

Making The Most Out of Air



The impact wrench can be used as a screw driver as well as on nuts and bolts.

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If you think compressed air is only good for filling tires, it's time for another look. Pneumatic tools can make your shop more efficient by speeding up work. All you need to get started is a good air compressor that will supply 90 pounds per square inch of clean, dry air at the operator's touch.

An air gun is a handy gadget to have around your shop. It is just a small hand-held device for directing a blast of air. It will clean out dirty corners, blow out tiny ports and pipes, or dry off wet parts. Our only problem has been the constant breaking off of the nozzle, and I fixed that with a piece of 1/4-inch plastic protective tubing.

Another inexpensive but handy tool for the air gun is a spark plug cleaner. One manufacturer has one for less than \$20. There is also a more expensive model that checks the spark under pressure. Both use a blast of grit to clean those hard-to-get places around the

electrodes of the plug. If you have any two-cycle engines, you will really appreciate this tool for cleaning fouled plugs.

Still in the inexpensive category is a paint spray gun. This will require a pressure regulator because spray guns usually need only about 40 pounds of pressure. There are models available that will spray either enamel (internal mix) or lacquer (external mix).

Most cities have specific codes regarding indoor painting, but most equipment can be painted outdoors. The real job in painting is always in the preparation.

Here's where an air sander can save a lot of time in taking off old paint, sanding down rough places, or smoothing off putty.

The advantages of using air for sanding are that the air-powered sander is much faster, more powerful, and the speed can be varied. Light duty sanders are available for about \$25.

Once you have an impact wrench in your

shop you will never give it up. No other tool can increase your shop efficiency more. We have all seen how tire shops whip lug nuts on and off our car wheel. This same tool can work for you on mowers, tractors, engines, as well as changing tires. Because you can adjust the power by a simple control on the wrench, you have positive control over how much pressure each nut or bolt receives. And do not overlook the use of this tool as a screw driver. Because you can hold the wrench steady and use your strength for pushing instead of turning, you have a real advantage on those hard-to-tighten or loosen screws.

For impossible-to-loosen nuts or bolts, the tool you must have is a pneumatic chisel. It is also good for cutting off old welds, punching or driving off stuck parts, etc. We have even used it for taking the ends out of metal barrels, and it works as good as any can opener.

Other air tools you will find useful in your shop include a truck jack or bumper jack, a tire changing tool, or an air-operated hoist similar to those found in automobile service stations. This last item is the most expensive, but

Howard Gaskill, of Hiwan Golf Club, Evergreen, Colo., has one he uses for servicing golf carts.

"It sure beats crawling underneath, and by raising the cart just a couple of feet it saves a lot of bending over," Howard reports.

Air tools do require some maintenance, and here are a few tips worth remembering:

1. Install all pipe and fittings $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch or larger so as not to restrict air passage.
2. Install all lines to drain. Water always forms in the tank and lines. Drain it often.
3. Use a filter at each outlet to assure clean air.
4. Use an in-line lubricator with tools that have internally moving parts.
5. Put quick-coupling connections on all tools and hoses to make quick changes easily.

If you buy good quality tools and take good care of them, your shop efficiency will increase and you will find it easy to make the most out of air.

A good air compressor has many uses in the maintenance of golf course equipment.

