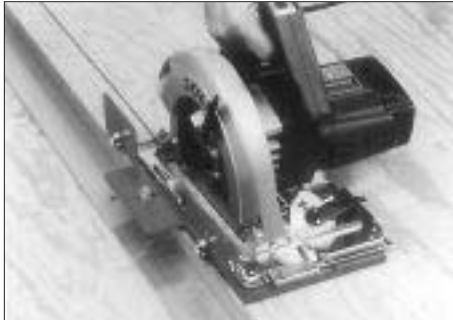


## Mini Panel Saw

by Bill Brockway



While a big panel saw can be a help on any job, it's rarely worth the trouble to set one up for a small project. The *Portable Panel Saw* from PSI Wood-working looks like a good alternative. The tool consists of two parts — a 96-inch-long straightedge and a ball-bearing assembly that bolts onto the shoe of any circular saw. Clamp the straightedge parallel to your cut, then run the saw with four of the bearings riding against the fence. The fifth bearing hooks over on the other side of the fence to prevent the saw from walking away from the cut line. The ball-bearing assembly flips out of the way so you can use the saw for regular cuts, too. The *Portable Panel Saw* sells for about \$89.

Contact: Penn State Industries, 2850 Comly Rd., Philadelphia, PA 19154; 800/377-7297.

### Lighter Roof Tiles



From Maxitile Inc. comes a new lightweight *Mission Tile* that offers the look of traditional clay or concrete roof tiles but weighs less than half as

much. The installed weight is just under four pounds per square foot. The new tile also carries a Class-A fire rating, which means it will resist burning in all but the most extreme circumstances. The tiles measure 24x36 inches, so you have to handle and install only 24 of them to cover one square. Price varies with location.

Contact: Maxitile Inc., 17141 Kingsview Ave., Carson, CA 90746; 800/338-8453.

### Shock Absorber



You've got your harness, your lifeline, and a good anchor point. You're protected in case you fall off the roof, right? Probably. But being stopped by a lifeline isn't like bungee jumping: There's no bounce. Sure, it's better than hitting the ground, but the jolt can still cause other injuries. Gemtor's new *Energy Absorber Lanyard* can give you a gentler mid-air stop. The lanyard is folded over on itself several times and sewn together with stitches that are designed to tear out one at a time. Each torn stitch slows your fall a fraction, so when you get to the end of the lanyard there's less of a jolt. Energy Absorbing Lanyards meet OSHA and ANSI standards and are available with a variety of locking hooks and D-rings.

Contact: Gemtor, One Johnson Ave., Matawan, NJ 07747; 800/405-9048.

### Crack Repair Fabric



One way to repair a disintegrating plaster wall is to strip it to the studs and install drywall. If your client isn't willing to go that route and just wants you to skim coat it, check out *Super Crackstop*, a Fibatape product from Perma Glas-Mesh. The self-adhesive reinforcing fabric comes in 36-inch-wide rolls in 75- and 150-foot lengths. Once adhered to the wall or ceiling, it provides a solid base for the skim coat and makes the finished product stronger and less likely to crack again soon. *Super Crackstop* sells for about \$45 for the 75-foot roll and \$90 for the 150 footer.

Contact: Perma Glas-Mesh, P.O. Box 220, Dover, OH 44622; 800/762-6694.

### Drill Doctor



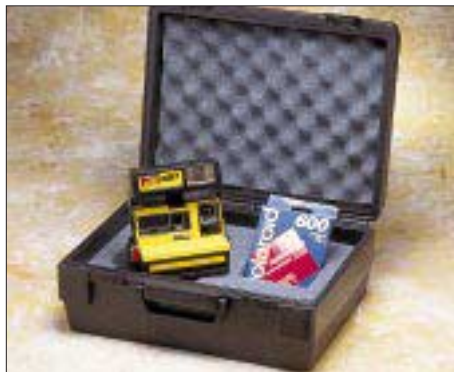
Sharp drill bits make your jobs go faster and easier. The *Drill Doctor* from Darex sharpens bits from  $\frac{3}{32}$  inch to  $\frac{3}{4}$  inch and all metric and lettered bits that fall in that range.

I had the chance to give the Drill

Doctor a try and found it easy to use. Large switches make it a snap to choose the angle of the tip (118° or 135°) and the configuration of the cutters (conventional, split-point, or masonry). And the Drill Doctor is fast: It takes about 60 seconds to sharpen a bit.

Contact: Darex Corp., P.O. Box 277, Ashland, OR 97520; 888/693-7455.

### On-Site Camera



Documenting job-site conditions with pictures is a great idea, but cam-

era equipment can sometimes be hard to work with. The new *JobPro Kit* is a camera system from Polaroid that offers the company's usual self-developing photos and was designed with construction sites in mind. The camera and a few spare packs of film travel in a molded plastic case much like the ones you now use to tote your smaller hand tools around. The camera takes care of focus and exposure settings, and also has a built-in flash and a close-up lens. The kit comes with one pack of film and costs about \$50. Additional film costs around \$10 for a pack of ten exposures.

Contact: Polaroid Corporation, P.O. Box 100, Penfield, NY 14526; 800/662-8337, ext. 506.

### Quick Tear-Off

Stripping a roof is a dirty job no matter what tools you use, so you might as well get it over with fast. The *Steep Pitch Tear-off Tool* from Roofers Choice is designed to speed the process



up. It's about 30 inches long and has a 5-inch-wide hardened steel blade with four notches that help the angled tip slip under nails and pop them free. The padded T-handle grip makes it easy to operate the stripper with two hands. The Tear-off Tool is welded out of plate and tubular steel and sells for around \$25.

Contact: Roofers Choice, 7064 Neff Rd., Valley City, OH 44280; 330/483-4125. ■