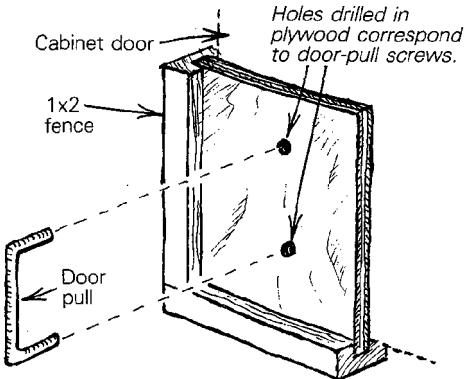


Tips and Techniques is a forum for reader's to exchange the methods, tools and jigs they've devised. We'll pay for any we publish. Send details and sketches to Tips, Fine Homebuilding, Box 355, Newtown, Conn. 06470.

Door-pull jig

Whenever I need to install pulls on cabinet doors, I begin the job by making a jig to locate the screw holes. The jig (drawing, below) is a piece of thin plywood ($\frac{1}{4}$ in. to $\frac{1}{2}$ in. works fine) bordered on two sides by 1x2 fences that meet at 90°. Grooves in the 1x2s accept the plywood insert, creating a fence on both sides of the jig. Once I have decided where I want the pulls to



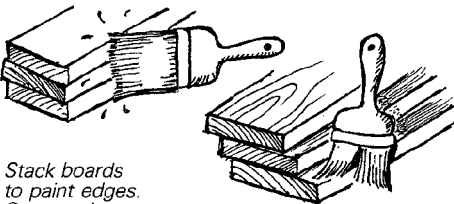
be in relation to the corner of the cabinet doors, I drill corresponding holes in the plywood insert, as shown.

To use the jig, simply snug the fences against the corner of the cabinet door where you want to install the pull, and drill your holes using those in the plywood as a guide. For the adjacent door, flip the jig and you're ready to drill.

—Andrew George, Richmond, Va.

Stack painting

When you've got to brush paint or stain on the edges of many boards, try stacking them flat so that you can apply finish to all of them at once. This will save you a tremendous amount of time



compared to treating each edge separately. When you've got them all coated, slightly stagger the pile and brush out any excess finish that may be on the faces and backs of the boards.

—Ed Kobus, Silver Spring, Md.

Foundation advice

I have saved a lot of money and headaches on a variety of new houses with this very simple technique: When I get bids for the foundation work, I insist on one combined price, including both the excavation and the concrete. This way each concrete subcontractor gets a price from his favorite excavator, and submits one complete price. What this means to the general contractor

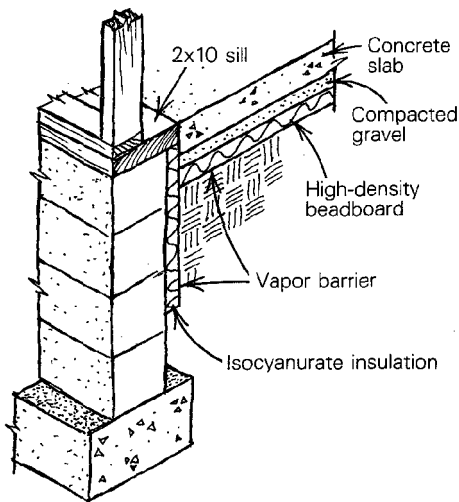
is that you won't find yourself faced with additional charges by the form setters for extra handwork on a hole that wasn't to their liking. In my experience, this includes most holes ever dug.

Besides eliminating surprise extras after the competitive relationship is lost, this strategy also results in one less subcontract you will have to let, schedule, supervise and shuffle paper for. Perhaps the greatest advantage, however, lies in simply avoiding a conflict between two subcontractors, with you in the middle.

—Douglass Ferrell, Trout Creek, Mont.

Perimeter insulation detail

The drawing below shows a detail that we (at the Colorado Mountain College Solar Program) have developed to insulate foundations in cold climates. Although it uses a standard 8-in. wide concrete-block wall, our method differs from typical foundation treatments in several ways. First, we top the block wall with a redwood or pressure-treated 2x10 sill. Its anchor bolts are recessed so they don't protrude above the sill, and the sill overlaps the blocks on the interior side, where it protects the top edge of an isocyanurate rigid insulation panel. This insulation



has a higher R-value than extruded polystyrene, but it is more fragile and it can lose its effectiveness if it gets wet. By placing it on the inside of the foundation and protecting it with a vapor barrier, we avoid these pitfalls and keep the slab thermally isolated from the foundation. This detail also eliminates the extra hassle of flashing and finishing exterior insulation, sealing the gap between the foundation and the typical sill and the kind of insulation damage that can occur during backfill. When the framed wall is lifted into place, the recessed anchor bolts don't interfere with the bottom plate.

If the slab is going to be a direct-gain heat sink or contain a radiant heating system, we place high-density beadboard under the slab for better performance. When it comes time to pour the slab, the wide sill plate serves as a screed, and if the floor is to be carpeted, it's a convenient anchorage for carpet strips.

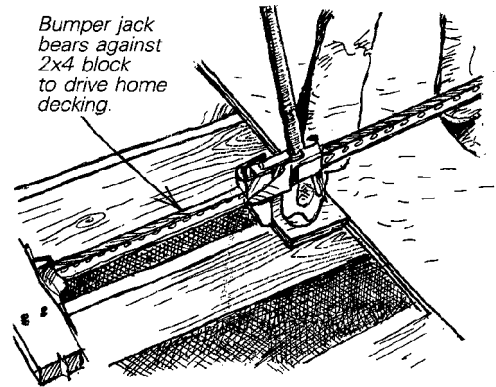
To build with this foundation detail you have to alter the typical construction sequence because the sill has to be installed and leveled before the slab concrete arrives. It also costs extra

for the 2x10 sills, but we think that the advantages outweigh the drawbacks.

—Johnny Weiss, Glenwood Springs, Colo.

Deck jack

If you've ever struggled to achieve a tight fit with T&G decking without marring the material, you might be able to use this tip. Instead of using pry bars or bump sticks, we use a big bumper jack. Its base bears against a 2x4 block nailed to the



floor framing, while the jack leans on a scrap piece of the T&G decking. Using this method we get a tight fit every time, with T&G boards or plywood, even in the winter when the decking stiffens up in the cold weather.

—Joe Eller, Freeville, N. Y.

Custom jigsaw base

I got tired of scratching my woodwork with the base of my Bosch jigsaw so I replaced it with a wooden one. I used a piece of $\frac{3}{8}$ -in. thick maple, 3 in. wide and 5 in. long. The larger base gives more stability, and the wood damps vibration.

—Will Milne, San Francisco, Calif.