

TOOLS

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OF THE TRADE

First Test: The New Nail Bangers

We test Nine framing hammers with the latest shapes, sizes, and materials

By Michael Davis

Tools of the Trade rounded up nine waffle-faced framing hammers from around the globe and put them out on a Colorado jobsite with 15 framers, lead by regular contributor Michael Davis, to see how they'd stack up. Here's what we learned, in order of increasing appreciation.

STILETTO TIBONE II-15

Everything about the Stiletto TiBone II-15 (17-1/8 inches, 31 ounces) is a notch or 10 above the rest. This titanium hammer has an interchangeable steel face, a well placed nail holder, a handle that just molds to your hand, and a perfectly positioned thumb indentation on the back of the handle for greater control in tight spots. The 15-ounce head hammer becomes an extension of your arm. Every bit of the force of the swing seems to transfer to the nail with almost no residual vibration going back up the hammer to your wrist and elbow. By far, the fastest, most accurate, most comfortable hammer in the group.



Field-test results for

Product Watch

TITANIUM UTILITY BAR

TiBAR12 is part of a trio of new Titanium prybars from Stiletto Tools. At 12 inches long and 15 ounces, TiBAR12 features a patented Dimpler, which the maker says cuts back on damage to the wood while pulling nails. It has a D-shaped, dimpled striking face, a Bite Bar that combines a Japanese-style nail puller, and a lower jaw to straighten studs, joists, forms and the like. There is also a built-in circular blade wrench.



First Test: Stiletto Airgrip

Cold-Shrink Handle Cover

By Michael Springer

Stiletto Tools has come up with an ultra-grippy rubber tool handle cover with cold-shrink technology.

Unlike heat-shrink tubing that can melt or cause you to char your tool handles, the Airgrip material simply shrinks into place at room temperature.

I applied Airgrips in temperatures as low as 40 degrees Fahrenheit with success... It comes in 8- and 18-inch lengths, and is ideal for improving your grip on heavy tools...and to increase the girth of tool handles that you find too thin to be comfortable. If you're like me, you'll think of endless uses for the Airgrip. Now if I could just figure out how to get it around my nailer and circ saw handles...



PLUS

Tool Test: 12-inch miter saws

Tool Test: Miter saw work stations

First Test: Sharpening system / Framing hammers / Rubber grips

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