

# Electric Jacket

**Ridgid 18-Volt Heated Jacket Kit**  
**Ridge Tool Co.**  
**800.474.3443**  
**ridgid.com**  
**List price: \$200**

by Robert Shaw

**K**eeping warm in the winter while maintaining maneuverability is always challenging. Though layers allow you to adjust to daily temperature changes, the more you wear, the harder it is to move and work efficiently. The heated jacket from Ridgid provides the same warmth as many layers would, but without the bulk, and its three-level heating system lets you adjust the temperature without shedding or adding layers. The pockets are also heated, so you can warm your hands up quickly.

## Working in the Jacket

The jacket is powered by any of Ridgid's 18-volt batteries; the one I have came with a 2.0-Ah battery and a charger. Because I had a 4.0-Ah battery on hand for some other tools, I tried that out too; it extended runtime significantly without adding too much weight and bulk (photo, below left). According to the manufac-



turer, runtimes of up to 18 hours can be expected with the 4.0 Ah battery.

Two buttons control the heat (photo, below right): One controls the pocket zone, the other controls the chest/back zone. Each features three levels of heat, indicated by an LED. I found it best to turn on the jacket a couple of minutes before walking out the door so the elements had time to warm up.

The battery pocket (on the waist) was in the way when I was wearing a set of tool bags; however, it was easy enough to

put the battery in my tool bags and leave it there. The adapter also has a belt clip.

The jacket's power supply has a built-in USB port with a 2.1-amp output. A pass-through hole from the power-supply pocket to the outside pocket accommodates a USB cord, so you can charge a phone in your pocket while wearing the coat. You can also use the battery and power supply separate from the jacket to charge a phone or tablet.

Drawbacks to this jacket were pretty minor: The pocket for the battery is a bit tight and is difficult to close with the 4.0-Ah battery in it. Closing the battery pocket while wearing the jacket is nearly impossible, so be sure to turn on the battery pack before zipping the storage pouch and putting the jacket on. There also seems to be a protection circuit that cuts off the power to the coat if you have the battery pack turned on when you plug the jacket in, so you need to power-cycle the adapter if you do this.

*Robert Shaw owns Colorado Deck and Framing in Colorado Springs.*



# Two-Sided Deck Brush

by Jim Grant

Over the years, we've applied finishes to thousands of decks, and the edges of the boards have always been a problem. Usually there's no quick, easy way to coat them unless we use a sprayer, but that can be a little messy. When we're not spraying a finish and there's limited space between boards, we've found that Padco's Crack & Groove Tools (800.328.5513, padco.com) work great. Recently we used them to restore 60 benches along a boardwalk in Laguna Beach, Calif. The applicators have a two-sided woven pad mounted on a polypropylene handle. The hand-held model comes in both 2-inch and 6-inch widths; the 6-inch one (photo, near right) costs about \$6 online. There's also a pivoting version—called the Any Angle (photo, far right)—that can be fastened to a standard extension pole; it runs about \$13 (without a pole). ♦

*Jim Grant is the proprietor of Jim The Deck Guy, in San Diego, Calif.*



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