

Carpenter-Friendly Clamp by Bruce Greenlaw



FatMax Xtreme Auto Trigger Clamp
The Stanley Works
800/262-2161
stanleytools.com
Street price: \$18

As a solo deck builder, I depend on the FatMax Xtreme Auto Trigger Clamp and spreader almost daily. It delivers a potent 450-pound clamping force, and it's spring-loaded to snap the jaws against the work at the press of a button. You only have to pull the trigger once or twice to apply the force. You can open the jaws by pressing the same button, flicking the clamp downward, and quickly releasing.

Bruce Greenlaw is a carpenter in Crescent City, Calif.

Heavy-Duty Wrecking Bar by Mark Clement

Fubar III
The Stanley Works
800/262-2161
stanleytools.com
Street price: \$80

If deck and porch tear-downs (or pergolas, fences, and any other backyard structures) are on your hit list, Stanley Tools' Fubar III should be in your tool box. I've used it for bashing apart framing, piercing cladding, pulling stuff down, and bust-

ing stuff up. The tool is relentless.

The Fubar is heavier than other 30-inch wrecking bars I've owned; its mass generates the inertia needed to overpower most of the building materials that I don't cut apart, notably beadboard ceilings, porch floors,



TOOL KIT

and trim boards. Whether ramming up from underneath, pulling with the tool's duck-billed jaw, or bashing balusters free, when you make contact with the material, the tool beats the resistance of most fasteners. All you have to do is get it moving fast enough, which isn't tough.

When I use the Fubar like a hammer or a ram, the head is big enough to move the material, rather than pierce through or split it. In other words, it's designed with optimum impact surface area for dislodging building materials.

The jaw is 2 inches wide and the intended purpose is to trap framing so you can twist it free. Honestly, I don't use the jaw for very much.

What I do use — probably more than any other feature — is the duck-billed leading edge. It's perfect

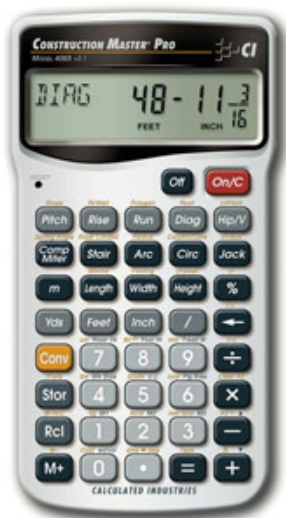
when I have to pierce cladding to get behind something before pulling it apart. A beadboard porch ceiling, fascia boards, siding, or a band joist and ledger connection — I can plunge the duck-bill into and behind any of these. Then I can yank, pull, pry, whatever. At 30 inches long, the Fubar provides good leverage for prying, whether that's jamming the toe of the tool into a fence post, peeling up an old T&G porch floor, or rolling a giant rock. There's no flex when I really lean on the bar — and I have bent cheaper ones.

This is not an inexpensive tool. For large demo jobs, however, it earns its keep in production and versatility.

Contributing editor Mark Clement is a member of the DeckExpo Demonstration Team.

Calculator for Feet and Inches

Construction Master Pro 4065
Calculated Industries
800/854-8075
calculated.com
Street price: \$80



I'm probably not the only one who wishes that building codes and hardware specs were more carpenter-friendly. I mean, you're supposed to space balusters so a 4-inch diameter sphere can't pass between them. Why don't they make the sphere a hair bigger, for crying out loud, and allow an exact 4-inch spacing so we don't have to introduce fractions into our calculations? At least I'm now armed with a Construction Master Pro calculator. It makes it much easier to juggle all those fractions, plus it allows you to do the calculations in feet, inches, and fractions of inches such as quarters, eighths, and sixteenths. Admittedly, these tools have been around for 20 years or so, but it's surprising how few carpenters seem to know about them. — B.G. ❖