

Best & Worst Buys

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mare. I've been waiting for new tie rod ends and boots for the CV joints on the 1990 model for three weeks. It takes up to a month to get some of the sprockets. If you're a good mechanic and don't mind constantly fixing and replacing parts, the Polaris is by far the best 4-wheeler made. However, I think my next model will be a Honda. All I want is to put gas in and go."

Robert Mueller, Marengo, Ill.: A set of DT 710 Goodyear radial rear tires is Robert's "best buy." "Vibration from the bias-ply tires on my Deere 4240 tractor used to vibrate the monitors we use, but these new tires have totally solved the problem. They have a very smooth ride."

Garry Nolan, Rouleau, Sask.: Garry's impressed with his Kirby straw and chaff spreader (Dutch Industries, Regina, Sask.). "We mounted two units on our International 1680 combines and are very pleased with them. They spread chaff and straw a full 30 ft. They work better than any other straw and chaff spreader on the market and are affordably priced. They're built simple, have low power requirements, and are easy to remove."

Scott Anderson, Coldwater, Mich.: Faced with the chore of mowing two acres of lawn, Scott purchased a 1992 LX 188 riding lawn mower built by Deere. "It has plenty of power and has been trouble-free. The 17 hp liquid-cooled engine runs quiet and smooth. The bagger does a super job."

Keith Rekow, Webster, S. Dak.: "It has plenty of power and is fuel efficient," says Keith, owner of a "best buy" 1993 Chevrolet 1500 4-WD pickup equipped with a 6-cyl. engine and automatic transmission. "It gets 17 1/2 mpg loaded and 19 1/2 mpg empty on the highway. I wish I could shift into 4-WD on-the-go instead of having to stop."

Russell Parris, Pleasant Hill, Mo.: "My Vermeer 605-H round baler is my best buy. It's very reliable. However, it should have a double drive chain instead of a single one so the chain and sprockets would last longer. Also, the baler does a poor job in wet hay."

Everett Hein, New Harmony, Ind.: Everett's pleased with his Makita cordless drill driver and 4-in. disc grinder. "They're well-built and dependable."

"My Kawasaki Bayou 300 4-wheel ATV is several years old but still works great and is almost trouble-free. I use it to repair fences and to check out cattle in pastures."

Niel Hannah, Port Hope, Ontario: Niel mounted a 1992 Vitetoe twin rotor chaff spreader on his Deere 9400 combine and says it's his "best buy." "It works well in all crops and has made a large contribution to the success of our no-till soybeans, wheat, and oats."

Glenn Weber, Heron, Mont.: "Our 1981 New Holland 315 small square baler works great. We've used it to bale 220 to 250 tons of hay per year with few breakdowns."

Harold Downey, Jr., Murray, Iowa: Harold's impressed with his 1990 GMC Sierra 1500 pickup equipped with a fuel-injected 4.3-liter 6-cyl. engine and 5-speed manual transmission. "It rides smooth, shifts like a dream, and starts easy even in the coldest weather. It gets 17 to 26 mpg depending on road conditions and has 45,000 trouble-free miles. The flame red paint hasn't

faded even though the pickup sits outside all year long. It looks as bright as the day I bought it. I hope my next pickup is as good as this one."

Jim Appleford, Aylmer, Ontario: "My Husqvarna 41 chain saw really cuts wood

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and is lightweight and easy to start. I like it so well I bought another one. It's a terrific saw."

On the negative side, "My Black & Decker 3/8-in. drills don't have enough power and burn out too easy. I often have to do a lot of heavy drilling, but these drills just can't take it."

Barry Hiebert, Port Rowan, Ontario: A 1993 Salford Farm Machinery (SFM) 22-ft. 8-in. S-tine field cultivator, equipped with double rolling harrows, rates as Barry's "best buy." "It's built heavy and handles trash well. The double rolling harrows do a good job of breaking up and leveling the ground."

Francis Illerbrunn, Mildmay, Ontario: "My best buy is my 1993 Pequea hay tedder (3230 Gordonville Road, Gordonville, Penn. 17259). It saves a day of baling time because of the way it fluffs hay."

Jerry Abel, Jr., Calumet, Okla.: Jerry nominates his 1991 Doda slurry pump as his "best buy." "It has a lot of volume and will pump manure that has a lot of solids in it."

"My worst buy is Smidley hog feeders made by Marting Mfg. The hollow side walls make great nesting areas for mice. The feed plate hinges rusted out and broke within six months. The metal chew plates are held in place with brads that hold about as well as thumb tacks. The hogs tear these feeders up at will."

Les Harris, Dorchester, Ontario: "My best buy is my 1993 Chevrolet Silverado 4-WD pickup equipped with a 350 cu. in. engine. It rides like a car. It performs fantastic and is unbelievably fuel efficient."

Wilford Schaffenacker, Mt. Pulaski, Ill.: "My worst buy is my Bonanza 60 by 90-ft. building. It has two double 15-ft. doors and a 20-ft. door that sag badly. A truss rotted off at one end because the gutters weren't installed properly."

Doug Allison, Corning, Iowa: Doug's the satisfied owner of a 1983 Vermeer 605-H round baler. "It makes nice solid bales. The six-bar pickup is equipped with rubber-mounted teeth and does a good job picking up hay. I don't know how they could improve this baler. It bales tough hay with no problems. The only limitation is that in light hay or straw I sometimes have trouble starting the bale."

Art Thomas, Stryker, Ohio: Art says his 1992 Ford Ranger pickup equipped with a 4-cyl. engine and manual overdrive transmission has turned out to be his "best buy." "I traded my 1985 Ford Ranger pickup

equipped with a 6-cyl. engine and manual overdrive transmission for this pickup. At first I was disappointed with the 4-cyl. engine because it didn't have enough power in overdrive and was less fuel efficient than the 6-cyl. engine. However, as the miles added up, it became more powerful and fuel efficient, and now at over 8,000 miles it has good power for a 4-cyl. engine and gets up to 30 mpg on long trips."

Keith V. Ashbaugh, New Raymer, Colo.: Keith likes his 1981 Suzuki 4-Runner 230 ATV. "I call it my Japanese saddlehorse. I use it nearly every day to do a lot of different jobs. I pull a two-wheel trailer for fixing fence, hauling hay bales, and other jobs. It was nearly new when I bought it and now has over 3,000 miles."

"My Makita 4-in. angle head grinder is well-built and easy to use."

"My 1991 Buick LeSabre car is neither a best nor a worst buy. It looks nice, handles well, and has a lot of accessories. However, the rotors were warped when I bought it. I didn't discover the problem before the 12-month, 12,000-mile warranty had expired so I had to pay to have the rotors trued up. The front shocks 'bottom out' on a road that I drive frequently. The dealer says the shocks are doing what they were designed to do so he won't replace them. The cruise control surges at times and eventually quit working. One of the electric windows sticks so I have to help it up. I wonder what's next. For a car that cost over \$20,000 I would think the dealer and manufacturer could do better."

Rob Helm, Kincardine, Ontario: "This drill has lived up to our highest expectations," says Rob, pleased with his 1992 Deere 750 no-till drill. "We haven't had any problems with seed placement. It plants at a consistent depth in both sandy and clay-type soils. The only problem is that it's difficult to service."

Barry H. Dee, Sedgwick, Colo.: Barry mounted his "best buy" Ficklin 4500 gravity wagon box on an old military 6-WD truck (209 West Grant, Onarga, Ill. 60955).

"This grain drill has lived up to our highest expectations."

"We bought it because we needed additional grain-hauling capacity at wheat harvest. The box is slip-coated, and the side unload door can be adjusted precisely for unloading grain into an auger. There's no need to back up or raise a hoist. It's a beautiful piece of equipment."

"I purchased my worst buy New Holland 850 round baler a number of years ago. When I first got it, I thought it was the most frustrating piece of junk I ever bought. If you got more than one bale out of 20 made without plugging, you were doing good. I asked dealer after dealer what was wrong, but no one could help. Finally I used a factory service phone number in the operator's manual to call company headquarters. I was told to move a small block that the tension cable rides on. Now the baler is one of the best tools on my farm. I don't know the name of the factory rep who helped me, but I want to thank him. I wish Deere had a factory service phone number in its operating manuals."

George E. Zeman, Elberon, Iowa: "My worst buy is my Morton building. The slid-

ing doors are built from flimsy material and bend from the slightest pressure. The building looks nice and has a good paint job, but it just isn't built from good materials."

Arnold Shackelford, Long Green, Md.: "My best buy is my 1990 Sears Craftsman 18 hp riding lawn mower. It's been trouble-free."

Elmer Schafer, Jackson, Minn.: "My 1980 New Holland 273 small square baler is my best buy. It just keeps doing the job. One year it went an entire season without missing a single bale. We use it to bale alfalfa, grass hay, straw, and along road ditches. It can be easily adjusted for any condition."

Joe Letwen, Cortland, Ohio: "I like my 1989 Chevrolet Silverado 1500 club cab pickup. It's the 15th new pickup I've bought over the years."

Forest Koone, Union Mills, N.C.: Forest's impressed with his Deere 500 round baler. "Even though it's a closed throat baler it does a good job as long as the hay is cured properly."

Gilbert H. Corss, Vandalia, Mich.: "Last fall I purchased a used Gilmore & Tatge (GT) grain dryer. It was easy to set up and works like a champ. I'm happy with it."

Jeff Jones, Tivoli, N.Y.: Jeff's happy with his Pequa 816 bale racks equipped with feeder bottoms. "We previously owned three of these bale racks and last spring we bought a fourth one. They're well made and easy to use. We especially like the fold-down side and front platforms which make it easy to load the conveyor. We also use them in winter to feed cows. We cut the strings off bales as we load them onto the conveyor and fill the racks with loose hay."

"My DuAl 215 quick-tach front-end loader is a best buy. It's a super piece of machinery. It was the only loader out of about ten different brands that I compared that would fit my tractor - a Ford 5600 4-WD. The loader is well made and built strong. I can put it on or take it off in only a couple minutes."

Paul Hansucker, Polson, Mont.: "My Ezee-On 1201 offset disk is well-designed and well-built (5110 62nd St., Vegreville, Alberta, Canada T9C 1N6). The company used good heavy materials to build it. It's easy to adjust and does a good job."

Steve Dittoe, Somerset, Ohio: "My 1989 Deere 850 MFWD tractor is my best buy. I've used it to do everything from moving round bales to cultivating corn, yet it's small enough to mow my yard. It's one of the most used tractors on our farm. We've never had any problems with it."

On the minus side, Steve lists his Skil 4 1/2-in. angle grinder. "It doesn't run smooth at all. I've only used it to do a couple of jobs but it already acts like the bearings are going out. Next time I'll spend more money and buy a Milwaukee."

Hatler E. Morgan, Benton, Kent.: A 1989 Troy-Bilt sickle mower rates as Hatler's "worst buy." "It goes good in forward, but doesn't have a reverse and is impossible to handle except in an open field. Someone stole it from me but I don't care."

Henry Schmelthop, Holland, Ind.: "Our 1989 Ford 3/4-ton 4-WD pickup is our worst buy. It has less than 9,000 miles, most of them on hard surface roads, but already the rear brakes stick. I had it back to the dealer four times. The last time I had to wait for four hours. Finally the shop foreman checked it out but couldn't find anything wrong."