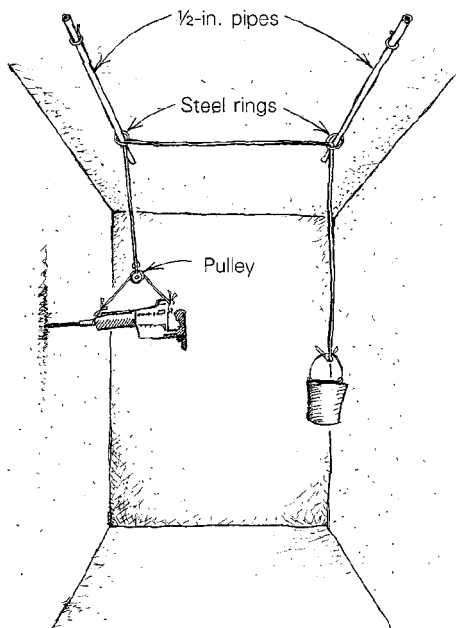


Tips and Techniques is a forum for readers to exchange the methods, tools and jigs they've devised. We'll pay for any we publish. Send details and sketches to Tips, Fine Homebuilding, Box 355, Newtown, Conn. 06470.

Tool sling

Using a sling to support a heavy tool in mid-air isn't a new idea, but I think the system I use is an improvement over other methods I've seen. Instead of suspending the tool from a single hook, I hang it from a steel ring that slides along a piece of 1/2-in. pipe. This allows me to move from side to side with the tool without the restraint of a fixed mount.

I usually use this technique when I'm working on a vertical surface with my Bosch demolition hammer. The hammer is on the working end of the rope, and a bucket containing sand is on the counterweight end. In the setup



shown in the drawing, I had to remove the stucco from the walls of an old porch. On this job, I used two pipe rails mounted on the ceiling with open-eye hooks. The double-pipe system was especially nice in this case because it kept the counterweight away from the work, and allowed me to move easily from wall to wall. —Peter Fenerin, Palo Alto, Calif.

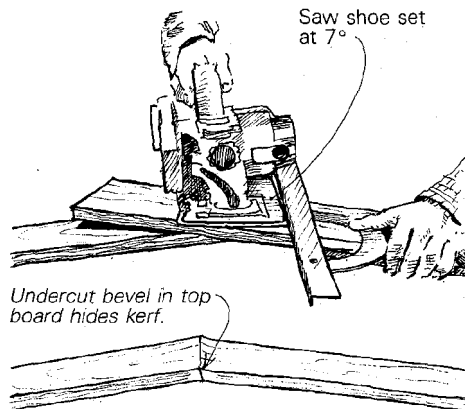
Presanded plugs

When I plug screw holes in places where there isn't room for my sander, I presand the plugs. First I drill some holes in a piece of plywood and I press the plugs into them. Then I sand the plugs smooth, push them back out and tap them flush into their permanent homes. Touch-up is done with a chisel or sandpaper. —Mark Hallock, Arcata, Calif.

Double cuts

Here's a quick way to get a tight joint with 3/4-in. thick rake boards where they meet at the roof peak. Tack your two rake boards in place on the gable end, letting them run wild at the top, one over the other, to form an X. Mark your plumb cut. Set the proper depth on

your saw and your shoe angle at 7°, and cut through both boards at the same time. You want the bevel in the top board to be an undercut, as shown, so lap the boards accordingly. This will be a function of which way the shoe on your saw tilts, and whether you are cutting from above on the ridge or from below



on a scaffold or ladder. This trick also works on straight cuts to join long runs of fascia.

—Matthew Giordano, Plymouth, Mich.

Cutting insulation

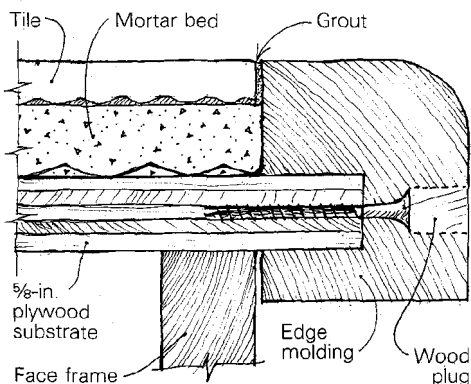
Ron Smith's idea of using garden shears to cut fiberglass insulation (*FHB* #16, p. 12) sounds good, but my partner and I prefer another tool—a machete. We bought ours for about \$8 at the local hardware store. The cutting is done with the rounded part of the blade near the tip, with long, light pull strokes. Because it cuts cleanly, drifting bits of fiberglass dust are kept to a minimum. The tool has to be sharp, but it's easy to put a keen edge on the blade with a flat mill-bastard file.

—George Mines and Brent Spohn, Ganges, B. C.

Counter trim

We use the wood counter edge detail shown in the drawing below in our custom home kitchens. We like this edging because it eliminates the need for trim tiles, which can be very expensive and hard to find. In addition, it makes a pleasing accent in a kitchen with painted cabinets. We prefer to use rock maple for this trim because it's stable and hard enough to stand up to daily use.

To make the edging, we start with a 1 1/2-in. by 2-in. length of maple, and we rout in a



5/8-in. wide groove to accept the plywood substrate of the counter. The face of the molding can have any profile, but we like to give it a simple roundover—it's nice to lean against and easy to clean. The top of the trim should be at least 1 in. higher than the surface of the rough counter for the mortar base and the tile finish. We bond the molding to the plywood with waterproof epoxy and hold it in place while it sets up with recessed drywall screws.

Before the tile-setter arrives, we stain the trim with a coat of Minwax stain, and rub in a coat of 75% urethane and 25% mineral spirits with steel wool. The trim is masked off during the tile setting and grouting. Then we give the trim a final rubdown of the urethane solution to touch up any blemishes.

—Patrick Miller, Del Mar, Calif.

Removing drywall

A short piece of copper tubing is an excellent tool for removing drywall. First locate the nails, either by prying loose one edge of the drywall panel or by tapping your way down the studs. Then place the end of the tubing over the nailhead and give it a whack with a hammer. One hit is usually sufficient to isolate the nail from the drywall. Repeat this procedure for the other nails in the sheet, and it should pull off the wall with no struggle.

—Peter Lewis, San Francisco, Calif.

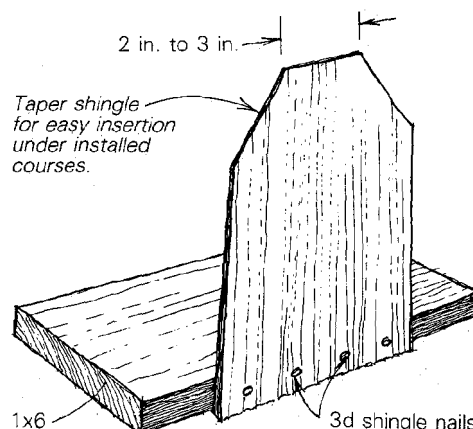
Longer pipe clamps

If you find that your pipe clamps aren't long enough, you can extend them by adding a standard threaded-pipe coupling and another section of pipe.

—Barry Lewis, Lake Elsinore, Calif.

Shingle shelf

When wood shingling a roof, keeping a ready supply of shingles close at hand can be a problem. The simple shelf shown in the drawing below can be secured to the roof by tucking the tapered tab under an already nailed



course of shingles. In this way shingles can be kept conveniently close to the height at which you are working, instead of down by your feet on the staging. A bunch of these shelves can be made from rejected shingles and scraps of 1x6s or 1x8s. Cutting the top corners off the shingle part of the shelf makes it easy to slip it up under a course.

—Kendall Gifford, Putney, Vt.