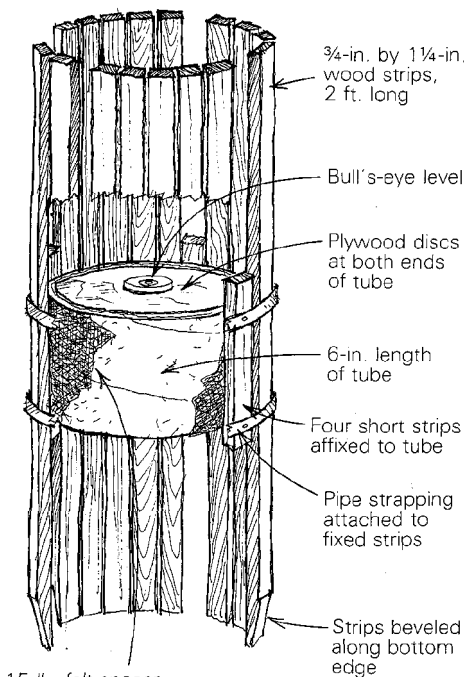


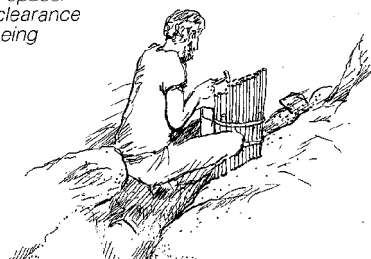
*Tips and Techniques is a forum for readers to exchange the methods, tools and jigs they've devised. We'll pay for any we publish. Send details and sketches to Tips, Fine Homebuilding, Box 355, Newtown, Conn. 06470.*

## Contour gauge for piers

Constructing a deck on the rocky coast of Maine presents the problem of accurately and quickly cutting tube forms so that they conform to exposed, irregular bedrock surfaces. Good-looking, strong concrete piers require a leak-free contact between the form and the rock. To meet these



15-lb. felt spacer provides clearance for tube being marked.



requirements, I constructed the contour gauge shown in the drawing. Pressed against the rock and made plumb with the aid of its bull's-eye level, the slats of the gauge can be tapped to conform to the contour of the rock, and this line can be quickly transferred by inserting the tube to be cut into the gauge, and tracing around the bottom of the movable strips. I built this gauge from scrap materials in a couple of hours, and it easily paid for itself in one job.

—Ian R. Walker, Princeton, N. J.

## Durable sawblade bushings

Several saws with 1/2-in. arbors use blades with 5/8-in. dia. centers—a plastic bushing makes up the difference. These lightweight bushings can be damaged pretty easily, especially when they are mounted in a circular saw. When our last one died, we hunted around for a more durable

bushing and found it right on the job site—a ring of type L, 1/2-in. copper water-supply tubing.

Not only does a copper bushing last longer, but you also have some control over its length. A slightly longer bushing (about twice the blade thickness) makes mounting and positioning quicker. Don't let the elongated bushing contact both saw-blade compression washers, or power transmission to the blade will be reduced.

—Samuel M. Hoagland, Farmington, Maine

## Furniture glides

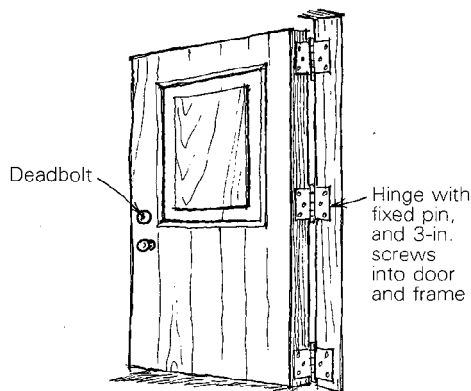
Since I can't find better commercial ones, I make my own furniture glides out of Teflon. I cut slices of 3/4-in. Teflon rod, chamfer their edges by sanding, drill and counterbore them and then screw them to chair and table legs. They are very slick, so they're easy on floors. Also, their white color makes a piece of furniture look like it's floating. I get the stuff from U.S. Plastics (1390 Neubrecht Rd., Lima, Ohio 45801). The 3/4-in. rod costs about \$5 a foot.

—Felix Marti, Monroe, Ore.

## Entry-door security

In the course of my work, I often find myself beefing up the security features on entry doors. In addition to adding a deadbolt, I like to add a reinforced deadbolt strike plate. I attach it, and the door hinges, with 3-in. screws.

Some doors are hung with their hinge pins vulnerable to the outside, inviting a break-in. Rather than resort to unsightly pins that protrude from the door jamb, I simply add (or replace) a hinge mid-height on the door with a fixed-pin hinge. Once this hinge is installed with 3-in. screws, the edge of the door is secure from inside or out. A carpenter needing to remove the door simply removes the screws from one leaf,



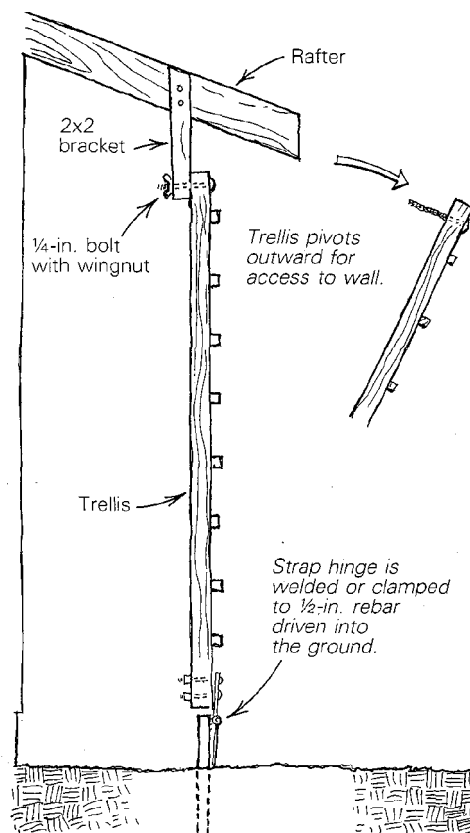
and then has the convenience of two loose pin hinges while planing, or re-hanging the door. Once those screws are back in, the door is there to stay.

—Kurt Lavenson, Berkeley, Calif.

## Utility-knife tune-up

When I work with drywall, I find that the blade of my retractable-blade utility knife cakes up with gypsum dust, rendering the tool useless. To give the blade a longer working life, take the handle apart and run the point of a soft graphite pencil over the blade and its guides. This will remove any built-up gypsum particles, and at the same time deposit a layer of lubricating graphite that won't attract additional gypsum dust.

—Paul J. McCarthy, Hartford, Conn.



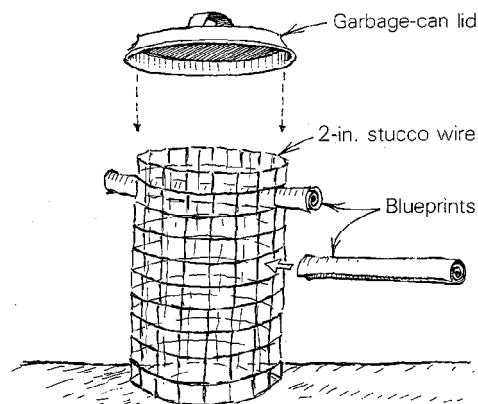
## Hinged trellis

The drawing above shows my solution to a problem that confronts just about anyone who lives in a house that is landscaped with vines on trellises. The problem is what to do with the trellis when it comes time to paint the house. My answer is to hinge it at the bottom, and bolt its top to a bracket under the eaves. This allows me to pivot both the trellis and the vines outward far enough to paint the building, without damaging either.

—Victor A. Maletic, Antioch, Calif.

## Blueprint basket

I'm an architect and builder who is just starting an office, and my equipment budget is slim. To keep the rolls of blueprints off my desk, I devised the basket shown in the drawing. It's made



of 2-in. stucco wire that's been fastened into a cylinder. The diameter matches that of a surplus garbage-can lid.—Jim Ramsay, Kelowna, B. C.