

Smart Words for Smart Homeowners

THE EXPERIENCE OF EXPERTS AND THEIR ADVICE ON RELEVANT HOMEOWNER TOPICS

SMART Helpers For Your Home

We've been in hundreds of homes, repaired and painted thousands of items, aligned and installed all kinds of things. Yet on almost every visit I'm reminded that most homeowners do not own the few basic items to help them. I'm talking about a total investment of less than \$50.00 for a lifetime.

Following is a short list of stuff to make your life easier and make the items in your house work better and last longer. Buy them. Use them soon and every time they're needed.



Silicone Spray: A Smooth Operator

The lubricant spray we use is yellow but that matters less than buying a large can of clear silicone spray with a removable skinny spray nozzle or "straw" so you can lube into tiny crevices. The other brand has teflon added.

We'll often be asked to repair a door or window and have to open a stuck window to get to the repair. It'll be stuck not from too much paint but from too much oxidization of the metal jam, or swelling of the wood jam. Once we get it open we spray the top and bottom jam slides with silicone spray and continue with the intended repairs.



The homeowner, when asked to inspect the finished work, is often more surprised and delighted with the moving window than the repair. "It works like new," is the typical exclamation.

Spray silicone onto door hinge pins, door latches, zippers, tools, door jams, fishing reels, dead bolt slides and inside key holes.



Spray silicone on things that rub or squeak and shouldn't. If this doesn't stop the rubbing you'll probably need Handyman Central Services to fix it. Always ventilate the room while using it.

Do not spray it on floors...it is very slippery. Do not spray it where you'll paint or hang wallpaper. Paint and glue will not adhere. Do not get it in your eyes or mouth, it's a chemical.

I just looked in one of the trucks and it has a brand made by Dupont, but most brands will work well on plastic, metal and wood. The can I'm holding has a price of \$6.49 and is, I'm sure, a few years old by now.

Citrus Clean: Like It Says

There is always a gallon in the truck. The one that sits in our truck is made by ZEP and we buy it at Home Depot.



It is a cleaner and a degreaser and smells like oranges because it's an orange oil concentrate. It is plant friendly. We use it to clean up after our work. We've used it on chrome lavatory faucets, ceramic tiles, storm doors, stainless steel, tools, countertops, varnished floors, vinyl shutters, our hands, doors and most dirty or greasy things we run into.

The simple process we use is: spray it on, let it sit for a few minutes. Then wipe the surface with a moist rag, or soft brush, then wash it off with plain water. Finished.

Some items, like bare wood and ceramic tile, will require that you dilute it with water. Follow all the instructions.

This stuff makes things clean and they will shine. The gallon from the truck had no price on it but I guess it's around \$14.50.

Phenoseal: Vinyl Caulk, Adhesive, Sealer

Unlike most other caulks Phenoseal® is vinyl. It has elasticity, durability, longevity, is water proof, stays put, doesn't crack with age. It can be painted, bonds to most things, is mildew resistant and is less than \$6 bucks per tube. Of course \$6 bucks is a few bucks more than the other big name caulking alternatives in the hardware stores. But when a caulk fails, it lets in water, or lets the paint flake, or lets in cold air, or invites insects or rodents to enter the house. So what's a few smart bucks when compared to your peace of mind over the long term?

There are a few procedures you must follow to get great results. Do it correctly or don't do



it at all. The surfaces must be clean and dry or you'll not get proper adhesion. Within a minute of applying, it rub a wet finger across the surface to smooth the bead of caulk and compress it into the corner or crack you are filling. Let the caulk cure for a few hours before painting and even longer if in a shower before using it. Read directions.

We also use Phenoseal® when hanging crown molding because it is an adhesive and a caulk. Very few walls or ceilings are perfectly flat; they have waves in them. These waves, depressions and imperfections are not evident to the non-comparative naked eye but they exist. Of course when you put flat wood trim against a wavy surface the imperfection that were not conspicuous before the comparison will become distinctive with the new molding against it. The Phenoseal helps to secure the trim, with brads and nails, while filling in any voids and waves at the ceiling or wall mating joints. (<http://www.phenoseal.com/>)



Awards For Superior Results

We have been granted awards for superior work performance from our customers and from leading consumer rating agencies like Angie's List®. This is our 7th consecutive consumer award. Less than 5 percent of service companies ever qualify for this award in any single year, so it's quite an unparalleled and rare distinction to be a successive winner SEVEN consecutive



