

# Products

by Patrick McCombe

## Behind Door Number One

Perching a solid-core door on your foot while you sneak in a hinge pin is a good way to mash your toes if not to hang a door. Enter the *Doorminator*, a heavy-duty rolling cart that makes supporting and hanging a heavy door by yourself as easy as dropping in the pins. The cart lifts and positions the door while spring-loaded hooks hold it steady. A 300-pound, 48-inch-wide capacity should handle just about anything you're likely to install, and forward, back, and sideways adjustments make both hanging and removal easy and safe. The *Doorminator* weighs approximately 65 pounds and has a swiveling back leg to negotiate tight spaces and narrow openings. It costs about \$400 (plus shipping).



Contact: Telpro Inc., Grand Forks, N.D.; 800/448-0822, [www.telprodirect.com](http://www.telprodirect.com).

## Stylish Rack

If you're tired of your roof rack whistling while you drive to work, the *TracVan rack system* for vans and SUVs might be of interest. It has an aerodynamic shape to keep wind noise to a minimum and features wide mounting brackets and damage-free fastening clips. Four sliding tie-downs keep your ladders or lumber under control. The aluminum frame



is powder coated to resist corrosion, and concealed fasteners accentuate its shapely look. The rack can be installed "in seconds," is rated for 500 pounds, and has a retail price of \$209.

Contact: TracRac, Fall River, Mass.; 800/501-1587, [www.tracrac.com](http://www.tracrac.com).

## Fancy Pan

A preformed, ready-to-tile shower pan can save hours in installation time. Here's a new, lightweight *polystyrene shower pan* that won't rot or degrade, maintains a 1/4-inch-per-foot slope,



and does away with many of the headaches typically associated with mud jobs and membranes. The built-in drain connects to either PVC or ABS pipe without special fittings, and the adjustable square grate simplifies tile layout, helping to keep cuts to a minimum. Pans cost from \$350 to \$575 for standard sizes, and custom sizes and shapes can be special ordered.

Contact: Bonsal, Charlotte, N.C.; 800/334-0784, [www.bonsal.com](http://www.bonsal.com).

## Sweet Switch

A retrofit garbage disposal is easy enough to install on the plumbing end, but fishing a wire up to a new wall switch can take a lot of time and patience.



Simplify the wiring process by mounting a *Sinktop Switch* on the sink deck, and save fishing for the weekend. The switch comes in white or chrome and the list price is \$67.

Contact: In-Sink-Erator, Racine, Wisc.; 800/558-5700, [www.insinkerator.com](http://www.insinkerator.com).

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### Family of Routers

A new collection of routers has joined the familiar yellow and black family of power tools. The new offerings include fixed, D-handle, and plunge platforms, with 1<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub>- or 2<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub>-horsepower motor packs. All



have features that are meant to edge out the competition. A quick-disconnect motor cord allows those who favor a trigger-operated D-handle to plug in to the motor without nine feet of cord tied to the housing. All three router styles feature flat tops, micro-fine depth adjustment, quick-release motor

latches, and grippy ergonomic handles. Plunge models have rust-proof brass bushings on the plunge mechanism, through-the-column dust collection, and a five-position adjustable stop. Street prices range from \$159 for a 1<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub>-horsepower fixed-base to \$249 for a 2<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub>-horsepower kit with both plunge and fixed bases.

Contact: DeWalt, Baltimore, Md., 800/433-9258, [www.dewalt.com](http://www.dewalt.com).

### Speakers for the Great Outdoors

Homeowners wanting to hear their tunes or talk radio outside can now choose corrosion- and weather-resistant outdoor speakers from M&S. The speakers feature



a 5<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub>-inch two-way woofer and a titanium dome tweeter and are said to be ideal for outdoor entertainment areas. Gold-plated binding posts, aluminum mounting brackets, and brass hardware help them

look good and last a long time in the great outdoors. Each speaker measures 7<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> inches wide, 9<sup>5</sup>/<sub>8</sub> inches tall, and 6<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> inches deep and can handle 70 watts. A pair retails for \$239.

Contact: M&S Systems, Dallas, Texas; 800/877-6631, [www.mssystem.com](http://www.mssystem.com).

### Hot Product

Scalding hot water in the tub or shower is serious business. The *HydroGuard HT115* monitors water temperature to prevent burns. When the device senses water temperatures above 115°, it reduces flow to a trickle (1/4 gpm), continuing normal flow within seconds



after safe temperatures return. The all-brass device screws on to an existing shower arm, works with both fixed and hand-held showerheads, and costs only \$25.

Contact: Powers, Skokie, Ill.; 800/669-5430, [www.powerscontrols.com](http://www.powerscontrols.com).

### Got a Tool Vice?

If you've held out for the ultimate in multitools, the new *Vise-Grip Toolbox* might be the one you've been waiting for. A small but useful set of Vise-Grips, with wire cutters on the business end, replaces the typical needle-nose pliers. The other end of the tool includes



two locking knife blades and a bit holder that accepts standard 1/4-inch hex-shaped sockets and driver bits. Although it doesn't have a strap or flap, the included sheath keeps the tool secure and allows quick one-handed draws.

Warning: If you open both blades and the bit holder at the same time, you'll need a screwdriver to unlock them again. It's likely to happen when you show a friend — I know. The Toolbox sells for about \$30.

Contact: American Tool Companies, Wilmington, Ohio; 800/866-5740, [www.visegrip.com](http://www.visegrip.com).

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### This Is a Stickup

Hot-melt glue is good for temporarily securing trim before pneumatic fastening because it sets quickly and might keep you from blowing a brad through your finger. But carpenters need to move fast, corded glue gun and all. The *G200K Portasol* is a professional-duty, butane-powered hot-melt glue gun that, according to the manufacturer, will work for five hours on a fill-up from readily available cigarette lighter-type butane. An on-board piezo igniter starts the fire, and a small window confirms that the gun is heating; it's ready to shoot glue in about four minutes. A fold-out stand on the handle keeps it upright. The G200K includes a blow-molded case and sells for \$160.

Contact: Cooper Tools, Apex, N.C.; 919/362-1670, [www.coopertools.com](http://www.coopertools.com).

### Rock On

In recognition that a radio is as much a necessity on the job as a cup of morning coffee, the *Job Site Radio* is designed to keep the crew rocking. According to the maker, the digital-tuning radio can take an 8-foot dive onto concrete and live to broadcast the tale. Twenty station presets introduce single-digit ease to the favorite-station squabble, and the omni-directional, flexible rubber



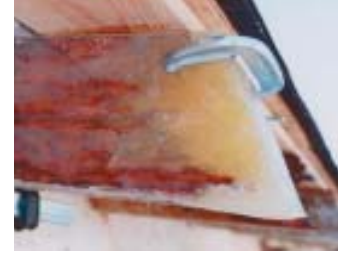
antenna is supposed to deliver clear reception even in remote areas. A clever pass-through plug keeps the radio from tying up an outlet or uses your 12- to 18-volt Milwaukee battery pack for power. With

a national weather band, digital clock, 12-volt auxiliary power port, and input jack for a portable CD or MP-3 player included, my only question is where's the on-board charger to juice up your Milwaukee battery packs? The JSR has a street price of about \$100.

Contact: Milwaukee Electric Tool Corp., Brookfield, Wisc.; 800/414-6527, [www.mil-electric-tool.com](http://www.mil-electric-tool.com).

### Cure for Common Rot

Frequently, repairing even badly rotted wood is possible and less expensive than replacement, according to the maker of a two-part Advanced Repair *elastomeric epoxy*. According to the maker, the epoxy can rebuild rotten windowsills, columns, structural elements, and even wood gutters and won't slump or sag when applied to vertical or



overhead surfaces. It won't shrink as it cures and can be painted or stained to match existing materials. Mixed epoxy has a 30-minute open time; unmixed material will keep for up to one year. A starter kit, including a double-barrel caulk gun, 12 ounces of primer, and 16.8 ounces of two-part epoxy, costs \$135, shipping not included.

Contact: Advanced Repair Technology, Cherry Valley, N.Y.; 607/264-9040, [www.advancedrepair.com](http://www.advancedrepair.com).

### Pencil-Free

When did tape measures start looking like SUVs?" one of my coworkers asked when shown the *Next unleaded measuring tape*. A tiny marking wheel, similar to a glass cutter, mounted on the housing, is said to leave a mark on almost any surface. A pointer on the tape housing, aligned with the marking wheel, indicates the chosen dimension. The tape comes in 16-, 25-, and 30-foot lengths and features a rubber covering for a good grip and impact resistance. I was able to get an 8-foot standout, and several uncontrolled retractions from 20 feet failed to do any damage to the spring or blade. But claims by the maker that it's easier to use than a traditional tape and pencil seem dubious. A 25-foot tape runs about \$20.

Contact: Levelution, Hailey, Idaho; 888/475-3835, [www.levelution.com](http://www.levelution.com).



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### High and Dry

The space under a raised deck is frequently wasted because it offers little or no protection from rain or melting snow. *Dry*

*Space*, a PVC rain diverter, fits between the deck joists and catches runoff, channeling it to the outside edge of the deck or a gutter system. F-brackets mounted on the side of the joists secure the panels without restricting seasonal movement. The system is now compatible with 16- and 24-inch on-center spacing, and the panels and accessories are manufactured in 12- and 16-foot lengths. The system is designed to allow a slight pitch to get

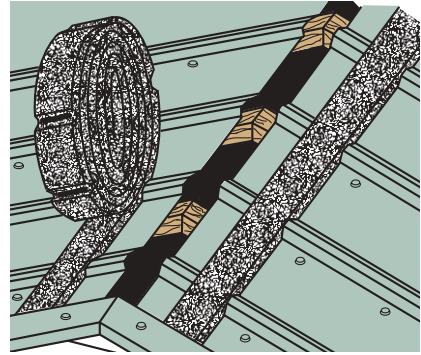
the water moving in the right direction. Manufactured in an unobtrusive off white, it runs \$3.20 per square foot.

Contact: Crane Products, Columbus, Ohio; 800/200-6121, [www.dryspace.cc](http://www.dryspace.cc).

### Breathe Easier

Metal roofing is increasingly popular but a little tricky to vent through the ridge. *Profile Vent* is similar to other rolled fibrous ridge vents, but it's available in 39 different profiles to match common standing-seam and screw-down metal roofing. The vent is sold in 20-, 50-, and 100-foot rolls and features self-adhesive glue spots to keep it in position while you fasten the ridge cap. Five-hundred-foot master rolls with an automatic dispenser are also available for installers who fabricate their own roofing. Prices run about \$1.90 per foot.

Contact: Ventco, Glenside, Pa.; 800/300-9515, [www.profilevent.com](http://www.profilevent.com).



### One Less Headache

If your wobbly cab protector is giving you a migraine, consider a sturdy new one that promises to alleviate your pain. Unlike cab protectors that bolt through the top of the bed rails only, the *Headache Rack* is fastened to the top and inside edge of the bed with L-shaped angle brackets. This double-bolting

results in a stronger and longer-lasting design, and rubber pads protect the truck's finish under the mounts. The *Headache Rack* is made of 2-inch, 16-gauge chrome-plated steel tubing with stainless-steel louvers. Options include a black powder-coat finish and a sliding louver panel in the rack's center to accommodate sliding rear windows. Headache prevention costs \$375 for the chrome, fixed-louver model.

Contact: Go Industries, Richardson, Texas; 800/527-4345, [www.goindustries.com](http://www.goindustries.com).

### Swell Well

For an alternative to ugly galvanized window wells, consider these easily installed *Window Well Pictures*. According to the maker, the flexible and



waterproof images dress up the plain zinc finish of a standard window well by replacing it with one of four attractive landscape scenes. Development of other scenes and landscapes continues. The high-resolution images are printed with UV-resistant inks and fit wells up to 4 feet deep and 12 feet in circumference. Prices range from \$40 to \$60 each.

Contact: Window Well Pictures, Boise, Idaho; 888/226-7658, [www.windowwellpictures.com](http://www.windowwellpictures.com).