

Best & Worst Buys

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ery 50,000 miles. I've never owned a pickup as good as this one.

"My worst buy was two **Trane** heat pumps that I installed in my office and home two years ago. Both have had major problems and I've had to replace the motors on both. Now one of them can't even cool a small office. They're noisy and use a lot more electricity than other same sized units that I have in other buildings. The company won't fix them and refuses to return my calls. The warranty isn't any good as written."

F.H. Goforth, Alexander, Ark.: "My **Kawasaki Mule 500** ATV is the best thing since sliced bread. It lets me carry everything



I need to repair fence. I added a Lexan windshield and top onto the machine to block wind and rain. I use my Mule every day, and my 7-year-old grand daughter even uses it to run errands."

Andrew Heinricher, Montney, B.C.: "I installed a new concave from **Sunnybrook Mfg.** (Sunnybrook, Alberta, Canada) in my Deere 6601 combine and it's my best buy. The concave has more bars and a larger opening between the wires than the original one on the combine. It comes with four filler plates and virtually eliminates white caps, cracked grain, and loss over the walkers. It also has noticeably more capacity in cereal grains. It turned my 6601 into a real combine. It's truly a best buy.

"My worst buy of all time is an under-the-hood welder system purchased from **Scott Hopkins Equipment** of Saskatoon, Sask. The company claimed it would compare with a 190-amp welder and burn a 5/32-in. 7018 rod. However, I found that it would hardly even burn a 1/8-in. 7018 rod and we were able to use it only for short intervals. The wiring roasted before we were able to use up even 10 lbs. of the 1/8-in. rod. The company wouldn't stand behind its product. It's now an \$1,800 piece of junk."

Richard C. Johnson, Woodsville, N.H.: Richard had the mechanical disc brakes on his Super H Farmall relined with **Kevlar** (Tribco, Inc., 1700 London Road, Cleveland, Ohio 44112 ph 216 486-2000). It's his "best buy". Kevlar is a space age plastic fiber for use on brake linings, clutch plates, automatic transmission friction discs, and other parts that would otherwise be lined with asbestos, bronze or other types of friction linings. Two products are available - Clutchtex® and Braketex®. The company says they're the only 100% Kevlar-fibered composite friction materials on the market and that they deliver higher torque and smoother operation and virtually eliminate brake, transmission and clutch plate wear after they're installed. "I couldn't believe how much better the brakes on my tractor worked," says Johnson.

Mary L. Wolfe, Hadley, Pa.: A 1998 **Mantis** tiller rates as Mary's "best buy". "It's a great little tiller that's easy to assemble out of the box and is unbelievably powerful and

works fast. It took me only 35 to 45 minutes to till my entire 30 by 80-ft. garden between rows and also between some plants. It's more versatile than bigger tillers and is also easier to carry around."

She says her 1994 **Cub Cadet 1864** riding mower is her "worst buy". "It's hard on gas and also starts hard. I often have to remove the air filter and hold the carburetor butterfly shut with my finger before it'll even start."

Wendyl Parrish, Kingston, Okla.: "My 1998 **Hay Van 14-ft.** no-till pasture drill is virtually indestructible and is my best buy. I've used it in rocky ground, stumps, and brush. It cost about two thirds less than a green or red brand and has a lot less on it to maintain.

"My **Lely** disc mower is trouble-free and is also a best buy.

"My **Bush Hog** disc mower is my worst buy. It was nothing but a dud. The company wouldn't back up its product."

J. Robert Jaworski, Erie, Pa.: "I use my 3-pt., pto-driven **Farmi** skidding winch to clean up windfall timber in our woods. It's my best buy.

"My 1997 **GM Sierra 4-WD** pickup is my worst buy. It has the company's version of ABS brakes and I've often had them kick in while driving on dry roads. I've already had to change the rear seals. I've talked to other people who own this same model and they all say they don't like the ABS brakes."

Parkes Richardson, Lawrenceburg, Tenn.: "It's the best tractor we've ever owned," says Parkes about his **Deere 4230**. "We bought it used in 1972 from a Texas horse farm and have had to make only a few small repairs on it."

Dale First, Dowagiac, Mich.: "I love my 1987 **Ford New Holland 4630** orchard tractor but have one complaint. The dealer used a kit to convert the upright exhaust system - which was equipped with a turbocharger - to a side-mounted exhaust. However, that left a 3 1/2-in. dia. hole in the hood that I have to look at every day. He said the company didn't make a cap big enough to cover the hole. So I spent \$26,000 on a new tractor that now has a hole in the hood."

Jerome Kline, Brooklyn, Iowa: "My best buy is a **Country Side** corn stove. It's easy to operate and the fuel is cheap and renew-

"Converting to a side-mounted exhaust system left a hole in the hood that I have to look at every day."

able. I can heat my 1,100 sq. ft. home for about a bushel of corn a day. I like it so well that I became a dealer for the company."

Gary Max Busler, Blaine, Tenn.: "My 1982 **Massey Ferguson 275** tractor works great and is my best buy. It's very fuel efficient.

"My 1997 **Deere 510** round baler, which I bought used, is also a best buy. It's easy to pull, makes a good tight bale, and doesn't require a lot of power. Also, the belts on it are easy to replace. The only problem is that when I start to make a bale the belt some-

times will cross and lock up which causes problems.

"My 1991 **Toyota 4-WD** pickup, which I bought used three years ago, is a best buy. It has required very little maintenance."

Joel Rosenau, Lemmon, S. Dak.: "I like my 1996 **Melroe Bobcat 773** skid steer loader. It has a long wheelbase for a smoother ride and good vertical lift. Works great for drilling post holes. One problem is that the optional joystick controls are very jerky and don't return to neutral freely. When I'm working with pallet forks sometimes the loader will lift 6 inches or more all at once. Before anyone buys this option they should try using them first. The old foot pedal controls were much better as far as I'm concerned."

Thomas Spurling, Ft. Lupton, Colo.: "I'm not too pleased with my new **Coleman 10 hp, 5,000-watt** generator. The output voltage of the generator is determined by engine rpm's. The company manual - which we never got - stated that the output voltage was factory set. It sure was - at 135 volts. The generator doesn't have a volt meter on it so I had to purchase a volt meter in order to find out what the voltage was.

"I'm well pleased with my 1992 **Deere 2355** utility tractor which replaced my previous **Deere 730** model. The 2355 has a lot of power and is fuel efficient and easy to service. The only problem I've had is when I back up and use the clutch at the same time - the seat doesn't swivel and the 3-pt. lever is mounted too low to be reached conveniently when backing up."

Matt Anderson, Londesboro, Ontario: "It has a lot of power and easily does its work at good speeds," says Matt, impressed with his **Massey Ferguson 18 hp** riding mower equipped with a 48-in. deck. "The big deck lets us cut our 5 acres of grass fast. We have to cut around a lot of trees because my dad is always planting more trees on our lawn. No problems so far."

Robert Lyke, Sumner, Texas: A **Troy Built** mini tiller equipped with a 2-cyl. Tecumseh engine rates as Robert's "worst buy". "I was able to use it only for about two hours before the engine failed to turn the tiller. The company said I would have to go to Tecumseh for warranty help. The bottom line is that I spent more than \$100 on repairs that didn't even solve the problem. I had to junk the machine. I'll never buy a Troy Bilt product again."

Trevor Kohler, Benedict, N. Dak.: Trevor owns a 1996 **Yamaha Timberwolf** ATV equipped with a 229 cc engine and is happy with it. "It's a real step saver. I use it to haul a lot of things. It'll pull flat bed trailers and augers with ease. The only problem is that I can't get the drain plug out in order to change the oil. We have to tip the ATV on its side."

Glenn Crandlemire, Mount Pleasant, New Brunswick: "Our 1998 **Subaru** Forester sports utility vehicle fits well in our farm operation. It can take a fair amount of rough and tumble going to the back forty. It rides like a car and is just as quiet. I pull a small trailer behind it whenever I need to haul large parts, etc. No problems."

On the negative side, "Our 1997 **Case-IH Maxxum MX100** front wheel assist tractor performs well but had a number of breakdowns during the first months we used it. Both rims on the front wheels had to be replaced and we had to make a major repair to the front axle driveline. We also had to make adjustments on the shifting mechanism and repairs and adjustments on the hydraulic controls. It took a long time to get parts."

Bart Vanderwel, Bow Island, Alberta:

Bart likes his 1994 **Case-IH 7230** tractor, which has 1,200 hours on it, but has one complaint. "I don't like the seat - it's too hard and uncomfortable. It must have been designed for people who weigh more than 400 lbs."

Gary Butts, Washington Courthouse, Ohio: "My worst buy is my 1998 **GM Yukon** sports utility vehicle. It gets only 13.9 mpg, has a very uncomfortable driver's seat, sways a lot going down the road, and has a poor paint job. Another problem is that air leaks around the passenger door."

Ed Venner, Manning, Iowa: "My 1985 **Chevrolet** Caprice car has 208,750 miles and still has the original engine, which has never been overhauled and still gets 30 mpg. The body is also in top shape."

Terrance Evarts, Waltham, Vt.: "My **Hesston 880 DT 4-WD** tractor has 3,000 hours with no problems. I wish the company still distributed these tractors in North America. You rarely see a used one available for purchase. Fortunately, my local Ford dealer will order any parts I need."

Donald W. Holland, Savannah, Mo.: "I bought a used 1989 **Chevrolet 3/4-ton 1500** series pickup 3 years ago with 60,000 miles on it. It has 175,000 miles on it now and still looks and drives good. No problems."

Hayden K. Wood, Berryton, Kan.: "Over the years I've owned several different brands

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of pickups, but this is the best one yet," says Hayden about his 1994 **Dodge 3500** pickup equipped with a diesel engine, 5-speed transmission, and dually wheels. "It has 140,000 miles and still looks and runs like new. It has a lot of power."

Dale E. Ater, Albert, Kan.: "Three years ago I bought a 1-year-old **Grazer** zero turn mower with 280 hours on it. It was equipped with a 3-blade, 52-in. deck and powered by an 18 hp Briggs & Stratton 2-cyl. gas engine. I use it to keep 10 acres mowed. It does a great job no matter how tall the grass and weeds are and doesn't leave any windrows - just a beautiful, level mowed surface no matter how rough or uneven the ground is. I really like the zero turn feature because I have to mow around a lot of obstacles. The flip-up deck is easy to wash out and also makes it easy to remove the blades as well as any grease. This mower is built strong. I'd recommend it to anyone. I've put 1,000 hours on it with no problems."

Jimmy Hollingshead, Bay Springs, Miss.: "My **Kubota 4700** tractor has great engineering. It never fails to start and has just the right amount of power for its size. I use it to mow about 10 acres of grass and to bush hog about 40 acres. It's a fine tractor.

"My 1987 **Wheel Horse 414** garden tractor is also a best buy. I use it to mow about 5 acres and to till a large vegetable garden. The Kohler 14 hp engine is original and doesn't smoke or use any oil. The only parts I've had to replace were belts for the mower and tiller, two batteries, and one starter solenoid. I expect to use this tractor for many more years. The company merged with Toro and has downsized its equipment. That's too bad because they used to have some larger tractors that I'd now like to buy.

"My **Land Pride 6-ft.** finishing mower is also a best buy."