

cooling. It's particularly useful for tilers, but once again not cheap at £200 plus, depending on what accessories you need. Everyone has a spirit level or three, but how about a laser level at £50 and upwards? More accurate than a spirit level, ideal for tilers as you can cast a level line all round a room at one go.

Specialist tasks will inevitably require specialist tools. For instance, if you fit solid surface worktops, which are becoming more and more popular, an orbital sander and a palm sander are essential.

Many of the tasks that we undertake produce a lot of dust so, as well as personal protection, an industrial vacuum cleaner with a dust extraction function is a must. As well as keeping the work area mostly dust-free, it will also quickly clean up at the end of the day. Many can also be used on liquids, should the worst happen. Expect to pay £100 to £200.

The list is endless, and it is easy to see why, in last issue's article on vans, most of the contributors had chosen to run large models. Speaking of vans, I have just installed a 2,000 watt power inverter, which lets me run power tools directly if no other power source is available. I don't use it much, but it is a handy backup you might wish to consider - cost £100 or so plus fitting.

To sum up, it seems new products on the market are mainly bigger, better, more powerful versions of existing tools. If you've seen something innovative lately, let us know.



Choose wisely...



Max Ashton, inventor of the Starrett Dual-Cut jigsaw blade, recommends some essential budget tools for any jobbing fitter

Get your tool choices right and they'll save you time, stop costly errors, get you out of an unexpected hole and, most importantly, safeguard your reputation. Get it wrong and you're in trouble. Some cost-effective additions to your kit could make life a lot easier. Here are a few suggestions to complement your burgeoning toy box.

- **Bosch PMF 180 Multi**

Gets you out of a hole by getting you into a hole. Sand, plunge cut and flush cut wood, coated particle board, plasterboard, tiling, waste pipes, you name it, without filling the room with dust. Does the same job as the Bosch pro version and the Fein Multi but is cheaper.

- **Bosch PWS 8-125CE**

Versatile 5in grinder with variable speed so you can sand wood and metal as well as everything else you would normally do with your grinder.

www.bosch-pt.co.uk
0844 736 0107

- **Dremel**

Think Swiss Army knife for times when nothing else will get into that awkward hard-to-reach corner.

www.dremeleurope.com
0844 736 0107

- **Square pencil sharpener**

Cheap plastic gadget but it speeds up sharpening your joinery pencil. Just finish off with your knife for the perfect fine line.

- **Stanley Intellisensor stud sensor**

It's amazing how easy it is to find an electrical conduit or a water pipe when all you really want to find is a solid piece of studding. Makes sure you are drilling something that should be drilled.

www.stanleytools.co.uk
0114 244 8883

- **Starrett Pro-site protractor**

If, like me, you always seem to find that no room is ever square, this is a godsend. Put it into the corner, read off the angle to set up your mitre saw. You need never get it wrong again.

- **Starrett TCT multipurpose hole saws and TCT stainless steel hole saw**

Without holes for pipes, taps, and sockets bathrooms are just a room with some cupboards. The multipurpose Starrett copes with every eventuality. The special stainless

saw makes short work of kitchen tap holes.

- **Starrett Dual-Cut Jigsaw blades**

Anyone who doesn't have it in their toolkit is wasting time and money. Cuts any wood materials and laminates cleanly on both sides but (and it's a big but) it also cuts exactly square, so you can reverse mark and get a precise fit on the other side.

www.starrett.co.uk
01835 863501

- **Bull's eye circular level**

Getting kitchen units and shower bases level in all directions when you've got four legs to adjust can be time-consuming. With a bull's eye level, you can zero it in while lying on the floor with your arms extended underneath like superman.

- **Rubson silicone applicator spoon**

It's a plastic spoon but with the added advantage of a handy tube opening and nozzle trimming cutter in the hand. You can't lick it!

- **DeWalt DT2074 flush-cutting jigsaw blade**

I hate to promote the competition, but the flush-cutting blade from DeWalt is a great innovation especially good when cutting off a fitted work surface all the way to the wall.

www.dewalt.co.uk
01753 567055