



Essential Toolbox List: Must-Have Tools Every Man Needs

These Are the Tools Every Guy Should Own

No matter your living situation or your field of interest, every man and woman should have a set of basic tools at home. Yes, there's always TaskRabbit or contractors-for-hire, but at some point you're going to have to hammer a nail, tighten a screw or put together a piece of IKEA furniture on your own – whether due to an emergency situation or just general time and budget constraints.

That being said, if you are unfamiliar with the best tools for everyday tasks, heading into a Big Box hardware store, with the hopes of narrowing down aisles of options into a handful of essential tools, might be overwhelming. And it's easy to leave with a bunch of widgets you don't need. Luckily, we are here to help.

We checked in with some handy-kind-of-guys and gals to create the ultimate list of tools that every man should own. From measuring tapes to power tools, the gang's all here.

Mark A. Sullivan, AIA, Partner at JZA+D

Tool Box (Including Crescent Wrench, Vice Grip and Screwdrivers)



Staying organized, and keeping all your items in a toolbox, will save you a lot of time and frustration when you need to find something specific. As a dad, I believe that when your kids reach a certain age you should give them a basic tool kit with a toolbox as a gift – a good one with a **crescent wrench**, **vice grip**, a **set of screwdrivers** with magnetic tips (Phillips, Flat Head, Square Head, Star Head, etc.) and other essentials.

[\\$34.99 at Amazon.com](#) [SEE IT](#)

J. Pickens, Host of HGTV's 'The Work Around'

Cordless Power Drill



Arguably the most useful and versatile tool ever. Aside from screwing things together and apart, it's also useful for drilling holes through a multitude of materials, mixing paint and stains and sanding inside tiny spaces. When you buy the drill, buy a case of varied screw tips along with it and you should be all set for most of your home projects.

[\\$79 at Amazon.com](#) [SEE IT](#)

Headlamp or Durable Flashlight



In the house or apartment, a HUGE percentage of repairs and projects take place in a tiny, dark space. Whether it's under the sink or in a crawl space or closet; being able to see is a MUST.

(This will also come in handy when you're trying to sort out a mess of cords behind your TV!)

[\\$12.97 at Amazon.com](#) [SEE IT](#)

Utility Knife



This is self-explanatory, but aside from opening packages and cutting off tags, you'll find a utility knife useful for trimming and cutting wires and scraping metal and rust. Plus, the old removable blades are great for scraping paint and spills off glass and flooring.

[\\$7.97 at Amazon.com](#) [SEE IT](#)

Set of Pliers



Pliers with a needle nose, straight handle tongue and groove. I recommend a small and large of each, and with them, the possibilities are endless. But don't skimp; you get what you pay for with pliers. Longer handles and harder steel means better grip, more strength and longer use – I've literally had the same pair of channel lock pliers since I was 16 (nearly 20 years). I've used them at least 1,000 times and counting.

[\\$37.99 at Amazon.com](#) [SEE IT](#)

Two-Foot Level



I don't think I even need to explain the reasoning here, but everyone should have a level. Apart from leveling things, it also serves as a great straight edge for cutting and drawing lines.

[\\$21.97 at Amazon.com](#) [SEE IT](#)

Safety Glasses and a Dust Mask



Duh. [Don't be the guy who thinks he's too tough for safety. Invest in good safety glasses and pick up some dust masks if you're planning to do any bigger repairs around your pad.]

[\\$7.15 at Amazon.com](#) [SEE IT](#)

A Collection of Little Supplies

There are a number of smaller items you should add to your toolbox. **Duct Tape**, **#8 pan head screws**, a box of **5/8" drywall screws** (or wood screws), a box of **2 1/2" drywall screws**, **painters tape**, cotton rags, mineral spirits, a black marker, and if you are a real go-getter, a few wire nuts and chip brushes.

Kayla Hein, Interior Architect and Creative Director at Modern Castle

Compound Miter Saw



A compound miter saw is a very handy tool to have on-deck for most construction projects. You can make quick straight cuts, like those you might make with a simple circular saw, or you can make compound angled cuts. These cuts are necessary for clean mitered edges or for getting perfect inside corners for molding applications.

[\\$349 at Amazon.com](#) [SEE IT](#)

Hammer



While it may sound basic, a good hammer is one of the most critical tools you can have in your arsenal. When shopping for a good hammer, skip over the lightweights. Select a hammer that has a good weight to it. A heavier hammer, although heavier to lift, will offer more driving force with each swing and result in less labor on your part.

[\\$12.97 at Amazon.com](#) [SEE IT](#)

Electrical Pliers



A good pair of electrical pliers is another tool that is incredibly handy. It is not uncommon for a drywall job to quickly lead to an electrical job or have some kind of overlap where you'll need to access the inner-workings of an electrical outlet. Electrical pliers make it easy to do quick repairs on electrical items and keep moving forward.

[\\$24.97 at HomeDepot.com](#) [SEE IT](#)

Marc Luongo, Electrical Contractor

Screwdriver



High-quality screwdriver set or multi-tip screwdriver is essential. A solid screwdriver set can be used almost every day from adjusting cabinet doors and building IKEA furniture to replacing batteries in toys and electronics.

[\\$14.97 at HomeDepot.com](#) [SEE IT](#)

Joe Murphy, Interior Design Specialist

Laser Tape Measure



A laser tape measure makes the job of measuring super easy, especially if you don't have someone to hold the other end of the tape. It also holds measurement information to eliminate the 'measure, take note, measure again...' monotony that can take place when using a standard tape. From hanging a picture to measuring for a new addition, it's a great resource for projects big and small.

[\\$59.97 at HomeDepot.com](#) [SEE IT](#)

Joshua Zinder, AIA, Managing Partner at JZA+D

Stud Finder



I recommend keeping an electronic stud finder handy, even when you're just hanging a picture frame or a painting. Electronic stud finders are good for any kind of wall because they detect density and objects in the wall, instead of using a magnet to find a nail in the stud.

[\\$6.75 at Amazon.com](#) [SEE IT](#)

Robert Fish, LGC, SBCCI, LBI and CASF

Voltage Tester



When it comes to electrical work in the home, you should always proceed with caution. The voltage tester is a small, easy-to-use tool that you can use to see if an outlet, light switch box or ceiling lightbox has power running towards it or through it.

[\\$21.77 at HomeDepot.com](#) [SEE IT](#)

Kershan Bulsara, Manager at Roofmaster

Measuring Tape



This is a classic, yet essential tool that everyone should have in their toolbox. Whether you're trying to identify whether or not your furniture will fit into your space or you're doing custom carpentry work in your home, you can't get the job done without proper measurements and calculations. A mismeasured material will lead to errors in the project, which could end up costing you even more to correct in the long run.

[\\$13 at Amazon.com](#) [SEE IT](#)

Jeff Neal, Industrial Painting Contractor

Paint Brush



I can think of hundreds of must-have tools, but I'll keep this focused on painting. A good, proper brush is important for home maintenance. A good brush has a thick head of bristles. This allows it to carry more paint, and provide a more even application. But it's also important to have the right brush for the type of paint. Oil-based paints need a synthetic or natural brush, while acrylic or latex paints require a synthetic brush only.

[\\$15.47 at HomeDepot.com](#) [SEE IT](#)

Jerry Banks, Project Manager at Judd Builders

Wrenches



You want to invest in tools that will last. If you decide to go with a budget buy because you don't think you'll use them very much, you might be surprised. Quality tools should last you a long time and help you get the job done with ease.

Whether tightening, loosening or getting a good grip, you can't go wrong with adding wrenches to your list of tool essentials.

[\\$116.08 at Amazon.com](#) [SEE IT](#)

You don't need to be a skilled carpenter to take care of things around your pad. Stock on these tools and you'll be ready to tackle everyday repairs and fix-it tasks effortlessly. And if you're unsure on the process, [how-to articles](#) and YouTube videos are a great resource. According to HGTV, 69 percent of Americans agree that they use/have used DIY online video tutorials to fix things in the home; 70 percent of which are men – so clearly, it's proving to be an effective option.