

## LED Gloves Provide Work Light

At first glance, LED Flashlight Gloves seem like a quirky novelty.

“Gloves” is a loose term as they are fingerless and slip over just the index finger and thumb. The Spandex fabric has adjustable wrist straps to make them one-size-fits-all.

LED flashlights are built into them for hands-free light. That comes in handy for jobs such as changing a tire at night, working on plumbing, and in other low-light situations. It’s also handy when fishing, camping, walking the dog, or reading.

An internet search for LED Flashlight Gloves yields many companies selling the same gloves under different names, starting at around \$15. Read the details as some don’t come with lithium batteries, while others offer an extra pair of gloves and



LED gloves available online help with low light repairs where holding a flashlight would get in the way.

four extra batteries. Also, some brands are rechargeable with a charging cable.

Overall, reviews seem positive, including from people who received them as gifts.



Bauer’s power reels are all mounted on the second level of his shop and have drop cords to operate them.

## Power Reels Are Real Work Savers

“I made a rather crude cord reel way back in high school shop class, and it worked so well that I expanded on that idea over the years and built several more,” says Minnesota farmer Robert Bauer. His heated farm shop now has at least seven custom-made reels, including that high school original. No two reels are alike.

“For the high school project, I bent two pieces of 1/2-in. rod into a 2-ft. diameter circle, then welded metal pieces about the size of a cell phone to the rods and onto a center core. I put a drive shaft through the core and welded a large sprocket on one end. I found the sprocket on an old check-row corn planter in our junk pile. To power the reel, I ran a belt from an old electric motor to a gearbox from a Cushman scooter. A roller chain connects a small sprocket on the gearbox to the large sprocket on the reel. The roller winds cord onto the reel when the gearbox is engaged and releases it when the gearbox is in neutral. It worked great then and still does.”

Most of the basic parts for Bauer’s other reels came from old farm delivery fuel trucks. He bought a few at auctions, found others at scrap yards, and even rescued one from a junk dealer’s trailer who was making a pickup at his farm. He built sturdy metal frames to hold the reels and mounted them in several locations around the second level of his shop. Each one is controlled with a drop cord and switch box hanging down at eye level on the main floor.

A large reel by the main shop door holds 100 ft. of 1-in. water hose. Bauer put a centrifugal booster pump on that one to provide 50 lbs. of water pressure at the nozzle, more than doubling the original hydrant pressure. Another reel is powered by an old 1/2-in. electric drill that delivers power to a gearbox. Others are run by electric motors. One made from an old hay



Robert Bauer built this handy power cord reel in a high school shop class over 50 years ago, and it’s still working hard in his shop.

winch winds and unwinds 200 ft. of 220 electrical cord. A collector ring from an old silo unloader directs power to the cord.

Bauer says ideas to build the reels usually came to him in the middle of the night. “In the shop, I put them together by trial and error, using gear reducers to get the correct speed so they’d slowly take up air hoses and electric cords,” Bauer says. Most of the reels are activated by a solenoid that engages a lever to the gearbox. A regulator reduces 120 lbs. of air pressure down to 30 lbs. so the reels engage slowly.

“I’m not a person who makes the same thing the same way twice, so the reels are all different,” Bauer says. “The first one has that Cushman transmission with a right-angle gear reducer. I dialed in the speed by using different size pulleys. Another one uses a gearbox from a Badger forage box, and another has the variable speed drive from a portable Owatonna feed mill. Even though they’re all different, they all work well, and if something goes wrong, I know how to fix them.”

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## White Vinegar Removes Rust From Tools

You can soak rusty tools or parts in white vinegar for several days to eliminate rust and return them to prime condition.

White vinegar is the perfect solution for restoring rusted tools. It’s inexpensive when purchased by the gallon and has an acidic rate of around 5 percent, which is strong enough to remove rust from most metal objects.

Vinegar can be damaging to some materials. It will darken wood quickly and can strip the finishes off metal objects. It’s best to test on a small area before committing to it for the whole project to ensure it gives you the results you’re looking for.

The vinegar will eliminate much of the rust, and you can remove the rest with a soft rag. Steel wool can be used on extra stubborn areas.

Metal rusts quickly when it’s been rusted



White vinegar can be used instead of chemicals to remove rust from tools.

once before, so you’ll want to use a protectant soon after it dries to seal the new surface and prevent repeat damage.

You can reuse vinegar multiple times, so consider storing it in a glass or plastic container until you plan to use it again.

## Case Keeps Batteries Organized



Battery case has storage for common battery sizes and has a battery tester.

The Battery Keeper Case is a durable, portable container that stores batteries and also has a built-in tester, allowing users to easily check the power levels of their batteries at any time.

The Battery Keeper Case eliminates the need for multiple testers or the frustration of trying to figure out which batteries in a jumbled drawer are still useable. With the push of a button, the tester will indicate the power level of each battery.

The Battery Keeper Case has multiple compartments, each labeled with the type of battery it’s meant to hold.

The Battery Keeper is available for purchase online at Amazon and in select retail stores. We found prices as low as \$25.

## Handy Multi-Outlet Cord Stand

We spotted this idea by Hector Nieves on Instagram. He made a portable wooden cord holder and outlet stand that’s easy to move around his shop. The base is a foot-long piece of 2 by 12-in. plank that holds a 2 by 4-in. upright secured with a metal L-shaped bracket. Two outlet boxes are mortised into the upright toward the top and provide easy access for plugging in power tools.

The outlets get their power through a heavy-duty supply cord that hangs from a hook on the back of the stand when it’s not in use. Nieves mounted a metal handle on top of the 2 by 4 so the device is easy to move around. Nieves says one person who’d seen his idea suggested adding hooks on the side of the upright post to hold small tools. Another suggested adding small caster wheels so the stand can be rolled around a shop. A third suggestion was to make the stand with a larger base, and have two upright posts with a cord reel mounted between them.



Nieves made a handy outlet cord stand for easy use in his shop.

## Easy Tractor Counterweight



When doing loader work with a skid steer or utility tractor that requires heavy lifting, you can quickly add a counterweight by hanging a log off the back, says John Rochester, Charlotte, N.C.

He just wraps a couple loops of rope around a 5 to 6-ft. log and ties it to hooks on the back of his skid steer. When no longer needed, it’s easy to drop it off.

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