He Makes His Own Drivable Posts

Pierre Ménard, Vispieux, makes his own drivable support posts for decks, fences and sheds.

"There were round, 1-in. diameter, drivable support posts on the market," says Ménard. "They worked beautifully, but they weren't as strong as I needed."

Ménard knew that a square tube has more strength than a round one and flat surfaces are more difficult to bend. He decided to build his own posts using 1 1/2 and 2-in. square tubing. To drive them into the ground, he added a flat plate or blade to each post, welding them at an angle to 'screw' into the ground.

"I cut the posts at a 30-degree angle and added a blade at an angle that is 4 degrees from perpendicular to the post," says Ménard. "If it is too sharp an angle, the machine driving the post can be hard to hold. If too shallow an angle, a rock or other object can get caught between the cutting edge and the trailing edge."

After initial trials, Ménard kept the shallow angle, but used 2 slightly separated, 1/4-in. thick, 6 by 3-in. half blades. This made the post easier to fabricate as well as to drive. He also bent the toe and heel edges of the half blades slightly to penetrate the ground more easily. He advises making jigs for placing and welding the blades.

The square posts can be driven into the ground by hand with a 2 by 4 or 4 by 4 attached, simply walking around the post. However, Ménard also devised 2-man power drivers using a drill, sprocket and chains followed by one with 2 drills.

"I am in the process of designing a third machine with two 3/4-in. Milwaukee drills," says Ménard.

Support plates for a building to rest on or attaching a post can be purchased or fabricated. Ménard welds 8-in. lengths of 1-in. threaded rod to plates or U-channel iron. After threading a nut on the rod, he inserts it through a 2-in. dia. washer and into the square tube in the ground.

Drivable posts made from square tubing have a flat blade welded on at an angle at bottom that "screws" into the ground.

Posts can be driven into ground by hand or with a 2-man power driver.

"Simply turn the nut on the rod to adjust the height," says Ménard.

Ménard says he has used the support posts for a wide variety of jobs, including replacing failing supports. A video at FARMSHOW.com shows how he drives the posts. A detailed explanation of how to make the posts is on his website.

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10-Ft. Deer Fence Posts Install Fast

You can put up a deer-proof fence fast with Deer Dominator fence posts. The fiberglass posts are pre-drilled with holes every 2 in. The 10-ft. length lets you push it in the ground a foot or more and still have an 8 to 9-ft. post.

"I've shot 20 fewer deer a year since we came up with the Deer Dominator posts," says Grant Schultz, founder of VersaLand, a 145-acre permaculture farm, laboratory and homestead near Iowa City, Iowa. Schultz has planted the farm to tens of thousands of fruit and nut trees, as well as fruit and nut-producing shrubs. Deer damage had taken its toll.

"I couldn't tell you the economic value of ending deer damage," says Schultz. "After developing the orchard we needed a way to keep the deer out. We tried composite poly/wood fiber posts, but they had to be drilled for each wire."

Deer Dominator posts are 7/8 in. in diameter. They're double coated with an epoxy resin for a bright white finish with a 25-year warranty.

The posts also work well to contain the cattle and hog herds on the farm. Since the entire post is an insulator, any number of wires can be easily electrified, and there are no more ground faults.

Ease of installation is important to Schultz. "Posts can be attached to existing wood fence posts with 2 or 3 screws," he says. "We have about 2 miles of fence in all with about 1/2 mile attached to existing posts."

Attaching high tensile wire is easy, too. Simply cut a short length of high tensile wire and bend it in a U shape. Slip it over the fence wire and through 2 holes in the post and bend the ends to the side.

"The posts work great on uneven ground, too," says Schultz. "In a dip, run a dog fence-type post anchor into the ground and through the bottom hole in the post.

"On ridges, install a 1-in. washer over the base of the post and secure it with a wire before pushing the post into the ground," says Schultz. "The washer quadruples the surface area of the post and keeps the wire tension from pulling the post into the ground."

Schultz sells the posts and other innovations as well as seedling trees and shrubs through the ecommerce website www.newfarmsupply. They are priced at $18.88 each. When ordering more than $200, use the code VERSALAND for a 20 percent discount.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, New Farm Supply, 5133 Strawbridge Rd. N.E., Iowa City, Iowa 52240 (www.newfarmsupply.com).

Fiberglass posts are pre-drilled with holes every 2 in., making it easy to attach high tensile wire that's bent into a U-shape.

Fence Post "Protectors"

You can protect fence posts from powered weed trimmers and lawn mowers with these new "Fence Armor" protectors that install at the base of each post. In most cases, all it takes is a hammer or screwdriver to attach them.

The 2-piece sleeves are made from durable powder-coated, G90 22-ga. galvanized steel. They're available in a wide variety of shapes, sizes and colors to match almost any type of fence including wood, vinyl, and metal. They can be installed on everything from ordinary wood and vinyl posts to round cedar posts, chainlink fence posts and even mailbox posts. Available colors include galvanized, white, black, redwood, clay, and almond, with custom colors available upon request.

"The idea is to extend the post's life by preventing damage to a new post or stop damage to existing posts," says inventor Al Martins. "Once a wood post is violated by a weed trimmer or mower, moisture seeps in and it begins to rot and fail. Vinyl posts are also susceptible as they have a very thin titanium oxide coating to prevent ultraviolet sunlight damage. Once a weed whacker starts to breach that coating, the post will immediately become discolored and start to degrade."

He says they make protectors in two halves, or sleeves, for a couple of different reasons. "First, if the post has already been damaged you can seal up the area and install the protector to give the post new life. Second, you may need to protect just one side of the post and not the other or you prefer one color on your side but your neighbor wants a different color on his side."

Two-piece fence protector installs at the base of any post, allowing you to get close with your weed trimmer or lawn mower without damaging post.

Sleeves are available in a wide variety of shapes, sizes and colors to match almost any type of fence.

The protectors are made to fit 3 1/2 to 7 1/2-in. wide posts and every size in between, in 1/2-in. increments. "We offer 113 different versions in all. It's important to measure your posts to make sure you get the proper size protector for your fence," says Martins.

He says the cost ranges from $5 to $10 per post, depending on how many sides of the post need to be covered.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Fence Armor, 10105 N.W. 88th Ave., Medley, Fla. 33178 (ph 888 289-5617; www.fencearmor.com; info@fencearmor.com).

Steel pipe mounted on loader bucket is used to make holes for fence posts. Bucket is then tipped forward to push post into hole.

Loader Bucket Fence Post Driver

Roland Girard, Cochrane, Ontario, uses a steel pipe mounted on his loader bucket to make holes for fence posts, and then uses the bucket itself to push the posts in.

A 4-ft. length of 3 1/2-in. dia. drilling pipe - clamped to the back of the bucket - is used to make the hole. Then Girard uses the bottom of the bucket to push the posts in.

The top end of the pipe butts up against a short length of square tubing welded onto the angled back side of the bucket. The bottom of the pipe is open. Girard used a pair of 3-in. muffler clamps to attach the pipe to the bucket.

"I got the idea because I had to build an 8-ft. tall fence for some whitetail deer that I raise," says Girard. "The posts I use are 12-ft. tamarack trees that are 4 to 6 in. dia. at the bottom and a little wider at the top. I sharpen the bottom of each post with a chainsaw. I try to set the posts about 4 ft. deep."

To make a hole, Girard lowers the bucket until the pipe is in the ground, then rocks the bucket back and forth, applying downpressure to push the pipe into the ground. "The pipe fills up with dirt as it goes down. The bucket's tilting motion causes the pipe to loosen up soil and enlarge the top part of the hole so it's easy to start a post."

Girard then tilts the bucket forward – so the pipe is parallel to the ground – and uses the inside of the bucket to force the post down into the hole, tilting the bucket back and forth all the while.

"The post goes down about 6 inches at a time into the hole," says Girard. "The hole is smaller toward the bottom, so as the bucket pushes down on the post it gets locked in solid."

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