

SCREW BASICS

Although there are many types of screws, the four everyday basic ones are the wood screw, the sheet metal screw, the machine screw and the coach screw.

Wood Screws



Are used when stronger joining than a nail is needed, or for when other materials must be fastened to wood, for example; hinges and brackets. This screw is tapered to help draw the wood together as the screw is inserted.

Sheet Metal Screws



Are primarily used to join light metal to metal, but can be used for plastic, Perspex and similar materials. Sheet metal screws are threaded completely from the point to the head, and the threads are sharper than those of wood screws.

Machine Screws



Are often inserted into pre-threaded holes but can also be used with machine nuts and washers. You will often find machine screws used in electrical appliances and the such.

Coach Screws



Have a hexagonal head as opposed to a slotted head and are used for heavy applications. They are driven with a spanner or wrench rather than a screwdriver.

Tips

- A pilot hole (usually 2 sizes smaller than the shank of the screw) should always be made before driving a screw. This is especially crucial in hardwoods or when driving a screw near the end of the board. When working with screws of larger diameter, a pilot hole of the same diameter as the shank of the screw should be drilled into the wood to a depth of 1/3 the length of the screw.
- Use galvanized or other rust-resistant screws where rust could be a problem.
- Remember, when choosing screw length, that the screw should penetrate 2/3 of the combined thickness of the materials being joined.
- To remove a screw with a damaged slot another slot can be cut with a hacksaw blade if the head is exposed enough.