

## Money-Saving Repairs & Maintenance Shortcuts

scan the areas where a cordless drill could hide. I found it partially covered in a dimly lit garage, among a collection of tools for a different project. I had looked there, but without a focused search and better lighting, I missed the exposed handle.”



**Jim Ruen, La Crescent, Minn.:** “I cut and split a lot of firewood to heat our house each year (Vol. 42, No. 6), guessing at lengths as I cut. I’ve seen tools that attach to the chainsaw bar, with most starting around \$20.

“I put together my own for half that price. I picked up a 2-in. diameter round magnet at Ace Hardware and an 18-in. long, 1/8-in. threaded rod that fit through the magnet’s hole. A nut on either side of the magnet, and I was nearly done.

“The only problem was that the nut stuck out above the face of the magnet. A few minutes with my grinder, and that was no longer a problem.

“I stuck it on the chainsaw bar and cut away, producing 18-in. lengths perfect for my fireplace. It works great, mounts and dismounts easily, and can be used on any of my half-dozen chainsaws.”



**Dale Freeman, Monroe, Va.:** “As I got older, I wanted safer steps on my John Deere tractor when I’m climbing on and off. The top step is 25 in. off the ground, and that’s too far for me with my bad back. I added another step 6 in. below the OEM step, at 19 in. off the ground.

“I hung the lower step from the upper one using straps made from 3/8 by 1 1/2-in. flat bar and 1 1/2-in. channel iron on each side.

“For additional support, I made braces that run at an angle from the tractor to the lower step. The braces use tangs (clips with slotted ends and mounting holes) and 1/2-in. round stock cut on the radius. Two tangs mount to the bolts that attach the upper step to the tractor, and two tangs also mount to the rear of the lower step.

“Once the tangs were in place, I cut the round stock to fit between them and tacked it into the slotted ends.

“I’ve found that using tangs and round stock is the easiest way to brace things without having to bend the end of a piece of steel to fit.

“The lower step was a big help for climbing into the cab; however, backing out and down was still tricky since it isn’t a normal 8-in. step. I decided to widen the

lower step. I bought another step from John Deere and cut away about 75%. I welded and bolted the remainder to the side of the lower step. That’s proven to be a big help.”



**Roger Gutschmidt, Gackle, N.D.:** “I’ve been making quick-attach units for 3-pt. hitches for close to 40 years, and I always add a hitch ball to the top of the unit. It’s proven handy for my customers and me when moving hay-bale trailers and other ball-hitch equipment around the farm.

“I position it just to the side of the top link clevis.

“The stress on a ball hitch like this can be significant when pulling loads across rough ground. I use 1/2-in. wall pipe and weld it to the top of the quick-attach frame. I slip a heavy-duty nut into the pipe and weld it in place, to later screw in the ball.

“I like to strengthen the ball hitch by welding a short length of 1/2-in. steel between it and the top link clevis. I also add flanges to the other sides of the pipe.

“It’s a simple add-on, but well worth the time. Done right, it’ll last a lifetime.”



**Marty Rudd, Mannsville, N.Y.:** “Tractor steps and running boards can be very slippery in winter when snow gets on them. After a couple of slips that could’ve been worse than they were, I decided to put some 1/4 by 1-in. bolts through the holes in the steps and running boards and nut them in place. It makes getting on and off the tractor much safer.



“The rack from a buck makes a nice place to hang miscellaneous stuff.”



**Howard Sklar, Aurora:** “If you want to preserve a car (or other) battery that won’t be used for a while, especially in cold weather, you don’t need an expensive drip-charge system. Just remove the negative terminal from the battery. I wrap mine in a plastic bag (see picture). This stops electrolysis and preserves the battery’s life. I’ve been doing this for years, and it works.”

**Ken Matthews, Boston, Mass.:** “I remember reading a shop tip in FARM SHOW about using Gorilla Glue to seal caulk tips (Vol. 43, No. 4). I recently saw a guy on YouTube say he stores his used caulk tubes tip-down in a container of water. He claims he’s never had one fail.”



**John Rochester, Charlotte, N.C.:** “Battery cables slipping out of the clamp is a common problem. No cable means no battery charge. Try stripping extra wire and putting a bend on the end. Allow plenty of extra stripped wire.



“Take a mushroom box (or other small container) and put a magnet inside to keep small steel bits from spilling or getting lost. It can be stored at any angle as needed. It works great under the truck.



“Before sorting items on a bench, lay a towel down and place a 4 by 4 near the edge. No more small bits falling off and getting lost, and the towel lets you pour them back into the bin.



“For many of us, finding the tool we need can be impossible. Try taking the tools you seldom use and store them separately.”



ClampTite uses stainless-steel safety wire to create a strong, temporary or permanent custom clamp.

## Reliable Clamp Repairs

“If you’re searching for a fast solution to a leaking hose or a reliable way to secure various materials, from fuel lines to radiator hoses, the ClampTite Tool deserves a spot in your toolbox,” says ClampTite Office Manager Niki Schendel. “Its innovative design makes it indispensable for professionals and hobbyists alike.”

Unlike traditional hose clamps, ClampTite uses stainless-steel safety wire to create a strong, temporary or permanent custom clamp.

Car enthusiasts favor the Premium ClampTite tool and mini kit, but its versatility extends to agriculture, aviation, marine and even medical uses. Each kit includes the specialized tool, a small roll of 304 .032 wire, and a roll of 304 .041 wire.

Constructed from machined stainless steel with a one-piece body, the tool is engineered to handle wire sizes from .19 in. to .062 in.

“It can even handle a coat hanger wire in an emergency,” Schendel says. “It’s rugged and strong in a smart design.”

ClampTite products, made in California, are available directly, through dealers, on Amazon, and at select small shops.

All ClampTite tools are backed by “The Forever Guarantee.” If a tool ever fails to meet expectations, the company will repair or replace it, regardless of how it was acquired.

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