

Weigh In!

Want to test a new tool or share a tool-related testimonial, gripe, or technique? Contact us at JLCtools@hanleywood.com or 707.951.9471



EDITED BY BRUCE GREENLAW



PamTite Hot-Melt Adhesive System

BY BILL ROBINSON

I've been looking for the perfect hot-melt glue and gun for years, ever since I saw a solid-surface fabricator install countertops with the help of hot-melt glue. I've tried all kinds, from a little pink craft gun with glue sticks to the Titebond HiPerformer Advanced Bonding System, and they've all fallen short.

Then I was introduced to the PamTite Adhesive System at the 2012 Remodeling Show in Baltimore. It includes the corded model HB 220 industrial-grade glue gun, plus a choice of two nontoxic, waterproof, and virtually odorless thermoplastic adhesives called PamTite and PamTite Plus. The former has a working time of 1 minute and instant tack, and it fully cures within 5 minutes. The latter has a working time of 3 minutes, has a less-aggressive tack, fully cures within 8 minutes, and is more resistant to

cold and heat. Both have a shelf life of several years. If you make a mistake with either, you can melt them with a heat gun and reposition your work. The adhesives aren't structural, but they bond to a wide range of materials and, according to the manufacturer, can often substitute for construction adhesives or traditional fasteners in controlled environments.

I've been using the gun with the instant-tack PamTite adhesive lately, and so far I'm really liking it.

HOT-MELT WEATHERIZATION

At the moment, I'm tuning up and weatherstripping lots of windows and doors in houses that are 50 to more than 100 years old, and the kit has been indispensable.

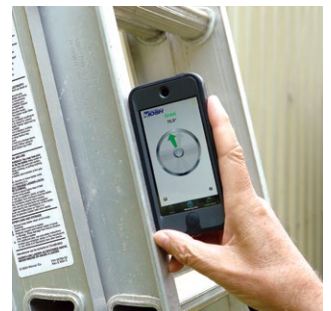
For instance, I weatherstrip old double-hung windows by routing grooves in the

LADDER SAFETY APP

For maximum stability, extension ladders should be pitched at a 75.5 degree angle. One way to check the angle is to stand with your toes against the bottom of the ladder and your arms extended straight out. If you can grasp a rung at shoulder height, you're in the ballpark.

Another way to determine the angle is to use the Ladder Safety app from the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH). Just hold your mobile device against a side rail and the app displays the angle while using visual and audio cues to guide you. A red indicator tells you the ladder pitch is too steep or shallow; a green indicator accompanied by a steady tone means you're within 2 degrees of 75.5 and are good to go.

The app also features a guide to choosing, inspecting, accessorizing, and using ladders. Accessibility features include a high-contrast mode that you can activate at the touch of an icon. Ladder Safety is free and is compatible with iOS and Android devices. Download it from iTunes or at the NIOSH website (search for "ladder safety app" at cdc.gov). —Bruce Greenlaw is a contributing editor to JLC.



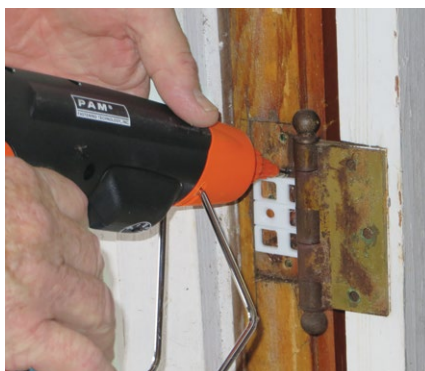


In addition to the glue gun, the PamTite kit's sturdy plastic case conveniently holds twelve 1/2-inch-by-10-inch glue sticks as well.

edges of the sashes and inserting either Q-Lon foam seals or silicone bulbs—a method that doesn't detract from the historic appearance. When this weatherstripping is loose at the ends of the grooves, I'm using the hot-melt to secure it while I return the window to the frame. Where window parts are worn and the fit is loose, a bit of hot-melt can make them work like new with no milling required. I also just used the gun to fix some leaky French doors and to glue plastic shims behind door hinges to realign the doors with their jambs.

TOP GUN

What I like most about the PamTite system is the gun itself. It has a built-in stand, lets you set the perfect temperature, activates the glue in less than 5 minutes, has



The kit has been helpful for tuning old windows and doors. Here, the author is gunning instant-tack adhesive to secure a hinge shim.

an adjustable stroke with a consistent feed, and accepts optional tips. It appears to be built to last, and also comes with a compact, sturdy plastic case that conveniently holds 12 of the 1/2-inch-by-10-inch glue sticks. The gun costs about \$110, and the adhesives cost about \$13 to \$17 per pound. I'll be using the kit for other things soon, so I might have more to say ... stay tuned.

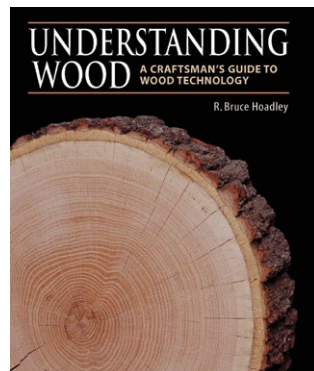
Bill Robinson is a weatherization expert, trainer, and multimedia construction consultant currently working in New Orleans. He also presents the Moisture Management Inside and Out clinic at JLC Live and moderates the Exterior Details forum at jlc.com.

PamTite Adhesive System / Pam Fastening Technology / 800.699.2674 / pamfast.com

MASTERING WOOD MOVEMENT

Moisture meters have been mentioned several times lately in JLC. When I bought a Lignomat mini-Ligno pin-type moisture meter years ago for architectural woodworking and finish carpentry, I also bought the hardcover book *Understanding Wood* and read it cover to cover.

First published by The Taunton Press in 1980, the book was revised in 2000 and is still in print. There's an incredible amount of useful information in there about working with wood, but for me the chapters on water and wood and on coping with wood movement were worth the price of admission. After studying them, I could use the meter to predict the shrinkage and swelling of hardwoods and softwoods whether I was working in the arid mountains or on the humid coast. That was a game-changer. The book costs \$40 at tauntonstore.com. —*B.G.*



Festool Track Saw Recall

Festool recently posted the following notice on its Festool Owners Group forum:

"Festool has notified the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) and Health Canada of a potential problem with the plunge mechanism on some TS 55 REQ Plunge-Cut Track Saws. While investigation is continuing, Festool, in cooperation with the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC), intends to recall affected units. If you have a TS 55 REQ Plunge Cut Track Saw, please discontinue use immediately and call Festool directly at 1-855-784-9727." —*B.G.*





Collomix Xo 1 Hand-Held Mixer

BY MYRON FERGUSON

I've been hanging and taping drywall since 1982, so I've mixed countless buckets of joint compound. For years, I mixed with a paddle powered by a heavy-duty ½-inch corded drill. It worked, but there were drawbacks: having to bend over slightly while mixing was hard on my back; the constant high torque was a drill-killer; and with thick compounds, I had to hold on for dear life.

About 10 years ago, I picked up a Collomix CX 20 hand-held paddle mixer, and I haven't mixed with a drill since. I can stand upright while mixing, and the two handles make the tool much easier to control. Using the recommended paddles, I've mixed compounds, heavy plasters, concrete, paint, driveway sealers—even dirt—and its rugged 7.2-amp motor and variable-speed transmission have been bulletproof. For the past few months I've been using the model Xo 1, the latest version of my old CX 20, and it appears to be even better.

FEATURES

The variable-speed Xo 1 is noticeably quieter and more powerful than my old model.

The handles are a bit higher, so I can stand upright with my shoulders comfortably level. And a quick-change chuck means that I no longer need two wrenches to install and remove paddles.

The Xo 1 comes with a universal paddle that can mix a variety of materials, but I prefer to use the optional KR 120 HF “bird-cage” paddle for mixing joint compounds. It's less aggressive, but it requires less torque to spin, reduces splattering, and doesn't draw the material right out of the bucket at high speeds. I can also simply spin it in a bucket of water to clean it without splashing water all over the floor.

I really like the ring guards at the bottoms of both paddles because they let the paddles spin smoothly against the inside of the bucket without cutting into the plastic. The paddles are made of steel, so they're built to last.

You can view a video at collomix.us.

Myron Ferguson is a drywall contractor in Middle Grove, N.Y., and presents the Drywall Trade Secrets clinic at JLC Live.



Xo 1 SPECS

Origin: Germany

Weight: 11.7 pounds

Amps: 10

Rpm: 0-650

Price: \$330 with universal paddle, plus \$45 for “bird-cage” paddle

Warranty: 2 years

Collomix USA

414.471.3883

collomix.us