



Hey, these PVC pipes would make great pontoons for a rowing boat if you plugged up the ends!

Cruising Home Depot

One of the most rewarding field trips I ever took was a day spent with J. Baldwin at a Big4 Rental outfit. We toured the premises and JB discoursed on the amazing things these machines would do for you if you gave them your credit card. I spend a lot my time these days trolling the aisles of our local Home Depot on weekends looking for whatchamacallits—some part or thing I hope will accomplish a task at hand. But I don't have a good lay of the land. Recently I asked JB if he would accompany me on a cruise through the ramparts of Home Depot, searching for new cool goodies, or overlooked and underappreciated old ones. Home Depots are not the best hardware stores in the world, but they are ubiquitous and well stocked. I've given the store's SKU for items we mentioned, which can be useful in tracking them down, in person or online (www.homedepot.com).

—KK

Aluminum Dust Pan

Made from recycled scrap aluminum, this tool is big, superlight, and has a superwide throat for garage-sized messes.

242-815
\$9.98

Touch-n-Foam

Liquid nastiness that expands into insulating foam. One can is enough for filling around a door, say, or a couple of windows (depending on crack dimensions).

251-456
\$4.47

Black Cable Ties

Immensely handy any time you need to tie or bundle something tightly. Only the black ones, UV rated, will survive (but not forever) in the sun. Longer ones can be cut shorter.

540-831
\$19.94



ScotchKote

Paint-on electrical insulation. Covers splices or exposed wires more thoroughly than electrical tape or shrink wrap; legal and up to code.

129-132
\$13.75

Evercoat Two-Part Foam

Mix two liquids and they foam up to fill any and all spaces. Fills, insulates, and soundproofs. Warning: it will stick to everything, including you. Yields about 2 cubic feet per quart.

134-941
\$37.97

Evercoat Casting Resin

Use to make exact duplicates of small parts, or tiny figures.

134-965
\$15.95

Zinsser BIN Primer Sealer

The only paint that will completely smother graffiti, markers, or stains. Covers anything, never fails. Try it over Masonite as an art paint surface.

164-364
\$21.97

Electric Air-less Spray Painter

Sprays all paint, no air. Uses little paint, with little overlap, great control, and doesn't fill the air with drifting paint mist. Cleans easily. You can rent 'em, too. The Wagner 305E is a good model.

579-766
\$79

Trim Roller

These itty-bitty paint rollers are just perfect for touchups.

431-621
\$1.97

Roller Cover Keeper

Keeps a paint roller wet if you're going to use it again soon.

687-547
\$1.97

Jasco Stop-Slip Floor Paint

The sand-like substance in this paint provides a rough, grippable surface even when wet.

384-880
\$8.91

Long-Mask (Blue) Masking Tape

One day of sunlight on masking tape will cause it to adhere permanently to whatever it was stuck too; that can get tiresome fast. Blue Masking Tape doesn't have that problem. It's a lot more expensive, but use it when the tape will be there for a while.

958-999
\$3.45

3M Safe-Release Masking Tape

Extra-low adhesion. The stuff to use on wallpaper or freshly applied paint. Also "sunlight stable" so it won't stick permanently in the sun.

958-980
\$4.28

Foil Tape

Duct tape in the sun will self-destruct; use this foil tape instead.

915-276
\$11.95

Red Duct Tape

Duct tape that actually sticks to stucco and cement, assuming it's been dedusted.

407-158
\$3.95

Cotton Cord

Old-fashioned sash cord intended for dangling window weights, but very useful for tie-downs. Hard to find sometimes, but superior in many ways to the plastic stuff because it doesn't slip out of knots as easily.

140-260
\$1.79

Refletrix Solar Shield

A radiant heat mirror plus a bit of insulation. Pretty good when you need something for a very thin space, like say in a mini-van roof. It won't withstand direct exposure to the sun.

132-923
\$39.83

Flame Protector

A non-asbestos flexible heat shield (the size and thickness of a place mat) that you slip behind or underneath any job that requires a flame, such as when using a propane torch for soldering copper plumbing under the house.

411-396
\$14.92

Gutter Scoop

For cleaning out gloppy gutters. Perfectly shaped for the job. Cheap.

978-967
\$2.92

Extra-Heat

Nifty device that reclaims heat from your clothes dryer vent for heating the room in cold weather.

146-242
\$5.97

DeWALT Magnetic Drive Guide

Keep one of these gadgets on your drill all the time. Makes starting a screw idiot-proof. Solves the problem of no extra hands to hold the screw.

127-549
\$4.86

Mini Vise-Grips

For holding things your fingers can't. You'll be surprised how often you'll use them.

308-269
\$12.46

Quick Grip Micro Bar Clamp

You can't have too many clamps. These tiny ones are strong and versatile.

206-074
\$8.94



Refletrix Solar Shield



Ratchet Tie-Down



Quick Grip Micro Clamp, Trim Roller, Mini Vise-Grips



Ridgid RoboGrips



Zircon iSensor Stud Finder



Grommet Kit

Ridgid Pipe Cutters

The only brand to get. Others will break, particularly if you leverage their handles with "cheater pipes."

747-655
\$43.97

Ridgid RoboGrip Pliers

These pliers automatically adjust their jaw size for an extremely tight grip even when you can't see the thing being tightened.

616-537
\$16.97

Ratchet Tie-Down

Really the only way to tie things securely on a car roof, or secure large objects, is with this web of heavy fabric. Be sure to get the kind that has a ratchet to tighten it. Hand pulling doesn't get it tight enough.

241-688
\$8.47

Zircon iSensor Stud Finder

Interior wall studs are hard to find, and essential for some things, like bookshelves. These once-expensive gizmos are now affordable and work much better than earlier models. Some versions will find wires and pipes, too.

404-233
\$12.94

Industrial Strength Velcro

Two-inch wide rolls. Very tenacious stuff. Great for sailboats, inside vehicles, shops. Also comes in a black version which the sun doesn't weaken as quickly.

847-062
\$26.35

Grommet Kit.

Put the tarp grommet just where you need it. A great way fasten flat, thin materials together, too.

627-516
\$8.33

Rechargeable Flashlight-Nightlight

Plug this flashlight directly into your AC socket and it serves as a nightlight, but is also an always charged-up flashlight.

456-420
\$11.97

Household Lead Test Kit

Simple color test to determine if your china, paint, or soil has lead.

221-793
\$5.67

Carbon Monoxide Alarm

Now that these are inexpensive they should go wherever flames and fire are.

421-846
\$39.97

Bath Panel

In 4 x 8 sheets, this 1/8-inch white material makes a very serviceable and very affordable large white board for an office or shop.

628-656
\$15.62