

James A. Smith, Truxton, N.Y.: “To drill hard spring steel, I make a dam of putty around where I want to drill, and fill it with turpentine. By using turpentine on hard material, such as spring steel, can be drilled, when it would have been impossible with oil. A common drill bit will go right through. I used the idea when I needed ‘sod turners’ on a plow. The dealer wanted \$40 each. Instead, I got some broken truck springs at a truck repair shop for free and drilled them with turpentine. They last twice as long as factory parts.”



Jon Brandt, Pierce, Neb.: “For extra bolt and pipe fitting storage, I use old buckets from grain elevators. They throw them out when installing new buckets so they’re free for the asking. I’ve found they make great parts storage. I screw them to boards attached to the wall of my shop. The top row is about 5 1/2 ft. off the ground and I’ve got 36 buckets in all.”

Elijah McMillan, Stanwood, Mich.: “I use dish soap to lubricate beads on small tires to make them slide right on the rim.”

Joel Argersinger, Toledo, Ohio: “I use cheap paint to prevent rust on plows, discs, planter blades, and anything that wears. I paint them before the off season. Keeping equipment in good shape means it performs better and sells for more later. Boxes on drills and planters should also be painted, inside and out.”

Phillip Hopkins, Locke, N.Y.: “I replaced the mercury vapor lights on our farm with LED lights. They’re now 10 times cheaper to run.”



Kobalt Steel Grip Sockets: Every toolbox should have a set of Kobalt Steel Grip sockets that are designed to remove rounded-off bolts and nuts. Cams inside grab onto even the most mangled surface. The harder you turn the socket, the tighter they grip. An 8-piece set sells for about \$15 at Lowes or Amazon.

Rod S., East Central, Kan.: “In Vol. 41, No. 2, Eric Sagan mentioned that he used WD-40 as a starting fluid. A friend of mine tried the idea on a small lawn mower but after many sprays of WD-40, he couldn’t get it going. So he tried real starting fluid and the engine roared to life. I did a little research and found out that apparently, WD-40 changed their propellant so that it no longer functions like starting fluid. So unless you have a can that’s several years old, it won’t work.”

Robert Grandjambe, Fort Chipewyan, Alberta: Ball hitches have to be the dumbest idea ever for towing trailers and equipment. They’re not secure and are difficult to hook up. What I’ve done with all my trailers and my wood splitter is to cut a hole in the top of the hitch so I can use a pintle hook on my truck and ATV. It’s such a time-saving and safe way to tow a trailer. I realized modifying a hitch like this is not street legal but it works well for hauling equipment around my place. If you want you could take off the ball hitch and weld a ring onto the trailer hitches in place of the ball hitch.”

Jerry Brandt, La Grange, Mo.: “The headlights on my 2000 Dodge Ram 1500 have been a big headache. They come on and stay on until I unhook the battery. I replaced the switch and checked all the fuses but can’t find out why they come on and stay on. I Googled it and saw lots of other people are having the same problem but no one had a solution. Not sure what to do.”

Dave Threlkeld, Belleville, Ill.: “I use old bicycle inner tubes as bungee cords because they’re much stronger. If they break, just tie them in a knot and keep going. I get most of mine free from a local bike shop.”

Wm. E. Skaggs, Chesapeake, Va.: “On most new riding lawn mowers, the blade spindles have sealed bearings. To make them last longer, I pull them apart, removing the shield from each bearing and then drill a hole in the housing and tap it so I can install a grease fitting. Problem solved.”

Douglas Edwards, Englehart, Ontario: “I made a rig to hold lawn mower blades in a vice to make it easy to sharpen them at the right angle. I like using a good file to sharpen because it does the best job.”



They Specialize In Lawn Mower Tires

The Lawn Mower Tire Store is an online service that strives to be the best resource for mower wheels and tires.

The company has been in business since 1994 and has a 99.9 percent positive feedback rating on eBay. They carry substantial inventory and ship orders to arrive in 1 to 2 days.

The Lawn Mower Tire Service website provides guidelines, stories and tips for maintaining current tires and ordering new ones. One section describes tire sizes, specifications, type, ply rating, load rating, branding, series and model numbers. If people can’t figure out what to order from this information, the website has sales personnel who can walk a person through the process and get you exactly what you need.

In addition to mower tires, the Tire Store also supplies accessory parts such as bearings, wheels, tire sealant and inner tubes. Their main focus is mower tires, but they also



Lawn Mower Tire Store website supplies mower tires as well as accessory parts. They also carry tires for other small equipment.

carry tires for golf carts, tillers, trenchers, ATVs, snowblowers, wheel barrows and other small rubber-tired equipment.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Lawn Mower Tire Store, P.O. Box 327, Newburgh, Ind. 47629 (ph 805 530-6596; www.lawnmowertirestore.com).



Money-Saving Repairs & Maintenance Shortcuts

Have you come up with any unusual money-saving repair methods for fixing farm equipment? What maintenance shortcuts have you found? Have you had any equipment recalled by the factory? Name a particularly tough mechanical problem you’ve had with a piece of equipment and how you solved it.

These are a few of the questions we asked randomly selected FARM SHOW readers. If you have a repair tip, maintenance shortcut, or other mechanical experience you’d like to share, send details to: FARM SHOW, P.O. Box 1029, Lakeville, Minn. 55044 or email us at: editor@farmshow.com.

Mark Newhall, Editor

“I use a short piece of angle iron, facing downward, to fit into the vice. Then I welded another piece of angle iron to the top of it, facing up. I drill a hole through this bracket so I can bolt the blade down onto the bracket. I sharpen one side and then remove the nut and flip the blade to do the other side. Holds the blade solidly so I can sharpen at the original angle.”

Robert O. Wallrath, Houston, Texas: “The bolt that holds the blade in place on my Yardman mower broke off. I got it out by grinding a slot in the broken end of the bolt, heating the shaft, and turning the bolt out with a flat blade screwdriver. Worked very well.”

William Watner, St. Marys, Kan.: “I use masking tape to build up the pouring side of a full can of paint about 3 to 4 in. so I don’t spill. I can just bend the tape into a pouring spout. Works just as well as plastic snap-on pouring spouts that you can buy, and you don’t need to clean the tape. Just rip it off.”

Gary Thomsen, Arion, Iowa: “A pvc pipe broke at the surface of our concrete well pit. I was able to square off the jagged brake by cutting the pipe from the inside with a demrel tool cutting disc. Worked good to make the repair.”

“Empty cardboard egg cartons make great parts trays when on repair jobs with a lot of small parts. The cartons soak up a small amount of grease and oil and once they are dirty, you can just toss them away.”

“I installed an electric hoist in my shop to raise things to store in the loft. Because of back problems, I can’t tote things up and down the ladder any more.”

Rich Schieber, Plymouth, Ind.: “When I have a stripped-out Phillips or hex head screw, I use left hand drill bits with the drill in reverse to back out the screws. It works great.”

Freeman Hochstetler, Gilman, Wis.: “OEM bearings are outrageously high-priced when you buy from the manufacturer. If there are numbers on the old bearing, we cross-reference it at a local supplier and buy for a fraction of the cost. There are also websites where you can purchase bearings with the parts number (for example, www.locateballbearings.com).

“I use a Cat forklift with the side shift disconnected and standard Pioneer couplers installed to raise and lower and move

equipment around the farm. Eliminates the need for a tractor.”

Lanny Vail, Bowman, N. Dak.: “Tubeless tire bead leaks are easy to stop with Door-Ease stick lubricant (NAPA Auto Parts or Amazon). It will not harm the rubber at all and I’ve never had it fail to stop a leak. Just rub it on the tire beads and also on the rim flange and mount the tire normally with a good bead lube.”



Marvin Boehm, Sherwood, Ohio: “I have a small farm shop where I keep my restored tractors and other farm stuff. I like some heat in winter but only on an intermittent basis. I bought a used ‘downflow’ gas furnace from a contractor who was replacing all the units in an apartment house. It mounts in an angle iron frame that I welded together and then suspended from a steel beam across the top of the shop.

“On a cold day, I just turn up the thermostat and get almost instant heat over my workbench. The furnace heats my 40 by 45-ft. insulated shop very quickly.”