

Tips and Tricks

Tool board for your shop.

I am a great believer in efficiency, and one thing that drives me mad is being unable to find a tool when I need it. Not only is it bad for my blood pressure but to make matters worse, I know I am losing money while I have half the company looking for the **dam** tool.

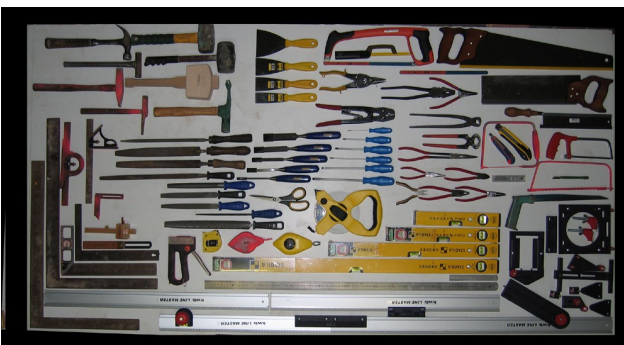
In the old days I used to take a black permanent marker and draw around the tool. The problem with this was that many of the non technical people had problems identifying what this outline meant. The advent of large format printers and digital cameras creates a fantastic ability to build a tool board that quickly allows anyone to identify the tool down to its unique colour characteristics. Even my accountant can now find a missing tool.

1



Lay your tools out on a piece of white particle board (melamine finish). The board should be on the floor of the room and the room should have a ceiling that is parallel to the floor. (This is to enable you to shoot the shot square to the board) Draw a 90 degree line around the tools using a permanent marker. (Marked by stars in the picture.) Measure these lines and write it down somewhere, you will need these measurements when you scale the print in your RIP Software. Standing on a ladder, put the camera on auto focus and place back of camera flat against the ceiling. Take a couple of shots, turning the camera slightly. View the shots to see if you need to move your take position to fit the tools into the picture. Do not worry if the picture is not square in the XY direction. (do not tilt the camera in the Z direction!., flat against the ceiling!) You can easily rotate the image (XY) in your graphics package.

2



Trim and rotate the Image using your favorite application. Here you can see my image after rotating and clipping in Photo-Shop. Now crop the image to your drawn line (not shown)

3



Open the image in your RIP software and resize the image according to the dimensions you measured earlier. Do not do this in your Imaging software you will end up with a hopelessly pixelated image. (just another way of saying a mess).

Print the job onto piece of self adhesive paper or self adhesive vinyl.

Once complete apply to the particle board you cut to size.

Save this image and the sizes you used in your archives. If a tool gets broken and you cannot find the exact replacement you can, simply by cutting and pasting, place the new image over the existing print.

4



Apply the vinyl or paper to the board.

Mount the board on a suitable wall and put in supports to hold the tools in place over their images. I used 30mm nails. (1¼ inch)

My blood pressure has come down significantly since installing the board as every evening the staff can easily identify the tools and return them to the correct position.

Bob Glenister July 2006

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