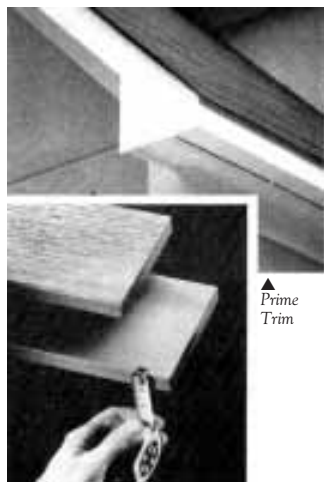


Engineered Trim

By Clayton DeKorne



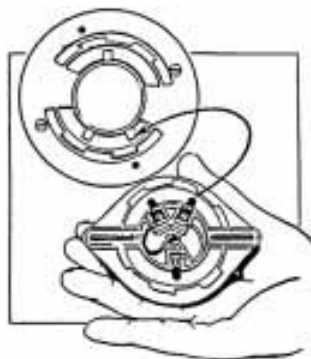
▲
Prime
Trim

▲
Trim Craft

Georgia-Pacific's *Prime Trim* and Temple-Inland's *Trim Craft* are both pre-primed, 5/4-inch wood-fiber trim-boards. The wood-fiber material is similar to hardboard, but don't let that bias your expectations. I soaked a sample of each product in water for a week. While I expected the boards might turn to mush, the Georgia-Pacific product hardly swelled, and the face was barely soft enough to scratch with my fingernail. The Temple-Inland product was a little softer and the edges started to chip after pulling it from the bath. But the test suggests both materials would hold up as fascia and skirt trim, even when the gutters overflow, or where splash-back is a problem. The boards are pre-primed on all sides, and come in 16 foot lengths. The Temple-Inland version has one textured "rough" face and one smooth face. Georgia-Pacific has two versions — one is sanded smooth on all sides, one has a deep wood grain on both faces. Both manufacturers confessed that you can't edge nail this stuff or the edges will split out. This might not be a problem for some exterior trim applications, but could be a drawback when nailing outside miters. For more information, contact Georgia-Pacific, 133 Peachtree St. NE, Atlanta, GA 30303; 404/521-4000 or Temple-Inland, PO Box N, Diboll, TX 75941; 800/231-6060.

Fast Fixtures

Q-Lock is a quick-connect device for light fixtures that works pretty much like the Quik-lok cord on a Sawzall. It consists of two plastic plates: One is secured to the ceiling and wired to



power, and the other is secured and wired to a ceiling fixture. A simple push and twist is enough to complete the connection. The Q-Lock is CSA approved in Canada (UL approval for the States is pending) for a wide variety of fixtures, including stem-pendant, cord-pendant, and two-pointed fixtures weighing up to 25 pounds. For more information, contact Pragmatic Electronics Ltd., 10819 63 Ave., Edmonton, Alberta T6H 1P9.

Universal Sealant



With so many caulks on the market, confusion about which one to use is inevitable. *Geocel Proflex* seems to be as close to an all-around caulk as they come. It's appropriate for such common building tasks as sealing joints in siding and trim, bonding poly vapor barriers, caulking the baseboard in "wet rooms," and joining the flashings on roofs. According to the manufacturer, the thermoplastic rubber caulk works as a light adhesive and will bond to just about anything. They also claim it has high resistance to ultraviolet light and the ozone in air pollutants, so it should stay flexible over time. It's compatible with asphalt and will cure under water so it can temporarily seal a leak in the bottom of a roof pond. It will bond to

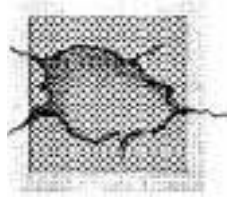
wet or oily surfaces so it can be used with pressure-treated and wax-coated woods. And if a tube is kept warm so the caulk is pliable, it will stick to frozen planks and icy flashings. *Proflex* comes in a few different colors — white, almond, brown, gray, and a very clear clear. But it's also paintable, and can be cleaned up with water before it cures. *Proflex* isn't compatible with extruded polystyrene or acrylic skylight glazing, however, and probably isn't the best choice for high-traffic surfaces. For more information, contact Geocel Inc., PO Box 398, Elkhart, IN 46515; 800/348-7615.

Insulation Knife



The *Insulation Material Cutter* looks just like the kitchen bread knife, but it slices through 6-inch-thick fiberglass batts and 2-inch rigid foam in one pass. It's also great for cutting tight fitting miters in pipe insulation (you can overlap two pieces and cut them at once to an exact length and angle). The 6 3/4 inch blade is scalloped on one side for chopping through fiberglass, and straight on the other for slicing up foam. Either side will work for your lunch, and both sides are treacherously sharp. The knife is made in Japan by Kanzawa Tekko, and is available mail-order for \$16 from Energy Products and Sales, 3920 State St., N.W., N. Canton, OH 44720; 800/255-7996.

Hollow Wall Patch



Here's the fastest way I've seen yet

to patch over an old outlet. *Hyde's Self-Adhesive Wall Patch* is a fiberglass-mesh-faced aluminum plate with a paper backed adhesive coating. It is available in 4x4- and 6x6-inch sizes. The plate just slaps over the hole, and is mudded over. Having done a few, I recommend wiping down the wall if there's a lot of drywall dust around. For more information, contact Hyde Manufacturing, 54 Eastford Rd., Southbridge, MA 01550; 800/872-4933.

Chubby Knees on Pants



Penzotti Pete's Knee Pad Pants were fashioned out of necessity by a long-time builder who developed severe knee problems. The denim "painter-style" pants (but no hammer loop or side pocket) have a sewn-in pocket that holds a neoprene-foam pad over each knee. The pads are only about 3/8-inch-thick, but they are surprisingly comfortable. I would trade my strap-on pair of "chubby knees" for a pair of knee pad pants any day. The Penzotti pads are protective enough for tasks that require a lot of kneeling, such as laying floors or installing baseboard, and unobtrusive enough to wear around all day for the 101 or so times you kneel down. And these pads won't cut into the back of your leg or force your pants to ride up your calves like strap-on knee pads. The only drawback I can see is the heavy denim might be a bit warm in hot weather, but the manufacturer told me he is coming out with a baggy canvas pair soon. The pants sell for about \$40 per pair, including pads. For more information, contact Penzotti Pete's, PO Box 151023, San Rafael, CA 94901; 415/456-4059. ■