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# Circular Saws 2013



*More power in a smaller package—that's the name of the game with today's handheld circ saws. Shown are the DeWalt DWE575, the Hitachi C7ST and the Hilti SCW18-A.*

By Matt Weber

**N**ext to the trusty electric drill, a good handheld circular saw is the must-have tool for the pro handyman and DIY homeowner alike. No other saw can perform as many cutting tasks in such an affordable and storage-friendly package. From ripping, cross-cutting, plunge-cutting and more, circ saws can cut partial kerfs, beveled edges and compound angles. Today's next-generation saws have evolved into wood-shredding beasts that offer more power and performance in smaller packages. This article will review a handful of circ-saw fundamentals for smart and safe usage, as well as highlight some of the latest models available at the hardware store.

## BRUSH UP ON THE BASICS

Anyone using a powered circular saw should have the following

fundamentals committed to memory, but when it comes to respecting those spinning metal teeth, everyone can use a refresher course.

**Blade Depth**—To avoid kickback and binding the blade in the kerf, set the blade of the saw so that only three teeth protrude beyond

the bottom surface of the material being cut.

**Start Blade before Cutting**—To avoid chipping the material being cut, bring the saw blade up to full speed before it contacts the cutting stock. If the blade is already touching the material when the saw starts, the teeth will often knock out a large chunk of material.

**Leave Stock Free on One End**—Clamp the work-piece to a table or sawhorses when cutting so that the cut-off section can fall away freely. Do not support the work-piece on both ends, such as cutting in the middle of two sawhorses, because the stock will bow when cutting, which can bind the blade and cause a dangerous kickback (and ugly cut).

**Support Sheet Goods**—Plywood, paneling, lattice and other sheet goods are often large, unwieldy



*For steep angles or compound cuts, it helps to retract the blade guard before cutting so it does not bind against the work-piece.*

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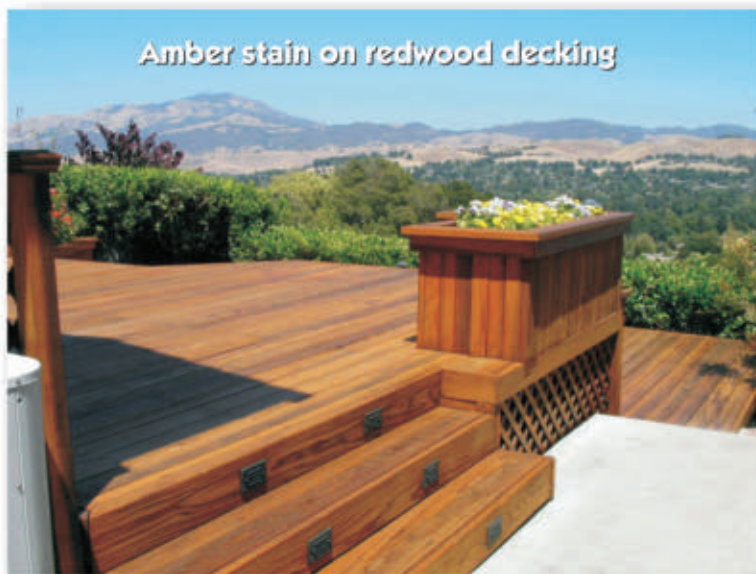
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and easily bow. When cutting, support the sheet with enough 2X4 scrap blocking to keep it flat and treat the 2X4 as waste material that your blade can pass through. Support the sheet throughout its entire length so the cutoff piece does not fall away near the end of the cut and tear out the material.

**Accessories Can Help—Long**

free-hand cuts with a circular saw can take a lot of practice to master. For ripping boards to width consider using an accessory rip gauge that guides the saw's footplate to help keep the blade in a straight line. For cutting sheet material, consider making your own cross-cut jig (see pp. 24-26).

**NEW TOOLS**

**Ridgid & Ryobi.** Ridgid offers a full line of contractor-tough saws available at The Home Depot. The Ridgid R32022 is a 7-1/4-in. framer featuring a powerful 15-amp motor, ratcheting lock levers, full-length front and rear kerf indicators, an integrated dust blower and a 0-56 deg. bevel scale. Our testers liked the new "Hex-Grip" handle surface that provides extra tack for slinging the saw around the job site.

The Ridgid R32103 is the company's worm-drive entry into the saw lineup. The heavy-duty worm gear construction provides higher torque and power for tough, everyday framing on the construction site. The 15-amp motor delivers plenty of power, and the saw features a handy Skyhook to hang on

Ridgid 32022, Ridgid R8651B, and Ridgid R32103 worm-drive



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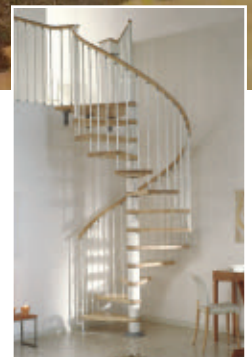
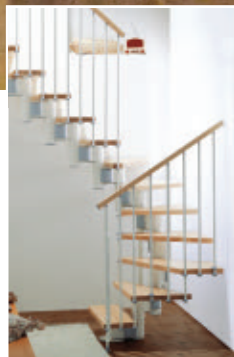


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framing material when not in use. The externally accessible brushes are convenient for on-the-job replacement.

The 13-amp Ridgid Fuego is a compact 6-1/2-in. saw that's billed

as the "fastest and lightest" framer on the market. And it lives up to the claim, as our tests proved the Fuego to be a big beast in a small package, zipping through 2x framing lumber



*The Ridgid Fuego is billed as "the fastest and lightest framing saw" on the market.*

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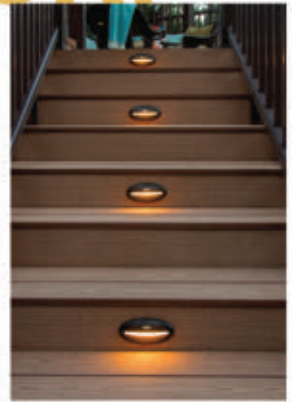


*The Ryobi P506 is a 5-1/2" compact trim saw.*

with speed and zeal unmatched by the competitors. It's easy to see why the Fuegos have grown so popular among pro framers. My only caveat is that I'm not a pro framer, and I've developed the habit of using my Speed Square as a cutting guide for my circ saw. However, the Fuego motor sits so close to the baseplate that it catches the ridge of the Speed Square during cutting and can't be used with such an accessory.

Ryobi offers the cordless P506 for trim carpentry applications. This 5-1/2-in. compact trim saw is a featherweight contender at only 4.7 lbs., but its easy maneuverability and 18V power make it a handy choice for light-duty cutting chores. The P506 is part of the Ryobi One+ Battery Program in which the lithium-ion power supply is interchangeable among many different tools. Visit [www.ridgid.com](http://www.ridgid.com) and [www.ryobitools.com](http://www.ryobitools.com).

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**Hilti.** Hilti manufactures top-quality professional construction equipment for many arenas of the global industry. The two saws we tested are the SCW 18-A and its metal-cutting companion, the SCM 18-A, each with 6-1/2-in. blades. Well-balanced and solidly built, both cordless saws whip through their respective material with speed and precision. Designed for work with



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wood and plastic, the SCW18-A cuts smoothly and easily when ripping a full sheet of 3/4-in. plywood. And we were particularly impressed with the unflinching

cutting action of the SCM18-A as we fed it 5/8-in. rebar. Plus, both saws offer plenty of working time per charge with the 18V, 2.6-Ah Li-Ion batteries.

Another notable feature of the Hilti brand is the confidence the company shows in the quality of its tools, as seen with its lifetime manufacturer's warranty. "Hilti repairs or replaces, at no cost, damage due to defects in materials or workmanship." Visit [www.hilti.com](http://www.hilti.com).

**Hitachi Power Tools.** Over the last few years Hitachi Power Tools has adopted a sporty new look that definitely sets them apart from competitive tools with more traditional designs. The 7-1/4-in. C7ST has a powerful 15-amp motor but remains lightweight and easy to handle at only 9.4 lbs. It has an increased depth of cut compared to its predecessor—1-7/8-in. at 45 deg.; 2-7/16-in. at 90 deg. The C7ST is backed by a 5-year warranty, comes with a hard carrying case and is priced less than the competition.

We also tested the cordless Hitachi C18DSL, a spunky 18V 6-1/2-in. saw with an LED work light, aluminum base and electric brake. This was the only 18V saw we tested that came with a rip gauge. Visit [www.hitachipowertools.com](http://www.hitachipowertools.com).



*A circ saw can be used to cut gradual curves and arches with wide radii. This is easiest to do with thinner material. Set the blade for a shallow cutting depth and carefully follow your curved cutline. If necessary, make more than one pass at a deeper blade setting. Here we're using the Hitachi C18DSL.*

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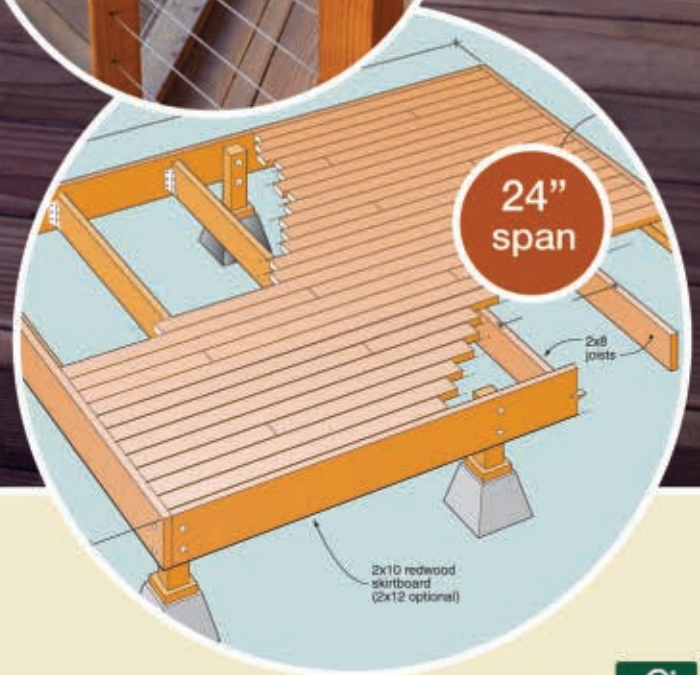
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*A cross-cutting jig works like a T-square for plywood panels and sheet goods. Make sure the two plywood jig components are joined perfectly square and fastened with screws and glue. Shown is the DeWalt DWE575.*

**DeWalt.** As far as corded power, the prize for the most compact, lightweight and thus most maneuverable saw that we tested is a tie between the DeWalt DWE575 and the Skil HD-5687M. The Skil was slightly lighter, but the DeWalt was slightly smaller.

The DWE575 7-1/4-in. contractor-grade framer has plenty of fire-power thanks to its 15-amp motor, and it offers a leading 0-57 deg. on the bevel scale. With so much muscle in such a small package (8.8 lbs.), I can see why many pro framers in our area are partial to the yellow saws. The DWE575 has cast aluminum shoe and guards, it's easy to adjust, comes with a canvas carrying bag and is competitively priced—recommended for both pros and serious DIY'ers. Visit [www.dewalt.com](http://www.dewalt.com).



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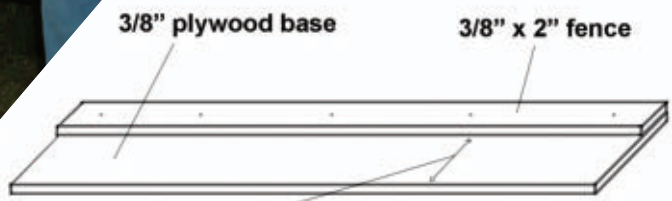
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Distance from outside edge of saw guide to inside edge of fence equals the distance from saw's blade to edge of saw's base plate. Pre-assemble jig with plywood base wider than necessary and then cut to size.

**Skil.** Skil offers three classes of saws for three different users. For everyday use on heavy-duty jobsites, the company has updated its original Skilsaw with the new Mag77-LT, which is the the lightest worm-drive saw ever. We see mostly sidewinders (direct-drive) saws here in the Southeast, but the worm-drive saws house the motor behind the blade, transmitting power to the

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The new Mag77-LT is 4 lbs.  
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For the mid-grade pro who  
wants a reliable saw at a reason-  
able price, the new Skil HD-  
5687M is the most lightweight  
saw in the 7-1/4-in. pro class  
market at 8.7 lbs. For both  
big jobs and small, the saw is  
equipped with a 15-amp motor,  
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*A thing of beauty: The new Skil Mag77-LT,  
the lightest worm-drive saw ever.*



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For the contractor, Skil offers the reliable HD-5687M. For the DIY homeowner, the Skil 5680-02 includes a handy laser guideline.

For the DIY homeowner, The Skil 5680-02 is a 2.5 HP 7-1/4-in. corded saw that makes a reliable choice for the weekend warrior, featuring tough magnesium guards, a "power on" light and a laser site line that helps the user closely follow the cutline when working. Visit [www.skil.com](http://www.skil.com).

**Bosch.** The EHT staff has used Bosch tools for many years, and the company's C21 model has long been our go-to circ saw. The company's new CS5 model features an unusual design for corded "sidewinder" style circ saws: The Blade is positioned to the left side of the motor. This means that if you cut with your right hand, then you have a direct line of sight to the blade, giving you the ability to make cuts with more accuracy and confidence. This is a big help for making "surgical cuts that require dead-on precision. The CS5 is a pro-grade 7-1/4-in. saw with a 15-amp motor and Bosch's reputation for quality.

One note about the left-blade saw: As a right hander, I hold the work-piece with my left hand and control the saw with my right. With the blade on the left, the motor and baseplate are on the right, which is where the majority of its weight rests. In a situation where I'm only trimming off a few inches or less, this puts the brunt of the saw's weight overhanging



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The new Bosch CS5 features a blade on the left of the saw for an excellent line of sight to the cutline.



The saw base of the CS5 overhangs the work-piece when trimming the end, which takes a little practice.



The 18V Bosch CCS180 is powered by the company's reliable lithium-ion batteries, which boast a 30-minute charge time.

the end of the work-piece and "floating" in mid-air. To keep the saw square to the wood during such a cut requires some extra grip and muscular control since the saw is otherwise unsupported—just something to consider before purchasing.

Bosch also offers the cordless 18V CCS180. With this 6-1/2-in. saw you get exceptional balance, "anti-sag" aluminum guards and baseplate, 50-deg. bevel and an easy-to-read depth gauge. The tool is powered by Bosch's time-tested lithium-ion batteries which have proven reliability and take only 30 minutes to charge. Visit [www.boschtools.com](http://www.boschtools.com).

**RotoSaw.** RotoZip now offers the RotoSaw, which utilizes spiral-saw technology to power circular blades that cut the most difficult building materials, including hardwood, rebar and granite. The RotoSaw can be used as a cut-out tool, a cutoff grinder, a flush-cut saw and a hole saw. When equipped with the right accessory the RotoSaw works like a tile-cutting wet saw, jigsaw or power shears (for sheet metal). The RotoSaw's 6.0A motor easily powers through dense, difficult materials with variable speed ranging from 30,000 RPM to 15,000 RPM. Visit [www.rotozip.com](http://www.rotozip.com). **EHT**



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# Wrap it Up

Installing Urethane Column Wraps



By **Kathy Ziprik**

**C**ontractor Steve Roth has installed more than three dozen column wraps and column wrap kits during the past decade. No matter how ugly, warped or twisted a structural column is, Roth finds he can create the perfect column appearance with easy-to-install urethane column wraps.

“Urethane and PVC column wraps are one of the fastest ways I know of to transform a project,” says Roth. “They install in less than an hour, and the kits have all the needed pieces. With the variety of

styles available from Fypon, I’ve been able to use column wraps on a wide assortment of new construction and remodeling projects over the years.”

For one of his most recent projects, Roth decided to update the look of the porch on a Civil War-era home in Michigan. He replaced rotted old wooden posts with standard 4x4 treated lumber posts. Then, to enhance the look of the home, Roth installed urethane post wrap pieces from Fypon’s Stone and Timber collection around the structural posts ([www.fypon.com](http://www.fypon.com)).

## **STEP-BY-STEP**

**Step 1** – Roth ordered four sets of the Post Wrap Kit from the Fypon Stone and Timber collection. He also ordered four Post Wrap Caps and four Post Wrap Bases from the same collection to complete each column wrap.

**Step 2** – Roth chose to paint the column wrap pieces prior to installation with a flat latex exterior paint. This makes the entire project easier, since you can paint the pieces flat on the ground and then need only to touch-up areas

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after installation where nails or screws were installed.

**Step 3** – Because there was no secure way to attach the top and

bottom of the wrap directly to the lumber posts for this project, Roth added inside blocking. After this was in place, he had an easy way to secure the wrap.

**Step 4** – Measure the length of the column and cut the wrap to length with a hand saw.



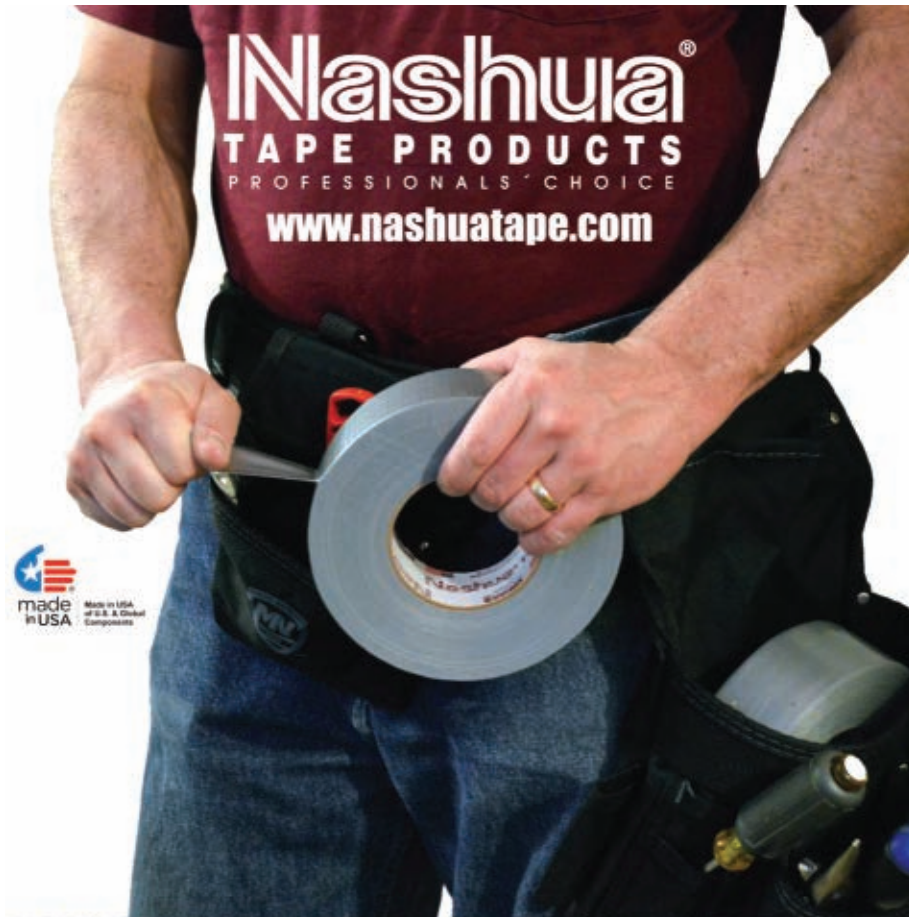
*Blocking was added to the post to provide a solid nailing surface.*



*Dry-fit the column-wrap components to make sure no further adjustments are necessary.*



*Apply premium construction adhesive to the joint.*



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**Step 5** – Place the U-shaped assembly in position around the structural post to ensure a secure fit. Dry-fit the U-shaped piece with the flat backer piece to make sure the pieces fit together.

**Step 6** – Making sure the panels are aligned, square and the miter seam is tight, use premium construction adhesive on the joints. Then secure the backer piece to the U-shaped assembly with non-corrosive finish nails or stainless steel deck screws every 6 to 8 inches through the outside of the shaft to the nailing blocks.

**Step 7** – Roth chose to add a column cap and base to the column wrap to enhance the overall look of the column wrap. These he secured with premium



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millwork adhesive and stainless steel deck screws.

**Step 8** – In areas where deck screws were installed, Roth added lightweight spackling, smoothed it out and then finished with touch-up paint. **EHT**

### TIPS FROM THE PRO

According to Roth, this easy one-person project took about an hour per column from start to finish. He used a hand saw, cordless screw gun, caulk gun, paint brush, premium construction adhesive and a ladder to complete each column wrap.

Roth offers these tips for contractors tackling a similar project:

**Tip #1** – For column wrap projects, first inspect the structural support post being covered. Make sure it's made of steel or pressure-treated lumber and in good condition before adding the column wrap.

**Tip #2** - Prefinish your materials before application. The Fypon products come factory-primed, and it's much easier to paint the products before they're installed and then to go back and do light touch-up afterwards.

**Tip #3** – Use non-corrosive fasteners (such as deck screws) so your fastener heads do not rust from exposure to moisture.



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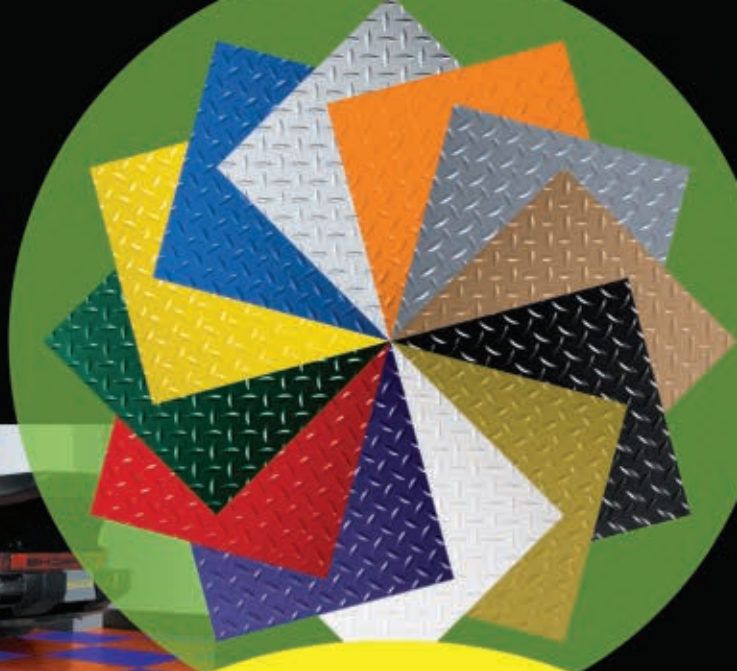


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They recently completed a project using a 1966 Corvair. The project is called the Electrovaire III, because back in the 1960's, the original car manufacturer tinkered with developing two electric versions of the Corvair.

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**BUSINESS** HighVoltageHotRods.com

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# ROOF DECK

By Rob Robillard

## *Rebuilding a Rotted Deck on a Flat Roof*

A client recently asked if I would replace her badly worn-out roof deck. This wooden deck was built over her screen porch and on top of a flat roof. It's not really flat: It's pitched 1/4 inch per foot, but without a spirit level you can't really tell.

Years of neglect and lack of gutter coverage above the deck had destroyed not only the deck but a window and the sidewall as well.

### **THE VALUE OF A ROOF DECK**

Besides being a great place to take the love of your life for a romantic interlude, flat roof decks are very popular among homeowners because you can use your otherwise unused roof space to create a private retreat and increase your outdoor living space. Many condos and apartment buildings have roof-top decks, patios and balconies instead of backyards or ground-level patios and decks.

### **FIRST THINGS FIRST: REPLACE THE ROT**

First order of business was to remove the old deck and repair the rotted house wall and replace the window in the same process. The window was in a corner where

# TOP CONS



# TRUCTION



# ROOF TOP DECK CONSTRUCTION



*This old, rotted deck and rail system required extensive demolition.*

*The joists had rotted beneath the deck.*



two roofs met and formed a valley. Water runoff from the roof valley was overshooting a damaged gutter and soaking the window. Water eventually entered the window sill area and rotted the 2x4 sill-framing and plywood sheathing behind the cedar clapboards.

Luckily we only had to replace a few 2x4 studs and window framing since the water damage stopped at the house rim joist. Once the framing and 1/2-in. plywood sheathing was replaced, we installed a new maintenance-free window and covered the entire house corner with Grace Ice and Water Shield.

Note: Ice and Water Shield is a self-adhering membrane that is mostly used as roofing underlayment because of its ability to provide leak protection for sloped roofs and to resist water penetration due to water back-up (ice dams).

We trimmed the window with PVC trim and sided the wall with pre-primed cedar clapboards. Care was taken to prime the end grain of the clapboards; to install rubber flashing at all vertical seams; and to use only stainless steel fasteners. We were looking for a long-term fix.

## REPAIRING THE WATER-DAMAGED ROOF FRAMING

When walking on the roof there were obvious soft spots, and you

could see that some of the seams were opened a bit. We were unsure what we would find when we peeled back the rubber, but fortunately the water damage was concentrated mostly at the low end of the roof pitch, near the outside wall.

We found that pretty much the entire last 3 feet of 3/4-in. plywood roof sheathing was rotted and needed to be removed.

At this point I was hoping that we only had rotted plywood



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# ROOF TOP DECK CONSTRUCTION

but experience told me that was wishful thinking.

Rather than cutting we simply pulled up the plywood back to the nearest seam, using nail pullers to remove the nails.

Once exposed we saw that about 8 feet of the 16-ft. outside structural beam was rotted. This beam or rim joist is supported by the screen porch posts below.

We continued to pull up plywood back towards the house corner, chasing rotted plywood and ceiling joists. We stopped when we got to solid framing, opting to continue a bit further to the nearest plywood seam.

Once all of the rot was exposed it was apparent that a prior repair had been attempted and not successfully so.

## SUPPORTING THE ROOF

Once we saw how badly the ceiling joists were rotted we stopped and built a temporary 2x4 wall underneath the roof and against the screen porch tongue-and-groove ceiling boards. Since the structural rim joist was rotted, this was necessary to support the ceiling joists and our body weight.



Much of the roof sheathing had also rotted and required removal.



The rotted wood was cut away from the framing.



New joists were "sistered" alongside the original framing members and supported on the ends with metal hangers.

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## ACCESSING THE OUTER RIM JOIST

In order to replace the outer rim joist and insert new framing into the joist bay, we needed to be able to actually stand on the outside of the roof.

Because all of the surface area beneath this roof is screening, access for ladders was difficult, and staging would take too much time and effort.

We decided to span the entire screen porch with temporary 2X12 framing, nailing it into the vertical support posts.

This accomplished two goals: It tied the posts together by supporting them while allowing us to place ladders all around the screen porch.

Once we were able to stand at chest height, we could then access the areas in need of repair and focus on removing the rotted rim joist.

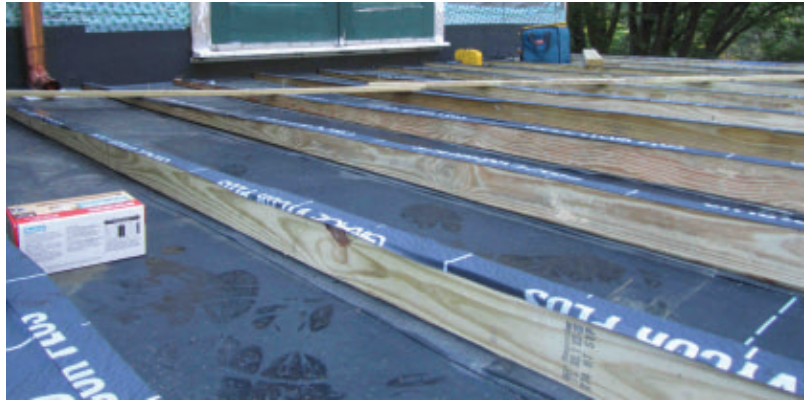
## REPAIRING THE ROT

In order to repair the rotted ceiling joists we needed to cut out all of the rot and apply new framing material against the old material. This is called “sistering.”

Note: Sistering a joist means attaching a second joist to the side of the damaged joist. It can also involve sandwiching the old joist between new material on both sides. Typically this involves framing lumber, but it could involve engineered lumber, structural steel or formed steel joists that are made of heavy-gauge sheet metal.

Sistering the ceiling joists was the most cost-effective solution because these joists were supporting a finished tongue-and-groove screen porch ceiling below that was in great shape.

Sistering joists can usually be difficult to do. While a certain size of lumber may physically fit in beside the old joist, getting the



After new sheathing was installed, the roof was covered with a single sheet of EDPM rubber roofing. Then, tapered 2x joists were installed to accommodate the slope of the roof.



After sheathing and trim boards were installed, the deck boards came next.

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# ROOF TOP DECK CONSTRUCTION

new board into position usually poses serious problems, due to walls, ceilings, and floors that were added after the original joists were dropped into place.

When sistering, try to go full length to support the ends of the new material being added. If that is not possible, attempt to get your joints as far from the middle of the

span as possible. Glue, nail and bolt or lag the new material to the old material.

In this situation we removed all of the rot and were able to slide full-length ceiling joists into the ceiling bay. These new ceiling joists would be directly nailed as

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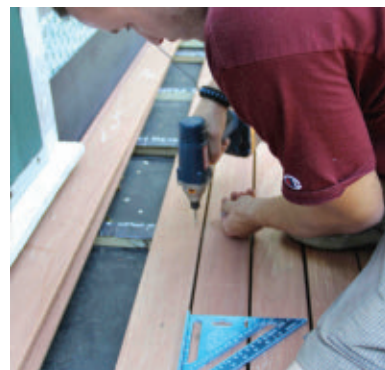


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The mahogany deck boards were installed with stainless steel screws and spaced 1/4" apart.



To prevent penetrating the roof membrane, the deck's rail system was designed with post sleeve supports, which fasten onto the decking and into built-up blocking in the joist bay.



Some of the width had to be ripped off the 4x4 posts so they fit into the post sleeve supports.

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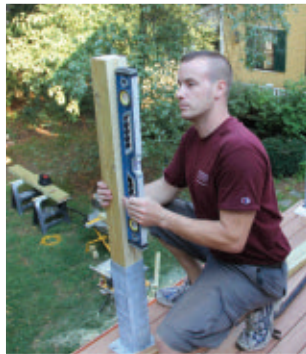
# ROOF TOP DECK CONSTRUCTION

well as mechanically supported and connected to the new double rim joist with galvanized joist hangers.

To sister the joists together we applied a liberal amount of construction adhesive and used a few 3-in. nails to fasten them to the old joists. We then went back and installed two 3-in. Truss Lock structural lag screws every 12 inches into the old joists where we had access.

We slid on the joist hangers before installing the outer rim beam, leaving the hangers loose inside the joist bay. There was no access below to add these hangers later.

After the joists were completed we installed the first of the outer double rim joists and directly nailed the rim joist to each new



*The posts were plumbed and shimmed as necessary.*



*Before completing the rail system, exterior wood stain was applied while the crew had unobstructed access to the decking.*

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New PVC fascia and crown molding were installed for a decorative enhancement.

The PVC post sleeves were trimmed to height on a miter saw.



joist end with three 16-penny nails.

The second outer rim joist was installed, allowing us to then fasten the joist hangers with 16d nails. The rim joist header was then attached to the screen porch support posts with long structural screws.

Note: A flat roof must be strong enough to support 55 lbs. per square foot. Our roof was certainly that strong when originally built, and I'm confident that our repairs made it even stronger.

### SHEATHING AND TRIM

We reinstalled 3/4-in. CDX plywood sheathing over the joists with construction adhesive and coated decking screws.

Next, in order to repair the outer rim joist we had to remove trim

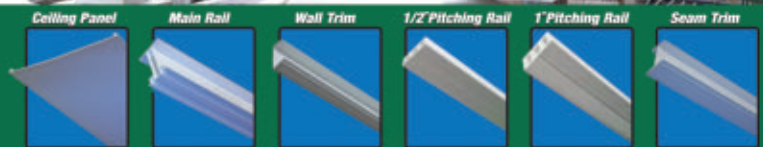
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# ROOF TOP CONSTRUCTION

boards and crown molding.

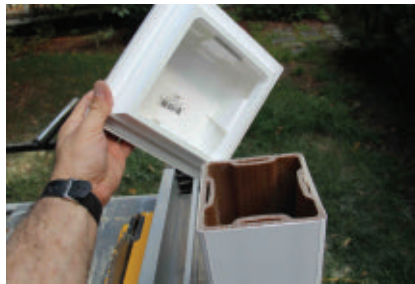
We decided to replace all of the trim and crown molding with Azek PVC trim boards and PVC crown molding, filling the nail holes with PVC Bond and Fill filler. PVC will not rot from weather exposure.

## INSTALLING THE NEW RUBBER ROOF

Considering that most roof decks leak due to seam or flashing failure, most often due to seam-adhesive breakdown, we chose to install a



*The posts are trimmed with a post cap at top and a post skirt at bottom.*



*The sleeves fasten over the posts and are engineered to allow for expansion of the wood.*

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# ROOF TOP CONSTRUCTION



Shown are the posts in progress.

The posts that met the house were ripped in half on a table saw.



full sheet of EDPM with no seams. EDPM is ethylene propylene diene monomer (M-class) rubber. Using a single sheet of membrane without seams is the best protection against leaks.

Regardless of the material you choose for your roof deck, proper roof slope should be added either during construction or, in post-construction, using a tapered (sloped) insulation system. I recommend using the thickest membrane and carefully sealing the seams.

On this project we installed the EPMD rubber membrane over the roof deck and up the side wall of the house, 18 to 22 inches.

## FRAMING THE ROOF DECK

Because this roof was slightly pitched, we determined that we could use 2x4 pressure treated lum-



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ber for our deck joists and then frame the deck level while still leaving an acceptable step down from the master bedroom's French door.

Using 2x4 stock allowed us that very small but necessary step down from the bedroom door onto the deck. In my neck of the woods I would have preferred a 6- or 7-in. step down to keep drifting snow and sloshing water away from the door's threshold.

The 2x4 "sleepers" or joists were left at 3-1/2 inches at the far end and taper-cut to 2 inches at the house end. We snapped lines with a chalk line and cut them with a circular saw.

We installed these tapered "sleeper joists" on top of scrap strips of left-over EDPM material to separate the deck joist from the rubber roof and protect it from abrasion.



*A 2x4 was used as the framing for the half post sleeve.*



*The halved sleeve slips right over the 2x4.*

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# ROOF TOP DECK CONSTRUCTION

We also installed Vycor, a thin rubber self-adhesive membrane, to the tops of the joists to protect the pressure-treated lumber from rain, snow melt and organic debris, all of which could eventually rot the wood.

Using screws we attached a constructed joist every 16 inches on center with a free-floating ledger board and a double rim joist.

This roof deck frame is not fastened to the house wall and sits on top of the flat roof. Weight alone holds this beast down; only the railings attach to the house.

## AVOID ROOF LEAKS WITH POST SLEEVE SUPPORTS

From a waterproofing standpoint, we chose not to penetrate the rubber roof membrane with our posts. Some contractors achieve this by



*A post cap was cut in half to match.*

*Next came the rail and baluster assembly.*



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# ROOF DECK TOP CONSTRUCTION

bolting their posts to the outside rim joist but that would have ruined the crown molding and copper gutter detail.

We took a different approach

and purchased Azek's post sleeve connectors. The galvanized steel surface-mount, post sleeve supports are designed to be mounted over the decking and bolt through



*The balusters are easy to fasten through channels in the upper and lower rails.*



*Measure between posts to determine length of your rail sections.*

built-up blocking in the joist bay below.

Once installed, I was impressed at how strong and secure they were.

## INSTALLING THE DECKING

All of the materials chosen for this deck are low-maintenance in nature except the decking itself. The homeowner wanted 1x4 mahogany decking. So we purchased deck boards long enough to eliminate any joints.

Spacing of the deck boards was important. Some contractors might space deck boards too closely, and then once they swell they don't drain water effectively and eventually there will be a



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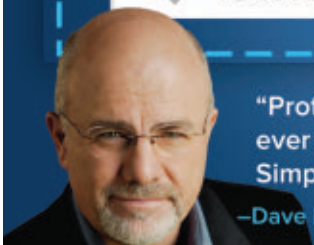
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nasty buildup of organic materials between them.

I aim for a full 1/4-in. spacing between the boards—especially since this is a rooftop deck. We used the edge of our Speed Squares to provide a consistent space.

To fasten the boards, we used 2-1/2-in. stainless steel screws for most of the deck and then had to reduce to 2-in. stainless steel screws because the tapered joists reduce in size as they get closer to the house.



The rails mount to the posts with special metal clips.



Clips at the bottom of the posts keep the lower rails aligned.

## INSTALLING 4X4 PT POSTS AND POST SLEEVES

Before we could install our 4x4 pressure-treated posts into the surface mounts we had to rip the sides on the table saw to get them to fit properly. It's important not to have a fit that's too tight because the PT wood can swell and crack the post sleeve.

Once the 4x4 posts were installed we checked and shimmed for plumb and then installed 5x5 post sleeves. The homeowner chose a decorative PVC post sleeve and railing system from Azek Building Products for its low-maintenance requirements.

Choosing to use the 5-in. rail post sleeve allowed us to achieve a highly durable, sleek, consistent looking post. It also allowed us to architecturally mimic the

look of a traditional wood-trimmed 4x4 post.

The design of the new 5x5 post sleeve contains specially located inner "chambers" that allow the sleeve to stay in place securely while allowing a traditional wood post to expand.

We plumbed the post sleeves against the 4x4 posts with shims and were then ready to install the railing system.

Note: To finish off the new Azek 5x5 post sleeve, we used a decorative post caps and post skirts. Small stainless steel screws and acrylic caulking held them in place.

## COAT THE DECK BEFORE RAILING INSTALLATION

We cleaned the deck and applied a coat of oil-based Penofin Exotic Hardwood Stain.



*The fasteners are concealed within the rails for a finished look.*

I prefer Penofin because it penetrates the wood's surface and permits moisture to pass in and out of the wood allowing it to breathe. The stain contains Brazilian Rosewood Oil, a flexible, water- and mildew-resistant oil that is sustainably harvested from the seeds of the Brazilian Rosewood tree. No trees are ever cut to produce this oil. It's easy to maintain and resists cracking, bubbling and peeling. There'll be no sanding required on next year's application—just clean the deck and re-apply.

I decided to apply the stain on the deck before the railings because it saves time and labor. Without the railings in place, I was able to apply stain to the entire

edge of the deck from the deck itself and not from a ladder on the outer perimeter. This cut at least an hour from my time and by not having the railings in place I didn't have to worry about trimming around the posts or under the bottom rail.

## RAILING REQUIREMENTS

The beauty of the Azek system is that the baluster spacing conforms to the International Residential Code (IRC) calling for on-center baluster spacing to be less than 4 inches.

The IRC also requires that a guardrail be 42 inches high and the entire assembly be strong enough to resist a 200-pound horizontal load (or 20 pounds

per linear foot, depending on the local code).

The Azek railing system meets this requirement and can be ordered so the balusters do not need to be cut to reach the 42-in. requirement. By eliminating the need to cut the balusters we saved time and labor.

Note: Check local code requirements prior to installation. Most building codes require that a 4" sphere shall not pass through the rail at any point.

## THE DEVIL IN THE DETAILS

We spent time making sure the siding and trim were installed properly by flashing all of our joints and not nailing anywhere within 8 inches of the deck, which ensured we did not penetrate the rubber roofing that ran up the side wall.

One detail that we changed from the original design was to run a horizontal trim board—called a skirt board—along the deck.


This board allowed us to install our fasteners up high as opposed to installing and fastening clapboard siding down to the deck, as was done to the earlier deck. The fewer nail holes, the better!

## DEALING WITH THE GUTTERS

Water damage had caused this roof to rot, which meant we needed to address the drainage situation. The original half-round galvanized gutters on this house were probably 60 years old. They had holes and were not pitched adequately. The homeowner opted to replace them with half-round copper gutters.

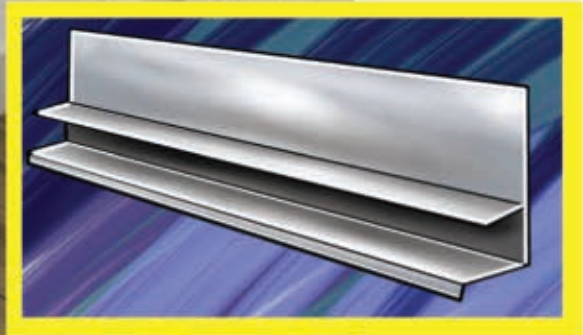
We cut a Schedule 20 landscape drain pipe in half and used it beneath the deck surface as a trough to channel the water from the downspout across the flat roof and out to the roof's edge where a lower copper gutter brought it to the ground. We reasoned that keeping the upper roof's water off the flat roof would prevent future problems.





"There are an estimated 40 million decks in the United States which are over 20 years old,

resulting in increasing deck failures every year. Nearly 60% of these failures were due to structural issues which led to 79% of all deck related injuries. Failure of the house to ledger connection was a contributing factor."



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*The final rail section tied into the area of siding that required replacement.*

### FINISHING UP

Once finished we caulked all joints and seams and did a thorough yard cleanup, including running a magnet around the yard to capture nails from the demo work.

For smaller projects like these we prefer to use a dumpster bag. Using a flexible lightweight bag that can instantly be transformed and perform just like a steel dumpster is changing the way I perform my remodeling services. It's a perfect solution for small renovations or cleanup jobs that are too small

for a dumpster, or where the location or budget can't accommodate a steel dumpster and its long-term rental costs.

These super strong and durable dumpster bags are puncture- and tear-resistant. The best part is that they fold up to the size of a small tarp and store in my trailer for those situations when I need a quick solution for job-site cleanup. **EHT**

*Editor's Note: Visit Rob Robillard's website at [www.aconcordcarpenter.com](http://www.aconcordcarpenter.com).*



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# 15

# TIPS FOR TILE INSTALLATION

*When it's time to hit the hard stuff—tile—keep these tips in mind for a successful installation.*

**T**ile has been around for thousands of years, and modern materials provide hundreds of design options. Not only does tile afford the installer a lot of creativity in the finished look of the project, but as a flooring material it does not burn, fade or easily stain when properly installed. It resists wear and can feasibly last as long as the substrate that supports it. The following are a few tips to keep in mind for your next installation.

**1.** A visual reference can make it easier to design a room's tile layout. Sketch a scale drawing of the living space on graph paper, including measurements, walls and any other obstacles. Tile is sold in square-foot quantities, and graphing the area can help determine the quantity needed. Also, it's wise to order about 7-percent extra to account for waste pieces and to have a little left over in case repairs are required.

**By Matt Weber**

*Photo courtesy Crossville Ceramics*

# 15 TIPS FOR TILE INSTALLATION



Photo courtesy DaTile.

**2.** Not only do tile subfloors need to be perfectly flat, but also strong and rigid. Any give or flexibility in the subfloor can lead to cracks in the grouts joints. Jump on the flooring in several areas of the room. If there are any signs of movement, then the floor should be reinforced prior to laying tile.

**3.** For floor tile, check the room for square. Use the 3-4-5 rule to check that the corners form right angles. Measure and mark a point 4 feet from the center along one wall. Measure and mark a point 3 feet from the center on the intersecting wall. A diagonal line between the two points should measure 5 feet if the chalk lines are at 90 degrees. In large rooms you can double the ratio (i.e., 6-8-10). If the room is less than 1/8-in. out of square within 10 feet, it can usually be disguised

within the layout. However, if one wall is significantly out of square, then lay out the floor so the tapered tiles will run along the least noticeable wall.

**4.** For floor tile, check for level and flatness. Checking for level is particularly important if you'll be adding wall tile. Set a 4-ft. level on the edge of a long, straight 2x4, to read over a large area. Swivel the boards to find and dips or bumps. Minor depressions can be built up with building paper, but a liquid floor leveler may be required for bigger dips. Plywood subfloors with high spots can be belt-sanded.

**5.** For wall tile, make sure the walls are plumb. With out-of-plumb walls, the tiles will necessarily have to taper in width as they progress up the corners, which can be very noticeable and

unsightly on a wall. It may even be necessary to remove the wall-board and shim the framing or install new studs to ensure plumb walls.

**6.** Tile should generally be installed on a rigid underlayment, which resists movement such as swelling and contraction that can damage the finished flooring. A traditional choice is cement backerboard. However, fiber-cement board can be difficult to cut and generates a lot of dust from a saw blade. For tile installed over a sturdy subfloor, consider using a new polyethylene membrane that "uncouples" the thin-set mortar from the subfloor to protect against material movement. For vertical installations, some of the newer tile-board products made from polystyrene foam weigh considerably less

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# 15 TIPS FOR TILE INSTALLATION

than fiber-cement and are much easier to cut.

**7.** For bathtubs and showers, run a bead of silicone sealant

along the edge of the tub where it meets the tile backerboard. For the best waterproofing, it's smart to seal all backerboard joints in a shower enclosure before installing

any tile. Once the tile is in place, avoid grouting the wall corners and beneath the first row. These areas need to be sealed a mildew-proof caulk.

**8.** A standard procedure for floor tile layout is the quarter method, in which the room is actually divided into four quarters to help sequence the layout. First step is to measure and mark the midpoint of all four walls. Snap intersecting chalk lines at the center point of the site, forming a square cross. Check that the lines form right angles. Start by laying a row of tiles in a dry run along each of the four lines, all the way to the walls, creating a cross of tiles in the center of the room. If necessary, use plastic spacers to keep the grout joints even. Lay tile starting from the center and working your way outward. Any cut tiles will be at the edge of the wall. All cuts should be the same size from one end of the room to the other.

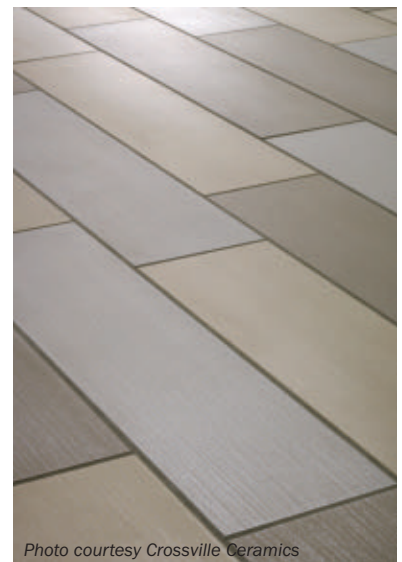


Photo courtesy Crossville Ceramics

**9.** For diagonal tile layout, use the center point established with the quarter method and snap lines across the two diagonals of the room creating an "X" on top

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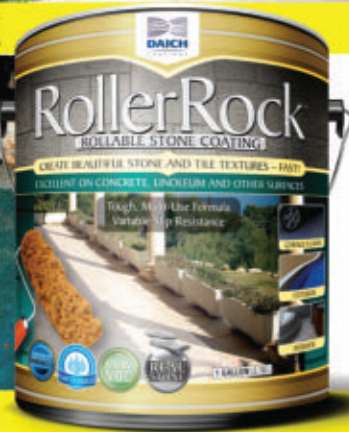
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Photo courtesy DalTile

of the cross. Then install the tiles as with using the quarter method. Make sure the lines are at true right angles and that the partial border tiles are equal in width.

**10.** Most professionals remove all baseboard trim before laying the tile. However if floor space is not a primary concern and the baseboard has a tall enough profile, you may be able to save time and labor by running the tile against the baseboards and concealing the joint with shoe molding.

**11.** The size of your grout joint is a personal choice, but keep in mind that larger grout joints are more likely to crack and attract more dirt. For the cleanest appearance with less maintenance, consider a joint as thin as 1/8 to 3/16 inch. If your design includes tiles of multiple sizes, consider using a 1/4-in. grout joint throughout, which adds consistency to the overall appearance.

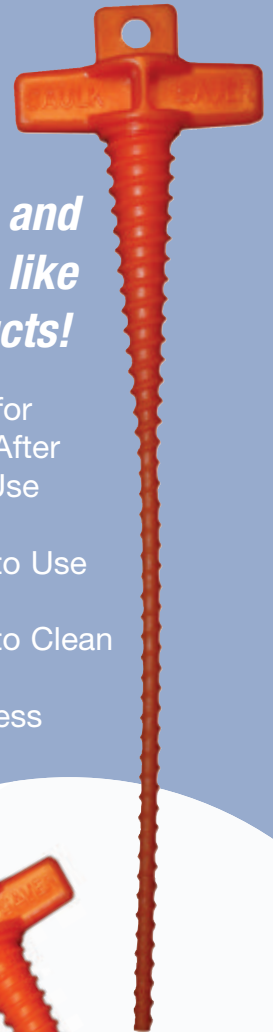
**12.** After applying the grout, allow it to cure overnight. On the

next day, scrub the floor with a damp, abrasive sponge to remove the grout residue from the floor. It's a good idea to repeat this for the next three days. If any grout haze remains, a solution of vinegar and warm water will usually remove it. Allow the grout to cure for a week before sealing.

**13.** Most ceramic tiles are glazed at the factory, but some types of tiles (natural stone, terracotta) may not be glazed and will require a protective sealer once installed. Regardless of the tile, you should always apply sealer to the grout to keep it from absorbing dirt and grime. This step is commonly overlooked since it comes at the end of the project, but doing so will protect against stains and make routine cleaning much easier to accomplish.

**14.** Consider mixing up your pattern. Some of today's most striking installations blend tiles of varying colors, accents, shapes and sizes to create a repeating pattern. To help visualize a complex tile pattern, Crossville Ceramics offers its free online

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# 15 TIPS FOR TILE INSTALLATION

tool, the "Pattern Portal", to determine the right tile sizes for your design. Additionally, the "Cross-Vision" tool allows users to mix and match tile and grout colors for

just the right look. Plus, the "Mosaic Builder" and "Backsplash Builder" allow users to lay out virtual installations, tile by tile. Visit [www.crossvilleinc.com](http://www.crossvilleinc.com).

**15.** Do some tile shopping, both at the local store and online. Today's tiles are available in countless styles and interesting materials, and you may be amazed at what you find, from glass and metal tile to faux wood and hand-painted mosaic.

## HOT PRODUCTS



### EASY DIY BACKSPLASH

TileQu!ck (sic) is a new and innovative product that allows even the tile-setting novice to install wall tiles with professional results. As an adhesive mat, TileQu!ck reduces the time and mess compared to traditional methods and materials. Create a beautiful backsplash for your kitchen or bathroom sink, and let your friends know that you "did it yourself". (Note: Tiles should not exceed 8-by-8 inches or 2 lbs. each.)

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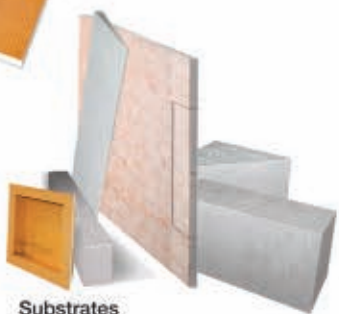
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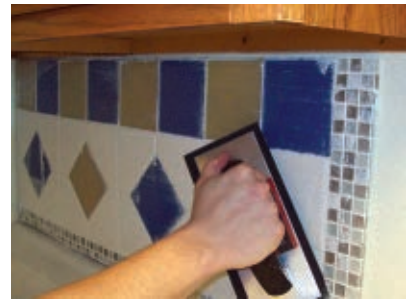
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View installation videos, tips and tricks at: [www.youtube.com/schlutersystems1](http://www.youtube.com/schlutersystems1)

# 15 TIPS FOR TILE INSTALLATION

smooth and level. Roll out the TileQu!ck mat and cut to fit. Remove the release paper and press firmly onto the wall, butting the seams but not overlapping.

Use a laminate roller or grout float to press it firmly into place. Clean any dirt or residue from the tile, completely dry them, then press firmly into the adhesive mat using



the appropriate spacers. Once finished, immediately apply grout per the manufacturer's instructions. Visit [www.quietwalk.com](http://www.quietwalk.com).

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side tips, a pointed tip for grout lines and a chisel tip for deep areas. It works with grout lines up to 1/8-in. wide. Visit [www.hydetools.com](http://www.hydetools.com).

### SUBSTRATES FROM SCHLUTER SYSTEMS

For flooring applications, The Ditra product from Schluter Systems creates an uncoupling layer that allows tile floors to move independently of the subfloor, preventing cracks in the tiles and

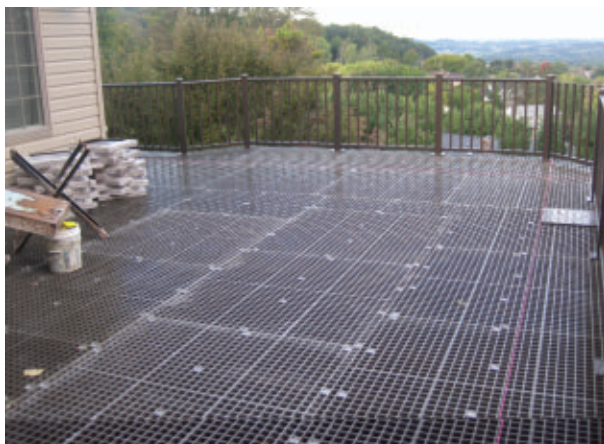
grout. This polyethylene membrane is only 1/8-in. thick and weighs 2 ounces per square foot. The latest innovation in uncoupling membranes, Ditra-XL, provides the same essential functions as Ditra but is 5/16-in. thick, allowing for even transitions between ceramic tile and 3/4-in.-thick hardwood flooring.



For areas with high moisture exposure, such as bathrooms, many substrates are not suitable for tile installation. These situations can require a great deal of preparation and waterproofing. In response, Schluter Systems offers Kerdi-Board as an easy way to create flat, level, plumb and square substrates for tile installation. In addition to being lightweight and easy to cut with a utility knife, Kerdi-Board is inherently waterproof and vapor-retardant and has workability similar to rigid foam-board insulation. Visit [www.schluter.com](http://www.schluter.com).

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a tile against a post or molding, simply scribe the profile of the obstacle on the tile. Then, make a series of closely spaced parallel straight cuts up to the profile line. Use tile nippers to remove the thin strips of tile between the kerfs.



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# 2013 SHOW PREVIEW

**T**he National Hardware Show is a fun show for tool hounds and DIY'ers. Held this May in Las Vegas, Nevada, it's the prime place for face-to-face networking between manufacturers and home-improvement retail outlets who are seeking new products. For a sneak peek on the cool tools and products soon to stock the shelves of your favorite hardware store, the NHS is the place to be. In case you can't make it to Vegas this year, we hope you enjoy this preview of hot items to be exhibited at the show.

## HYDE QUICKLY CLEAN GLOVE

Got a jobsite mess? Clean it up quick with the new, eco-friendly Hyde Quickly Clean Glove. Developed by a house painter, the Hyde Quickly Clean Glove has a patented weave that turns it into a "miracle glove" for cleaning almost anything without harsh chemicals. It removes oil-based and latex paint, caulk, adhesive, grease, dirt and grime and more, using nothing harsher than plain water or mild hand soap. Many products currently in use are chemical-based and labeled

"avoid contact with skin." By contrast, the Quickly Clean Glove actually buffs and rejuvenates skin. It is a healthful alternative to chemicals that are absorbed and dry the skin, and to Volatile Organic Compound (VOC) products that are being removed from the market. Visit [hydetools.com](http://hydetools.com) or booth 5915.



## DRYLOK EXTREME

DryLok Extreme is one of the newest members of the DryLok Waterproofing family of products. It has been tested by independent labs to hold back 15 PSI of water pressure (a wall of water 33-ft. high). It is a latex-based, low-odor, VOC-compliant formula. It has a mildew-resistant smooth finish and comes with a 15



year, fully transferable warranty. DryLok Extreme can be used on the positive and negative sides of buildings' exterior and interior. Beyond the traditional uses of a masonry waterproofer, DryLok can also be used in concrete pools, ponds, Exterior Insulating Finishing System (EIFS), as well as on and under stucco. For spray specs and product specs, visit [www.drylok.com](http://www.drylok.com) or stop by booth 5921.

## KIK SPADE BITS

When it comes to spade bits, the Kik Pro Series bit lineup from TG Tools offers an advantage that—to our knowledge—no other spade bit can claim. It is the unique ability to drill holes at a curve, changing direction easily during the drilling process. The Kik bits eliminate the spur commonly found on similar bits, which allows the Kiks to alter the drilling trajectory for curved holes. This ability makes many tricky tasks easier for plumbing and electrical installations.



Furthermore, since the bit keeps spinning at varying angles, it never binds and stalls in the hole, which is a common problem with spurred spade bits. Engineered with 30 percent more cutting surface, the Kik bits also result in longer life than standard competitors and rank among the fastest drilling spades on the market. Visit [www.mytgtools.com](http://www.mytgtools.com) or stop by booth 3647.

## BLT ROLL-OUT GARAGE FLOORING

The unique new roll-out garage floors from Better Life Technology, LLC, have all the attributes of BLT's traditional rolled flooring—easy installation, protection from stains and cushioned noise reduction—as well as multiple other benefits. This new concept offers a full series of designer floors to provide the look of hardwoods, granites, marble, epoxy or the classic black-

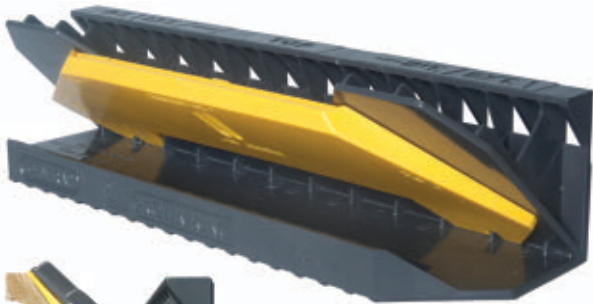


and-white checkerboard. Custom looks and images are also available, as in crests, names or favorite pictures. Imagine your garage floor appearing as a golf course or tennis court; the possibilities are endless. These vinyl floors can also be coated to resist the harshest of chemicals. Visit [www.bltlc.com](http://www.bltlc.com) or booth 3647.



## GENERAL'S E-Z PRO CROWN KING

The challenge for woodworkers has always been the accurate cutting of crown molding to create seamless joints at inside or outside corners. The new E-Z Pro Crown King (880) from General Tools & Instruments makes it a snap to cut crown molding accurately, eliminating trial and error and saving time and money. Unlike other crown molding jigs on the market, the Crown King requires no assembly and is designed for the ultimate ease of use. It enables professional and DIY woodworkers to produce inside and



outside corners with the three most common crown molding spring angles (38, 45 and 52 degrees). In combination with a

miter saw, the Crown King can create precisely joining angles every time. Simply measure the corner angle, divide it by half, set your miter saw to that angle, cut and fit. No complicated compound miter angle calculations are necessary. Visit [www.generaltools.com](http://www.generaltools.com) or booth 6240.

## FRANKLIN PROSENSOR 710

The ProSensor 710 is a professional-grade stud detector that is more accurate, faster and less error-prone than other products on the market. The ProSensor 710 senses the wall in thirteen locations simultaneously, then immediately illuminates the display elements that are in front of a stud, providing pinpoint location so you can work with confidence. It operates effectively even through difficult architectural features (such as wall and ceiling textures, uneven plaster, and paint, difficult wallpaper, etc.) that can



cause other detectors to fail. One-step operation simplifies the task: Simply press button to turn on, and the LED lights instantly indicate the location of objects, making it very easy to visualize the position of studs. Visit [www.franklinsensors.com](http://www.franklinsensors.com) or booth IS617.

## LYSOL TRIPLE-PROTECTION AIR FILTERS

The Lysol Triple-Protection Air Filter may look like a typical pleated filter, but it is anything but typical. In addition to trapping allergens at a high-efficiency level, it features an unscented, pesticide-free antimicrobial to protect the filter plus activated carbon to remove pollutants that average filters don't catch. It is the first air filter certified "asthma & allergy friendly" by the Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America. AAFA's Certification Standard is more stringent than the industry norm testing (ASHRAE MERV) and uses actual allergens in the laboratory. Testing proves that



the affordably priced Lysol Triple-Protection Air Filter traps at least 95 percent of pollen, 92 percent of dust-mite allergen, and 85 percent of pet dander. These common allergens can trigger allergic reactions and represent a vast range of micron particle sizes. Cat dander can be as small as a fraction of a micron. Visit [www.LysolFilters.info](http://www.LysolFilters.info) or stop by booth 3010.

## GRK "DECKING TEAM" FASTENERS

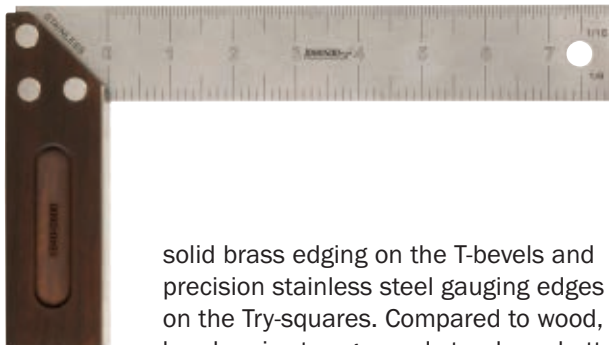
The GRK Decking Team consists of three styles of GRK's high-performance, high-quality fasteners for creating the strongest, most secure deck in the neighborhood. First is the RSS—the Rugged Structural Screw. Forget pre-drilling for lags; it's not worth your precious time. The RSS will slice into the posts,



ledger boards and handrails like a knife through warm butter. Once you've easily established that rock solid foundation it's time for the most vicious of multi-purpose screws, and the R4 will have your deck boards secured to those joists in no time. If you've gone the composite decking route, simply substitute the R4 with GRK's Kameleon Composite Deck Screw, which is available in many sizes and colors that match today's most popular composite decking. Finally, use GRK's Finishing Screws to complete your new deck with aesthetically pleasing trim work and caps. The tiny head on the FIN/TRIM screws hide within the trim work, making them nearly invisible. Visit [www.grkfasteners.com](http://www.grkfasteners.com) or stop by booth 3646.

### JOHNSON LEVEL BAMBOO-HANDLED TOOLS

Johnson Level & Tool offers two bamboo versions of the T-bevel and Try-square, one with a traditional bamboo handle and the other with a carbonized bamboo handle. Carbonization of bamboo provides a richer, more elegant finish "for the true artisan". All models offer a stainless steel blade that will never rust or corrode and a finely routed handgrip, completed with



solid brass edging on the T-bevels and precision stainless steel gauging edges on the Try-squares. Compared to wood, bamboo is stronger and stands up better in both dry and damp climates. Bamboo

has the tensile strength of steel, resists moisture and is sustainable to the rigors of everyday use on a job site. Visit [www.johnsonlevel.com](http://www.johnsonlevel.com) or booth 6323.

### QUICK DAM

Quick Dam flood-control products provide a compact, quick and easy solution for flood concerns. Just one inch of water can cause significant property damage and with limited flood insurance options, flooding is a growing concern. Recommended for fresh water applications, Quick Dam Flood Barriers and Sandless Sandbags weigh less than one pound each, making it easy to carry several at a time. Activate the super-absorbent contents with water, and in just minutes



they will swell and create a barrier to contain or divert floodwater. They are designed for indoor or outdoor use against nuisance rainwater and moderate flooding. Quick Dam Water-Gates are ideal for salt or fresh water applications. These self-rising barriers activated by water, with wall heights from 6 inches to 5 feet and connectable lengths of 25 to 50 feet, are ideal for responding to all types of flooding. Visit [www.absorb-sp.com](http://www.absorb-sp.com) or booth 1910.

### EVAPO-RUST

Rusty tools have met their match. Evapo-Rust is non-corrosive to steel and does not harm brass, copper, aluminum, gold, lead, titanium, steel, cast iron, chrome, solder points, vinyl, plastic, rubber, silicone, glass, cork or wood. The product has an in-definite shelf life and can be used over and over until it absolutely stops working. On average, one gallon de-rusts up to 300 pounds of light to moderately rusted steel. Fully immerse the rusted item in Evapo-Rust and check progress in about 30 minutes. No scrubbing is necessary. Soak times will vary from 30 minutes to 24 hours, depending on severity of rust, type of steel and temperature. Visit [www.evapo-rust.com](http://www.evapo-rust.com) or booth 4346.





## SAFETY GUARD RAILINGS

Safety Railings with a simple design provide peace of mind, knowing that your site supervisors, inspectors, trades and potential home buyers are safe while in homes under construction. A number of products are available from Guard Railing & Ramp Rentals and Sales Ltd. The Interlocking Steps, which make two steps or six steps, are easy to assemble and set up, providing you the flexibility to adjust height and gain



quick access to the home. This can allow access for the homeowner before the final phase of your project, and also provide an easy way for trades, site supervisors, etc. to access the home. The Railing Systems

provide fall protection for unfinished "open to below" construction applications as well as the stairway systems. Learn more at [www.guardrailingramp.com](http://www.guardrailingramp.com) or visit booth 3548.

## LEAK STOPPER RUBBER-FLEXX

The new Leak Stopper Rubber-Flexx spray sealer is a long-lasting rubberized repair product specially formulated to penetrate deep into damaged areas and stop roof leaks instantly. With the addition of liquid rubber, this flexible, high-performance sealant provides a superior watertight bond that will stop problem leaks for good. Rubber-Flexx is ideal for a variety of roof surfaces including shingles, metal roofs, chimneys, skylights, gutters, pipes and many other surfaces. Visit [www.gardner-gibson.com](http://www.gardner-gibson.com) or booth 5212. **EHT**





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# Open Sesame

*Garage door backup-battery dead? Here's how to bring it back to life.*



By Bruce W. Smith

**G**arage doors with backup batteries are a common site in homes across the country where storms bring frequent power outages.

But the backup battery doesn't live forever, despite the built-in battery charging systems found in many of the better systems. Long periods without power, or frequent periods of using the standby battery pack before power is restored, eventually takes a toll.

Fortunately, there's an easy solution: Replace the batteries inside the backup pack. The fix takes less than 20 minutes and costs less than \$30.

The batteries in my Sears DieHard garage door opener backup battery system is the same as those found in thousands of others—a pair of 12V / 5Ah units that are common in home security systems' backup batteries.

I found the replacement batteries at eComElectronics.com for \$30/pair with free shipping—or about 1/3 the price of Sears replacement batteries. (The same battery fits a host of other brand's garage door backup systems, including Liftmaster and Chamberlain.)

Replacement requires nothing more than removing the four

screws that hold the top of the backup battery pack in place, disconnecting each battery's wire from the circuit board, crimping on spade connectors to the new batteries' leads, and dropping them in place of the old batteries.

Now if the power goes out, push the garage door control and ... open sesame.



This Sears DieHard garage door opener battery backup lasted for 8 years before the internal batteries died.



The plastic top is held in place by four self-threading screws that are easily removed



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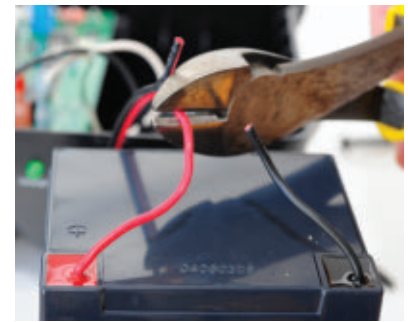
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## QUICK FIX

The backup battery system consists of two 5Ah rechargeable batteries (Sears #41B822) that plug into the smart circuitry. To remove, unplug the connecting wires from the circuit board.



This UB1250 battery (eCom #4228) is the direct replacement for the Sears 41B822. Street price is about \$15.



New batteries come with universal 18-ga. spade terminals. So the wires have to be cut from the old batteries and fitted with spade connectors.

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Guard Railing has developed a quick and easy safety railing that installs quickly, is neat and tidy, and offers max fall protection. Developed to meet safety regulations when installed properly, made of

durable steel construction and painted bright orange, the 4B System is quickly becoming the railing of choice for residential construction sites. Have the peace of mind knowing that when you have the 4B System installed, your trades, site supers, inspectors and potential home owners doing walk throughs are safe.

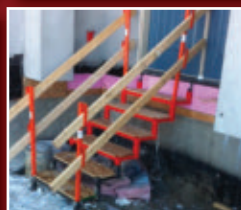
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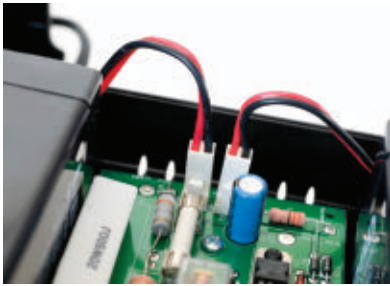
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Reinstall the new batteries and plug the connector wires back into the control board.



New batteries are in place. You may have to bend the terminal at the "top" of each battery so it clears the edges. (Original battery wires were built into the battery itself.)



Replace the top. In some instances a little minor trimming on the underside of the top is needed to clear the upper spade terminal on each battery. **EHT**

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## MANTIS DECK CLIPS



The Mantis Deck Clip System system is designed to provide a hidden fastener solution for slotted decking made from PVC, composites or wood products. The Mantis can be installed with a typical screw gun, or use the company's coil-fed NailScrew pneumatic gun to install the Mantis clips even faster. The Mantis clips elevate the deck boards off the joists, which allows the boards to completely dry, protecting against mold and rot. The system ensures no visible fasteners on the deck surface. Even the first and last boards are free of surface fasteners, unlike other systems. The Mantis clips come in a box for 50 square feet of coverage or a contractor bucket for 250 square feet of coverage, with screws included. Visit Ty-Lan Enterprises at [www.suredrive.com](http://www.suredrive.com).

## ORECK PUSH POWER SWEEPER PPS31D

The patented turbo sweeping system of the Oreck PPS31D sweeps a 31-in. path using two circular brooms in addition to a large brush roller. Everything from fine sand, street dirt, wet and dry leaves, stones, cigarette butts and even cans can be whisked away without the need for electricity. Yards, sidewalks, halls, machine shops or warehouses can be quickly cleaned with minimal energy. The wear-resistant, beltless direct drive and dust-protected ball bearings ensure easy maneuvering and a long service life. Protruding circular brushes and sweeping-pressure adjustment ensure maximum cleanliness even in those hard-to-reach corners and edges. The large brush roller on the bottom picks up all the fine particles, and all the debris is then deposited into the large, easy-to-empty 13.2-gallon container. Visit [www.oreckcommercial.com](http://www.oreckcommercial.com).



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# HOT PRODUCTS

## MR. BEAMS LED UNDER-CABINET LIGHT

Mr. Beams LED Under-Cabinet Light is a low-cost, wireless lighting option that is perfect for those dark spaces in and around the home. This is the first, bright DIY LED Under-Cabinet light to hit the market and retails for \$29.99 for two. Roughly the size of an iPhone, each light sheds 40 lumens of light to brighten countertops, closets, pantries, etc. Even better, it has a hands-free motion sensor so it saves energy and only turns on when someone is in the area. The light also features an adjustable auto shut-off time. Available in white or brown to blend in with the most common home décor, the light installs simply with tape—no electrician needed. Visit [www.mrbeams.com](http://www.mrbeams.com).



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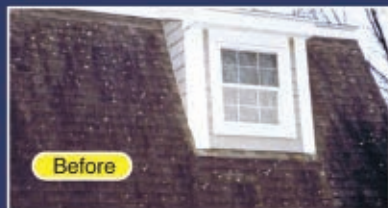
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Better Life Technology .....	38, 39, 79	Quick Dam .....	54
Bigfoot Systems .....	60	Ready Seal .....	10
Bristol Valley Hardwoods .....	52	Red Dragon Torch .....	18
Brush Weatherseal .....	81	SafeWorld International .....	70
Bucket Ape .....	34	Sakrete .....	88
California Redwood .....	13	Sandlutions .....	26
Caulk Saver .....	67	Sashco .....	31, 65
Cepco Tool .....	27	SaverSystems .....	9
Crown Master Mitre Box .....	72	Schlage .....	85
Custom Service Hardware .....	24	Schluter Systems .....	69
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Earthway .....	12	TG Tools .....	2, 3, BC
Elastilon USA .....	73	The Nailer .....	16
Evapo-Rust .....	16	TimberTech .....	19
Everflashing .....	59	Tjernlund .....	34
Factory Direct Hose .....	46	Touch 'n Foam .....	5
Flood .....	43	Ty-Lan .....	44
FrogTape .....	45	UGL .....	6
Gardner .....	53	Viance .....	47
General Tools .....	IFC, 1	Wagner .....	33
Great Railing .....	50	Woodworkers Hardware .....	36
GRK .....	7		
Guard Railing & Ramp .....	82		
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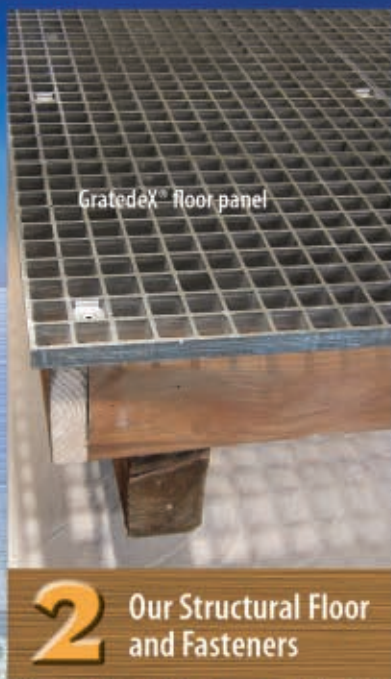
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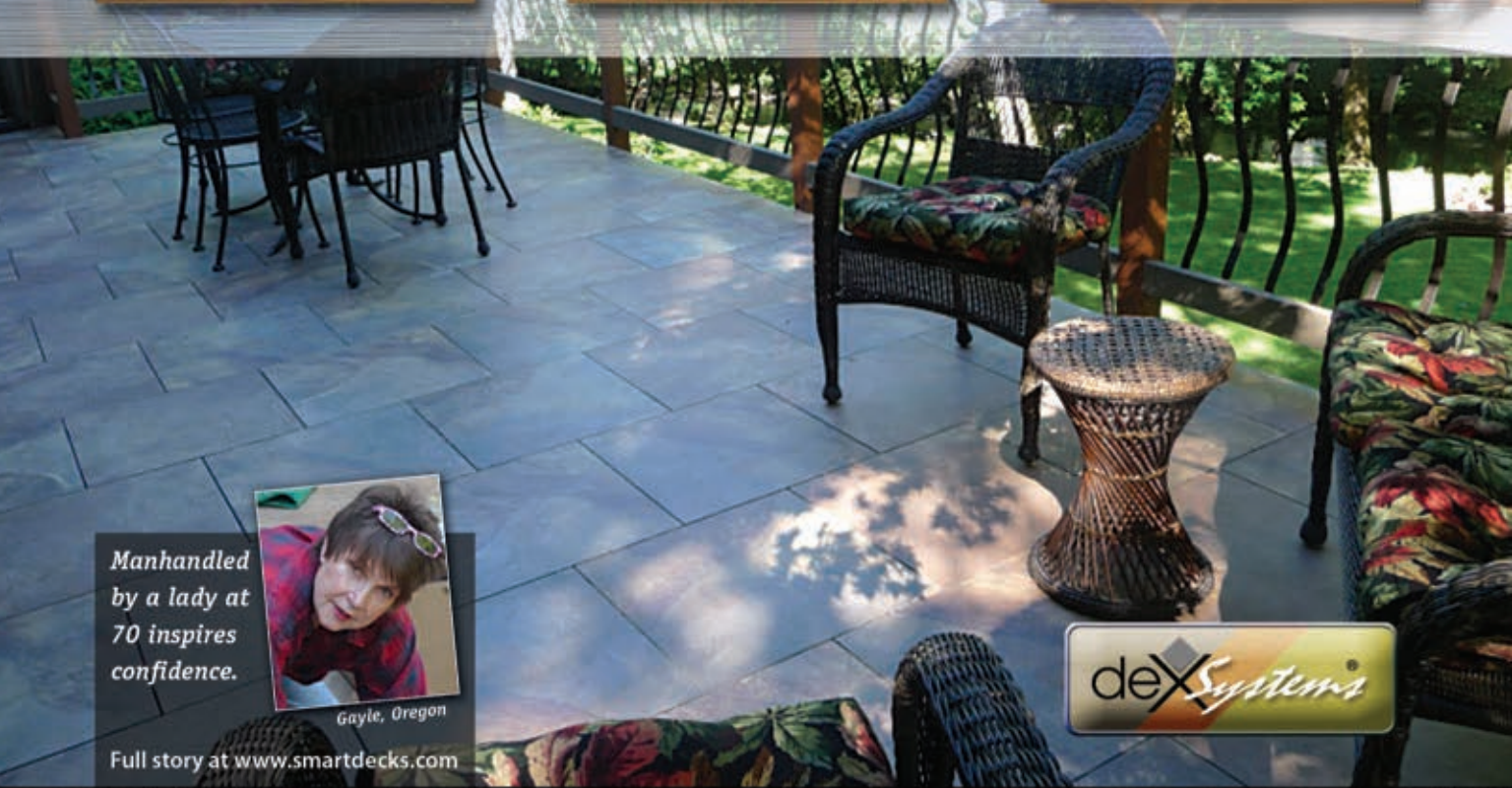
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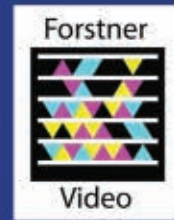
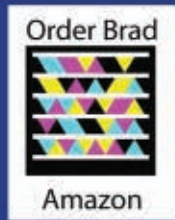
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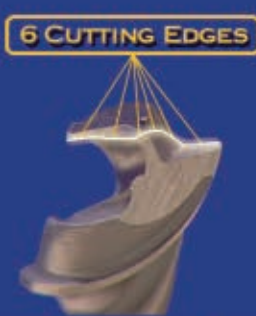
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