

Tech-Tips

Rust Remover



We are always on the go and sometimes get caught in the rain with our tools. The result – RUST. We've tried many expensive rust removing products but have found grandpa's simple idea the best.

Submerge the rusted object in undiluted white vinegar. I find the cleaning strength vinegar (10%) works best.

If the object is too large to do so, liberally spray or dab vinegar over the rusted area.

Allow the vinegar to soak in for at least 30 minutes. If you're dealing with a lot of rust, a longer soak will probably be necessary. If that's the case, start with a couple of hours. Then, check on your progress.

Pull your object out of its vinegar bath and use a stiff brush or green kitchen scrubby to scrub off any remaining surface rust. Then, rinse the object off, and dry it thoroughly.

Repeat the process if any rust remains.

Once clean and dry I typically apply a thin coat of light oil to help prevent further rusting.



Label Your Electrical Panel

Recently we had to shut power to a damaged outlet but when we got to the panel and found 58 breakers with no labels the fun began!

We began the old game with me in your basement and Erik yelling from upstairs, "Did you switch it already?" I yell "No" but he doesn't hear and adds helpfully, "Because the light is still on!"

30 minutes later and a dozen clocks in the house to be reset and 2 computers plus alarm system restarting we found the circuit. You should only ever perform this comedy routine once because you will want to label the electrical panel. Swear you will do it to save yourself time and aggravation not to mention the labour cost of an electrician or service provider the next time. Do it this weekend. If you are alone, get a radio and turn it up really loud. When Zeppelin cuts out, you've found the right switch.

Keep Your Pictures Hanging Level

Most folks hang a picture on a single nail but over time vibration in the house and the centrifugal force of the earth's spin causes the pictures to tilt off level slightly.

On larger pictures it is best to hang on 2 nails spaced approximately 1/3 the width of the picture

Alternately - push a straight pin into the bottom two corners of the picture on the backside, and then clip off the heads of the pins with diagonal cutters leaving about 1/4 of an inch sticking out of the frame. Hang the picture using a level, when set in place, gently push the section of the picture frame with the pins behind it into the drywall to secure the positioning of the picture. They'll stay straight and level forever now.

Mousetrap Technique



Snap-type mousetraps, when well placed, can be an effective way to rid your house of mice. Snap traps may seem cruel but compared with a slow death from a glue trap or poisoned bait, they're a more humane way to exterminate mice. And because you toss the remains in the garbage, there are no dead mouse surprises to encounter later.

Common mistakes with do it yourself pest control are poor placement of traps and using too few of them. Mice have poor vision and prefer to feel their way along walls. Place snap traps along walls in areas where you've seen the telltale brown pellets. For an average-size house, two dozen mousetraps would not be too many.

The best technique is to set two traps, parallel to the wall, with the triggers facing out. While mice can jump over one trap, they can't jump two. Favorite baits of professional exterminators are chocolate syrup and peanut butter.

Live traps are best used in pairs in the same manner as conventional mousetraps. Place them back-to-back with the open doors on each end.

TIP: Before you sweep up mouse droppings, always spray them with a disinfectant spray such as Lysol. Mice can pass disease to humans through their waste.

Rounded Bolt Heads

Ever have to loosen bolts with worn, rounded heads. A wrench just slips off, but if you use a pipe wrench – off it comes. The pipe wrench jaws dig in and grab the head so you can remove the bolt.



Keep Shovel or Chute Snow Free

We've had some heavy wet snow recently and it was sticking the shovel and clogging up my snow-blower. There was a can of WD-40 in the garage (and about 10 other places around the house!) so I gave it a shot and lightly sprayed the shovel and the chute of my snow-blower. It made shoveling snow quicker and less strenuous by keeping the snow from sticking to my shovel and weighing it down. It also helped the snow-blower, keeping the snow chute from clogging up with wet snow. Give it a try.

