

FOR WHAT IT'S WORTH

*The
Journal's
pick of
curious,
interesting,
and useful
products*

New Cordless Drills

by Bill Brockway



New from Skil is the HD2645 9.6-volt cordless drill. This T-handled tool has two variable-speed ranges — 0 to 350 rpm and 0 to 1,000 rpm. The weight is listed at 3.7 pounds, and it boasts a torque rating of 150 inch-pounds. The HD2645 also has a 15-position clutch and a $\frac{3}{8}$ -inch keyless chuck. It sells for around \$115.

Skil's 12-volt version, the HD2745, runs its $\frac{3}{8}$ -inch keyless chuck at 0 to 400 rpm and 0 to 1,200 rpm and is rated at 190 inch-pounds of torque. It sells for around \$145. Both drills come with a charger, two batteries, and a case.

Contact: S-B Power Tools, 4300 W. Peterson Ave., Chicago, IL 60646; 312/286-7330.

Lighted Extension Cord



Have you ever run your extension cord, plugged in your saw, and only discovered when you pulled the trigger that the outlet was dead? Next time, try using the *Glo-Plug*, a contractor-

grade extension cord with a small lamp inside the clear plastic plug at the female end of the cord. The lamp lights up to indicate that the cord has power. The cords are available in 25-, 50-, and 100-foot lengths, with either 14/3 or 12/3 wiring. The 50s and 100s also come in a triple-outlet version. Prices range from around \$10 (for the 25-foot, 14/3) up to about \$60 (for the 100-foot, 12/3, triple).

Contact: Southwire Company, One Southwire Dr., Carrollton, GA 30119; 800/444-1700.

Self-Retracting Lifeline



Like safety glasses and earmuffs, fall-protection equipment sometimes doesn't get used simply because it's a hassle to work with. The *Ultra-Lok* lifeline from DBI/SALA makes it a little easier to work on a tether. When you walk away from the anchor point, the line uncoils behind you. As you walk back toward it, the line automatically retracts into the housing. If you do slip off of the scaffolding, the speed of the line sliding out will cause the mechanism to lock up and stop your fall. The *Ultra-Lok* will work with any

brand of body harness that has the attachment ring in the back. It comes in 30- and 50-foot lengths that cost \$695 and \$830, respectively.

Contact: DBI/SALA, DB Industries, 3965 Pepin Ave., Red Wing, MN 55066; 800/328-6146.

Compact Flashlight



This flashlight is about the size of a 25-foot tape measure and has a belt clip on the back to attach it to your tool pouch. The *Hi-Gain 250* weighs under 8 ounces even when loaded up with the four AA batteries that power the bulb. The plastic case is watertight and tough. The *Hi-Gain 250* sells for about \$12.

Contact: Diamond Light Industries, 3191-A Airport Loop Dr., Costa Mesa, CA 92626; 800/804-4448.

Bug Plug



The outside corner trim of a vinyl siding installation makes a great place for bugs to nest. The hollow trim is

spacious and usually warmed by the sun for part of the day. Now you can keep wasps and other insects from setting up house with *Fit-Z-All* foam corner plugs. Enough plugs to protect an average house cost approximately \$40.

Contact: Fit-Z-All, 2339 Milton Ave., Solvay, NY 13209; 800/298-8401.

Longer Steel Studs



A few years ago, the HL Stud Corporation introduced the nonbearing *Carpenter's Steel Stud* in an 8-foot-long version. Now the studs are also available in 9- and 10-foot lengths. Like the original 8-footer, the longer studs have the same dimensions as a 2x4 and can be nailed or stapled to a wood plate. The longer steel studs are selling for \$1.90 and \$2.10, respectively. These prices are for large orders — contact the company for a price on your project.

Contact: HL Stud Corp., 2000 W. Henderson Rd., Suite 60, Columbus, OH 43220; 800/457-8837.

Multi-Socket

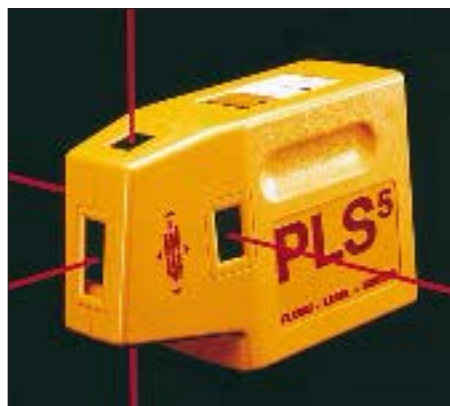
How would you like to stop searching through your entire socket set every time you need to torque down a nut? Check out the *Multi-Socket* from American International. Thirty-two spring-loaded pins slide in and out of



the housing individually so the socket can automatically adjust to any nut from $\frac{3}{8}$ inch to $\frac{11}{16}$ inch. The one I tried worked well on stripped nuts — even on small thumb screws and wing nuts — and also grabbed metric sizes ranging from 9mm to 17mm. The Multi-Socket sells for about \$25, including shipping.

Contact: American International Tools, 1116-B Park Ave., Cranston, RI 02910; 800/932-5872.

Laser Times Five



Self-leveling laser tools aren't all that uncommon on construction sites these days, but this one from Pacific Laser is different. Instead of shooting one laser beam, the PLS5 shoots five beams that define the x, y, and z axes of three-dimensional space. The red lines on the photo above show the positions of the five beams. The beams aren't visible as they pass through the air, of course; they only show up as dots when they hit something. The PLS5 is self-leveling as long as you set it up within 8 degrees of level in the first place, but that range is easy to hit by eye. The tool sells for about \$1,495.

Contact: Pacific Laser, 449 Coloma St., Sausalito, CA 94965; 800/601-4500. ■