

NEW TOOLS FROM THE BUILDERS' SHOW

Our picks of the
saws, nailers, and
accessories to
look for in 2001

As usual, this year's International Builders' Show — held in Atlanta February 9–12 — racked up some impressive numbers. Some 72,000 visitors viewed the offerings of 1,000 exhibitors distributed across 1 million square feet of floor space. In addition to more building products than you might have ever dreamed of, several major tool manufacturers introduced their new lines at this show, rather than at the National Hardware Show in Chicago this past August. Here's a selection of what's new and interesting.

by Dave Crosby

Cordless Roofing Nailer

If you went anywhere near the Stanley-Bostitch booth, you'd hear the sound of genuinely innovative technology in action. The CRN38K Cordless Roofing Nailer made its debut at the show, with hundreds of attendees driving thousands of roofing nails, and not a hose or cord to be seen. This 8.1-pound, 20.4-volt

tool uses a multi-blow action to drive 1-inch to 1½-inch collated polymer-coated roofing nails, which come in disposable canisters of 120 nails.

The tool is said to be suitable for installing shingles, felt, drip edge, and metal flashing. During an early field review, a torch-down roofing

contractor also found this tool particularly useful for nailing down "shiners." The new roofing nailer comes with two batteries, a charger, two canisters of nails, a demonstration video, and a case at a suggested retail of \$500.



Redesigned Framing Nailer

Senco brought a new line of redesigned full round-head nailers, advertised as having 14% to 20% more power than the manufacturer's current models. The FramePro Model 600/650FRH and 700XL/750XL FRH nailers will handle nails up to 3½ by 0.162 inch. Other features included an aggressive sawtooth nose for easy toe-nailing and an inline magazine for balance and line of sight. Both have suggested retail prices of \$380 or less.





Balanced Flooring Nailer

New from Porter-Cable is the Model FCN200 Flooring Cleat Nailer. For 3/4-inch solid-strip hardwood flooring installation, the pneumatic nailer uses 1 1/2- to 2-inch L-shaped cleat nails. Designed to stand by itself without falling over, the nailer distinguishes itself with "power, ergonomics, and balance" according to the manufacturer. Expected retail price is \$500.

Collated Trim Nails for Steel Studs

If you are one of the many carpenters who has been wondering how to fasten trim to steel studs, you'll be happy to know that Senco has just come out with a Hardened Collated Finish Nail. Available in 1 1/2- and 1 3/4-inch lengths, the 15-gauge nails are galvanized to resist corrosion at the steel-to-steel contact point, and can be driven into concrete, also. A box of 4,000 nails, depending on the size of the nails, costs between \$38 and \$46.



Improved Housewrap Nailer

Hitachi came out strong at the show, with over a dozen new and noteworthy power tools. The NV50AP2 Plasti-Tacker Plus will handle Plasti-Top nails for housewrap, felt, or insulating sheathing like its predecessor, and it will also drive 7/8-inch to 2-inch Round-Top (metal-capped) ring-shank fasteners used with hot built-up or single-ply roofing systems. The average street price is \$520.



Heavy-Duty Cordless Recip

At 9.5 pounds, the new Hitachi 24-volt CR24DV Cordless Reciprocating Saw features a 1 1/8-inch stroke at 2,600 spm, tool-free blade changes, and externally accessible auto-stop brushes. Available later this year, according to the manufacturer, the average street price will be \$350.



Accurate Benchtop Table Saw

Porter-Cable's newly introduced Model 3812 Benchtop Table Saw has some familiar features and a few unique innovations. Slide-out material support rails provide a 24 1/2-inch rip capacity, and a 3/4-inch panel can be installed for full-width support. The miter-gauge slots are 3/4-inch T-slots for better support and improved accuracy. The trunion system is



configured such that the blade centerline is maintained throughout the bevel range, eliminating the need to reset the fence for bevel cuts. On-board storage for all components is standard, as is an electric brake. Two especially appealing features are the rack-and-pinion bevel adjustment and a click-in/click-out blade guard for easy transportation and setup. The saw comes with a 24-tooth blade, miter gauge, rip fence, quick-release blade guard, and wrenches, for about \$400. An optional outfeed support (\$37) and folding stand (\$68) are also available.

7 1/4-inch Cordless Circ Saw

Also new to the Hitachi 24-volt lineup is the C7D 7 1/4-inch Circular Saw, providing the depth of cut you'd get from an AC saw with the convenience of cordless operation. Designed similarly to the well-received C6D 18-volt 6 1/2-inch saw, you even get the built-in miniature work light, which is pretty handy at times. The average street price is \$380.



Dust-Free Cutting

Dust is a concern on many job sites, especially where fiber-cement products are involved. With the introduction of the Hitachi C7YA Dust-Reducing Circular Saw, or the C7YAH (for fiber-cement), you now have another option for almost dust-free cutting. I haven't



tried this tool out yet, but the manufacturer claims over 90% collection efficiency for the saw, which can be used with a vacuum, a dust bag, or a "flow deflector." An adjustable plastic guard can be positioned to maximize dust collection efficiency or provide a better view of the cut line. Both models feature a spindle lock and a shroud configuration designed for fast, easy blade changes like a regular circular saw. The average street price is \$250.

Improved Compound Miter Saws

Heading up the DeWalt pack were a couple of miter saws that boast features any user will appreciate. Designed for greater cutting capacity and versatility, the DW703 10-inch Compound Miter Saw and the DW706 12-inch Double-Bevel Compound Miter Saw both cut 50-degree left or right miter angles, have 48-degree bevel stops, and 11 positive miter stops. Suggested retail for the DW703 is \$239; \$449 for the DW706.



Cordless Drywall Driver

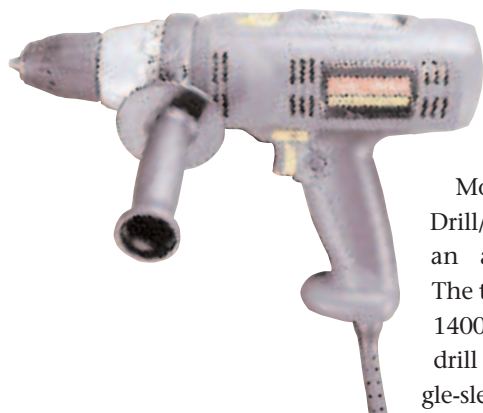
The high-torque 2,300 rpm DS200 14-volt Dura-Spin cordless screwdriver, introduced last year by Senco, has a new cousin designed specifically for drywall. The 4,000 rpm DS162-14v is said to drive



nearly 1,000 1 1/4-inch drywall screws on a single charge. The new tool handles collated screws from 1 to 1 5/8 inches for fastening drywall to wood or steel studs. It features a clutch and depth-of-drive adjustment, and comes with two batteries, a charger, a belt hook, two spare bits, and a case. Expect to pay about \$200 for the DS200-14v and \$229 for the DS162-14v. Phillips and square-drive collated screws are available in tubs of 1,000 with a variety of point configurations.

Electric Drill with Clutch

Craftsman came out unexpectedly strong at the show, underscoring its recent decision to develop a credible presence in the professional-duty power tool market. A unique introduction, the new



Model 27994 3/8-inch Drill/Driver comes with an adjustable clutch. The two-speed (0-400/0-1400 rpm) 5.5-amp AC drill also features a single-sleeve keyless chuck, an advertised torque range of 150 to 700 inch-pounds, and a 10-foot cord. I don't know why it took this long to put a clutch on a corded drill, but at \$100, this looks like a winning idea.

New Right-Angle Drill

Part of a new line of Hitachi drills, the D10YV 3/8-inch Right-Angle Drill features



3 1/4-inch head clearance, a 4.6-amp motor, and a no-load speed of 500 to 2,300 rpm for a drilling capacity of up to 3/8 inch in metal or 7/8 inch in wood. The average street price is \$165.

Another Choice in Cut-Out Tools

The highly versatile, heavy-duty DW660 Cut-Out Tool from DeWalt can be used with a variety of bits for drywall, wood, plastics, fiberglass, ceramic tile, and stucco. Tool-free bit changes, a turn-on/bump-off switch, a removable and adjustable cutting guide, and a reinforced 10-foot cord make this 30,000-rpm 5-amp tool one you'll want to keep handy, especially at a street price of \$80.



Adjustable Horse

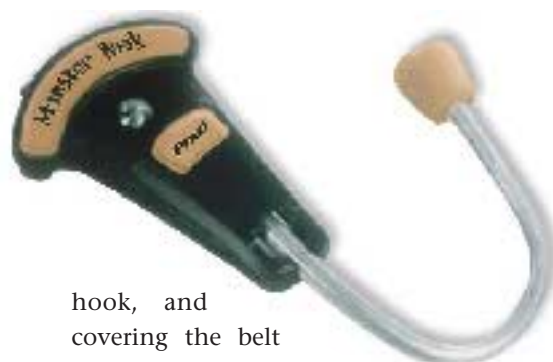
In the never-ending quest for a light, durable sawhorse, you might want to check out the ZAG 2-Way Adjustable



Sawhorse from Stanley. It quickly adjusts from 30 to 37 inches high, 29 to 47 inches wide, will accept a 2x4 on edge or flat for a work surface, and retails for \$30.

A Better Tool Hook

The new, improved version of the accessory Prazi made famous is now available. The PR-7500 Monster Hook clips onto your pocket, belt, or nailbelt for a convenient place to hang just about any tool. Improvements include eliminating the nut and washer on the



hook, and covering the belt clip. The hook no longer spins through 360 degrees, there's a stronger "bite" on the clip, and the U-hook is stronger for use with heavier drills or framing nailers. At \$11, it pays for itself the first time you don't drop your drill on the finished floor.

Aggressive Screw Extractor

One of the truly cool accessories demonstrated in the Craftsman booth was the Model 52154 Screw Remover Set, recently dubbed the "Screw Out." It works on the same principle as what



mechanics commonly refer to as a "left-handed drill bit." You chuck up the remover in your drill; set the rotation to counter-clockwise; engage the tip into what's left of a cammed-out Phillips, square-drive, or Torx screw head; lean into it a little; and squeeze the trigger. The bit is machined to engage the screw aggressively until it has been removed. At \$20, it's worth buying and keeping in the toolbox even if you need it only a few times a year.

New Toolbelts for Tradespeople



As part of a full line of Worksite Storage products, DeWalt now offers an assortment of toolbelts and pouches designed for specific contractor needs, including framers, trim carpenters, sheet metal workers, and electricians. Retail price for the Electrician's Pouch, shown here, is \$150 at the most; assorted pouches range from \$10 to \$50.



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For More Information

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