

sticky tools

by Lawrence Weathers

Want to keep your tools in plain sight and close at hand rather than buried in a murky bucket of water or lost in a pile of trimmings? Give this easy and cheap solution a try.



I noticed that I was spending a lot of time digging through the mess around my wheel to find tools. I had tried numerous plastic containers to hold them, but this didn't work very well because at least half of the tool was hidden from view, so it was difficult to identify which one I wanted without pulling most of the tools out. Even worse, sometimes I would knock one of these plastic tubs over, sending a bunch of tools to the floor. I needed to keep my tools completely visible. Also, since I'm not very good at putting things back where they belong, I didn't want a system that would require me to put a tool in a specific place each time to find it again.

Since my throwing area is bounded on three sides by steel shelves, the vertical sides of the shelves were unused storage space that I could utilize by putting magnets on my tools. This allowed me to have easy access to them and be able to see all of them at once. Also, I didn't need to put tools back in the same spot. Any shelf edge would do, and there were a lot of them within arm's reach.

I bought 40 6 mm x 3 mm grade N42 neodymium disc magnets online for less than \$10. Most such magnets are grade N35, but since they were so cheap, I decided to go with a 20% stronger magnet. The stronger ones worked so well that I ordered 40 more.

Attaching the magnets is easy, you'll just need a drill and some epoxy. Bore a shallow hole slightly smaller than the diameter of the magnet in the side of each tool. For better adhesion of the glue, it's best to

rub the magnet back and forth on a piece of sandpaper to create a rougher surface. Fill the hole with epoxy. Then press the magnet into the hole and clamp while it dries. Make sure that the surface of the magnet is slightly above the surface of the tool.

I also use magnets to attach my metal tools, such as needles, ribs, and those made from hacksaw blades. With these, you can just put a magnet on the shelf edge and stick the metal tool to it.

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