

Hello, Friends!

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July Topic: What's in Your Toolbox

Last month's topic about organizing your tool shop got us thinking: wouldn't it be handy to have a toolbox that contained general items needed for basic household repairs? That way, you can always find a tape measure, wrench or hammer when you need it.

Think about where you could conveniently store your toolbox. It's sort of like a fire extinguisher — you want to know exactly where it is when it's needed, but you don't want to see it all the time. Take into consideration the best place for easy access and buy an appropriate size metal or plastic toolbox.

I have my own toolbox sitting on a shelf just outside the service door to the garage. That's where its home has been for the last 15 years, since we moved into this house.

Here are some suggestions for basic items for needed items in your own toolbox:

- Hammer and assorted nails — some long, some tiny. I have a small plastic jar where I keep a mixture of odd ones left over from do-it-yourself purchases. I can usually find what I need for small jobs there.
- Tape measure — and remember the old builder's rule: measure twice, cut once.
- Screw drivers, both Flat and Phillips — It's good to have at least one long and one short version of each.
- Command hooks for quick hang-up projects — There are dozens of styles and sizes of these.
- Level — and some smart phones have leveling programs, too.
- Stud finder — especially helpful with good old-fashioned nails.
- Assorted picture hangers — again, multiple sizes and styles make a hang-up job fast and easy.
- Needle nose pliers — my favorite tool name, but it's a very helpful item.
- Channel lock pliers — several sizes can help you in the tiny spaces often resulting from fix-up projects.
- Sharpie marker and pencil — and have one or two small pads of paper for writing down numbers and sizes, too. Hopefully, the pencil will include an eraser, since you'll probably need it!

I've seen even pink toolsets — created for women with style. They range in pricing from \$20 to \$40 and sometimes include a donation to a cancer-fighting fund. Here's a picture:

If you have kids leaving for college or friends moving away, this is a thoughtful possibility. A well-stocked toolbox could be a perfect gift for that person who has most everything else.

Your local professional organizer,

Betty Huotari

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