

## Where To Buy Parts For Japanese Mini Trucks

"Off-road" mini trucks from Japan have caught on fast since they were first imported 7 or 8 years ago. New dealers and importers have sprung up in many areas.

Buyers like the price – often as low as \$3,500 to \$4,500. But finding parts can sometimes be a problem.

Jimmy Johnson of MacTown Mini Trucks in McLeansboro, Ill., recently called FARM SHOW to say his company specializes in new, used and rebuilt parts for mini trucks including models such as Honda, Daihatsu, Mitsubishi, Mazda, Suzuki, and Subaru. They even manufacture some of the parts.

"We've been selling parts for Japanese mini trucks for 7 years and offer a wider selection of parts than almost anyone else," says Johnson. "One problem with getting parts for these trucks is they weren't built for export to North America. As a result, the parts numbers for them aren't of any help when you go to Auto Zone or Napa."

"I hear every day from people who couldn't get parts anywhere else, and they're elated when they find we can help them. We've gained a lot of knowledge about these little trucks over the years and are willing to share what we've learned with our customers. We also offer workshop manuals (in English) for sale on our website for anyone who needs them."

Other companies sell parts for Japanese mini trucks, says Johnson. "However, most of them ask you to fill out a parts request form, which is then reviewed and sent off to Japan to see if the part is available and what it's priced at. It can take two weeks to get a reply. Then the company calls you back and quotes you a price. As a result, it can take a month or more before you finally get the part. We'll probably already have the part you need."



MacTown Mini Trucks specializes in new, used and rebuilt parts for mini trucks from Japan. Items for sale include "Camoclad" camouflage kits.

in stock. But if we don't, we can usually get it within 7 to 10 business days."

The company stocks a wide selection of engine parts including engine rebuild kits, transmissions, hydraulic pumps, starters, alternators, water pumps, fan belts, bearings, oil seals, voltage regulators, manifolds, mufflers, clutches, steering shafts, ignition switches, glow plugs, brake shoes, filters and more, says Johnson. They also sell windshields, struts, doors, and CV axles.

Other items for sale include "Camoclad" camouflage kits, which consist of permanent "peel-off" vinyl that adheres to the pickup's surface to form a new camouflage skin for the truck. The company also manufactures and sells lift kits for 1999 to 2007 models. They also sell new and used trucks, wheels and tires, and bolt-on or weld-on bumpers with 2-in. receivers, as well as Blackline snowplows.

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## Wireless Inspection Camera

By Jim Ruen, Contributing Editor



Aardvark video borescope's 3 1/2-in. wireless color monitor can be attached to the pistol grip camera unit or placed on a stand up to several feet away.

You don't need to tear an engine apart to check a cylinder wall for scoring or rip out a wall to check for bugs or water damage, thanks to new remote video cameras.

High-end video scopes have been available for sometime. What's new is that instead of paying thousands of dollars, new scopes are priced in the \$250 range.

When Circuit Specialists offered FARM SHOW the opportunity to try out an Aardvark video borescope, we grabbed it. I asked my mechanic, Herman Miller, and his crew to take a look at it. They were impressed, and so was I.

Miller, located in Fountain, Minn., already owned a scope he bought several years ago. When he saw the Aardvark from Circuit Specialists, he liked its features and its price tag.

"Ours was a lot more expensive, and the Aardvark does as much or more," says Miller. "We use ours to check under the hood for fluid leaks as well as to look inside the engine," he adds. "You can twist it around to see behind stuff and inside closed spaces without tearing everything apart."

The Aardvark's 3 1/2-in. wireless color monitor can be attached to the pistol grip camera unit or used separately up to 50 ft. away or more. The camera can be used for viewing as well as recording still and video of what's being viewed. Interchangeable, flexible 9-mm and 17-mm shafts are available for use with the camera. The shafts are equipped with LED lights mounted at the lens to ensure clear viewing.

Using the Aardvark takes some practice as you learn to adjust the shaft to get the image right side up. The downloadable manual helped immensely, and the company's help line operator actually had experience operating the unit.

Being able to capture video and stills for later playback via an SD card was very helpful. You can also connect the camera to a standard TV monitor or to a computer via USB cord.

The unit runs on four AA batteries, but also comes with an AC adapter. The basic Aardvark package is priced at \$249. Similar packages are available from A&I Products, Milwaukee Tools and others. Prices and attachments may vary.

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To save money, Eugene Schwanbeck built his own air compressor equipped with a 220-volt, 5 hp electric motor.

## He Built His Own Air Compressor

Eugene Schwanbeck couldn't justify the cost of a new air compressor. So the League City, Texas man built his own.

"It's built mostly from salvaged parts but looks like it's new. I spent less than \$500 to build it," says Schwanbeck. "Comparable commercial models sell for \$3,000 or more."

He started with an 80-gal. tank that he fished out of a dumpster. "It was a certified air tank so it still had many years of useful life left in it," says Schwanbeck. He cleaned up the tank and repainted it. A 2-stage pump, which he got from his father-in-law, is driven by a 5 hp single phase, 220-volt electric motor that he bought new for \$300. The air compressor is complete with a magnetic starter, automatic electronic drain valve, and low oil cut-off switch. All components mount on a rectangular frame made from 2-in. sq. tubing, with an expanded mesh safety guard.

"I'm happy with the way it turned out," says Schwanbeck. "I painted the air compressor Dewalt yellow and black and just for fun stenciled the Dewalt name on the tank because Dewalt is one of my favorite tool companies.

"I use it to operate tools in my home shop. My old compressor couldn't keep up with my plasma cutter, but my home-built model can and now I can use it to operate a decent sized sandblaster, too. The pump and motor combination are rated for 17 cfm at 175 psi, which is a lot more capacity than I need."

"My biggest expense was for the motor and paint. The power cord and locking plug that I used came from a gas-powered generator, the conduit is from an outdoor patio project, and the expanded metal and steel tubing frame are left over from a shelving project for my garage."

Schwanbeck says the compressor has state-of-the-art features. "The low oil cutoff switch ensures that if there's not enough oil in the pump a circuit will open to prevent the unit from operating. And the automatic



Compressor's 2-stage pump is driven by a 5 hp single phase, 220-volt electric motor.

electronic drain valve prevents condensate from building up inside the tank and rusting it out. It's a feature usually found only on industrial compressor models."

Safety wasn't spared either, says Schwanbeck. The air compressor is equipped with 3 separate high pressure relief valves that protect the pump, the plumbing, and the tank. "If the pressure gets to a certain point the valves relieve the pressure to prevent any components from exceeding their ratings," notes Schwanbeck.

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## Portable Welding Cart

"It rolls easily on big wheels wherever I need to use it," says Tom Chaney, Chrisman, Ill., who converted an old Roper riding mower into a towable welding cart.

He got the junked riding mower, equipped with 18-in. rear wheels, from an uncle. He threw the engine away and cut the front end off, leaving only the frame, rear wheels and axle. He welded a 4 by 4-in., 1/4-in. thick angle iron onto the front of the frame and mounted a 10-in. caster wheel on it. Then he welded on a U-shaped handle between the rear wheels.

He welded the original gearshift lever to the side of the frame, with a U-shaped length of rod on top, to hang welding cables and a welding helmet.

"The original welder could be bought with a cart, but it had small wheels," says Chaney. "I wanted a portable welder because I have



Tom Chaney converted an old Roper riding mower into a "high wheeled" towable welding cart.

a 3-pt. mounted generator on my tractor. Now I can pull my welder outside anywhere I want to go and hook it up to the generator. The top part of the mower frame consists of a flat metal plate, which I use to store tools."

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