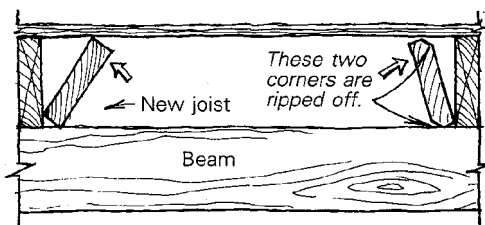


Tips and Techniques is a forum for readers to exchange the methods, tools and jigs they've devised. We'll pay for any we publish. Send details and sketches to Tips, Fine Homebuilding, Box 355, Newtown, Conn. 06470.

Retrofit joists

If you've ever had to beef up a pier-and-beam floor with some additional joists tucked between the subfloor and the beams, you know it can be difficult work in a space where it's tough to maneuver tools and materials. The diagonal dimension of the joist is too big to let it roll into place without some serious pounding. After pondering the problem for a while, I got an idea. If I set my saw at 45° and

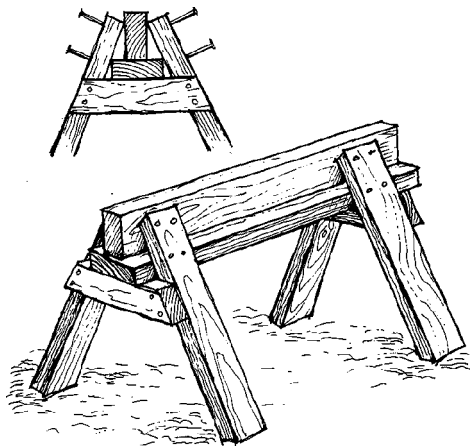


ripped away the top edge on one side of the joist and the bottom edge on the other, as shown in the drawing above, the joist should roll a lot easier and I would still have my original dimension. It works.

—Don Boerner, Rowlett, Tex.

Simple sawhorse

With all the fancy substitutes for wooden sawhorses, the real thing is sometimes overlooked.



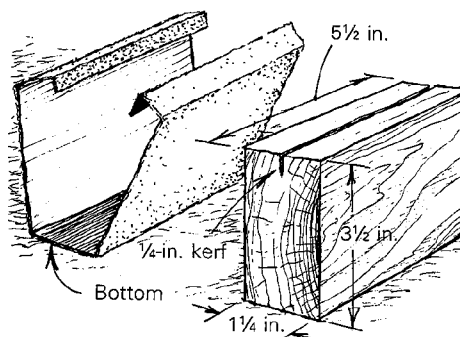
The sawhorse shown in the drawing above is easy to build and sturdy enough to carry heavy loads. You can pound one together in about 20 minutes, so you don't need to worry about leaving them on the site, unattended at night.

The sawhorse is built entirely of 2x4s, with whatever dimensions suit you best. The two pieces assembled as an inverted T give it rigidity, allow the legs to flare equally and provide a sturdy nailing surface.

—Swami Govind Marco, Montreal, Que.

Sanding block

You can buy sanding blocks at the hardware store, but I've always made my own. All it requires is a small scrap of hardwood and a



couple of passes with a saw. If the block is carefully cut and the sandpaper is crisply folded, the paper will stay snugly in place without gluing or tacking it.

Cut a block 1 1/4 in. by 3 1/2 in. I use this width and height because the block feels comfortable in my hand. Now cut the block 5 1/2 in. long, the same length as half a standard sheet of sandpaper. A 1/4-in. deep kerf along the center of one of the long edges completes the block.

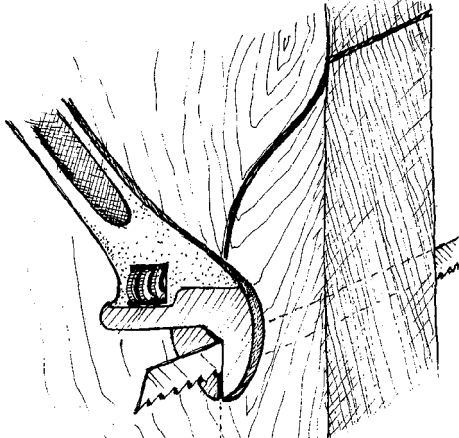
As shown in the drawing above, there are six folds to be made in the sandpaper. Begin by inserting one edge of a half-sheet in the kerf. Fold the paper around the surface of the block until you reach the sixth fold. Gauge this crease by removing the first edge of the paper from the kerf, and inserting the second edge.

Once the sandpaper is all folded, hold the edges that will sit in the kerf together so that the sandpaper forms a sleeve, and feed it onto the block from one end.

—M. Felix Marti, Monroe, Ore.

Blade guide

A rolling bandsaw is a good way to cut curves in heavy timbers, but if the timber is already part of the house, you've got to take the saw to the wood. We had to remove 3 in. from a 6x10



post to gain room for a stairway, and we used a Sawzall to make the cut. We guided the blade on the open side with a wrench, as shown in the drawing above. This operation takes two people and a fair amount of time, but it works very well.

—Jeff Morse, Tamales, Calif.

Pulling nails

An elementary but important carpentry technique offers the correct way to extract a "fro-

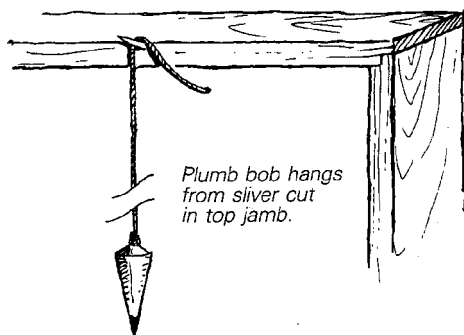
zen" nail with a claw hammer. With the recalcitrant nail held firmly between the claws, lever the handle down toward the work at right angles to the hammer head.

This method offers greater leverage and control than the more common practice of lifting the handle up and away from the work. The claws have to be sharp and the handle has to be strong—requirements for any good hammer.

—Dick Haward, Nehalem, Ore.

Plumb-bob anchor

Whenever I'm hanging a door with wood jams, I use a chisel or utility knife to lift a small sliver in the center of the head jamb. Then I use it to anchor the string on my plumb line, as shown in the drawing below. The sli-



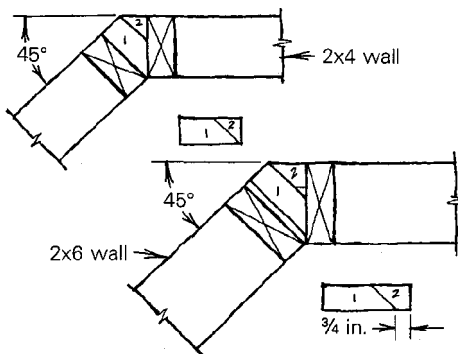
ver is a quick, handy way to get a purchase for the plumb line, and it stays there until it is eventually hidden behind the door casing. The same trick can be used to hang a plumb line when you're framing.

—Michael R. Swee, Palo Alto, Calif.

More backing

I have noticed that back issues of *FHB* have tips on stick-framed backing for 45° corners. While they're good methods, they require 4x4s and table saws, neither of which I usually have on site.

To make corner backing out of 2x stock, I simply set my circular saw on 45° and remove one edge of a 2x4 stud. Then I nail the ripping onto the stud, filling the corner void (drawing below). This method will also work with 2x6



studs if you make the rip 3/4 in. from the corner instead of right on it. This method wastes no wood, requires no table saw and results in plenty of nailing surface.

—Tom Mahony, Kona, Hawaii