

Choosing a Compressor

Those tiny nails and brads we use in woodworking can be a bear to hammer-in; you'll hit your thumb as often as what you're aiming-for.

A seriously better solution is the pneumatic nail gun. People who frame houses for a living use big ones, but the kind we generally use in woodworking are smaller, lighter and require less compressed air, which brings us to the topic of this column – air compressors.



Talk about choices... Walk into any pro tool store and you'll find compressors of all sizes and shapes. Big, vertical ones provide a continuous supply of compressed air at high volume, but unless you paint cars, you can probably forget about them. At the opposite extreme are the small

"pancake" compressors. In-

between are the 20-, 30- and 40-gallon models, both vertical for space-saving or horizontal on wheels for greater mobility. Some are gas-powered, but we'll talk about the electric variety, the only kind for use indoors.

Unless you're operating a production woodworking shop, ignore the really big compressors. They're overkill for the sanders, nailers and spray systems you're likely to use. Instead, look at the air delivery requirements of those tools. Most don't need higher volumes of air than 90 to 120 psi (pounds (of air pressure) per square inch). Even the small pancake compressors can handle that, but you also need to think next about how long you'll want that pressure on a continuous basis. Applying paint or stain, for example, requires a steady, continuous rate of air delivery. The compressor you need is one that delivers both the pressure and the volume of air your applications require. Mid-size compressors usually do both, very adequately.

My compressor, which has been with me since day-one, is a two hp, four-gallon Craftsman. Pretty puny by today's standards, but it gets me by because I only use it to run my 16- and 18-gauge nailers. If I regularly sprayed finishing materials, I'd have something larger. But, given that I always advise buying the right tool the first time, if I had to do it over again I'd get something in the 30-gallon range. For most hobby-type woodworkers, that's plenty.

A word of caution; there's probably a petcock or other drain device on your compressor to let you remove water that condenses from air in the tank. When you're done using your compressor, open it and leave it open until you're ready to use your compressor again.

Living Around Electricity. Be Aware

Electricity is the power source for many of the modern conveniences we enjoy today: the light in our home, the heat from our furnace and the cooling of air conditioners on a hot summer day.

We also use electricity to watch our favorite television program, listen to music when playing video games and when using our computers. While electricity helps to improve our quality of life, it can be harmful if we are not careful. Electricity comes from the many power lines we see located outside our home. To help us live safe around electricity, here are a few safety tips for us to remember:

- Safely store warm weather tools like lawn mowers and trimmers. Check cold weather tools, such as leaf and snow blowers, along with their power cords, for unusual wear and tear. Repair or replace worn tools or parts right away.
- Unplug and safely store battery chargers that won't be in use again until spring.
- Use only weatherproof electrical devices for outside activities. Protect outdoor electrical devices from moisture. Make sure electrical equipment that has been wet is inspected and reconditioned by a certified repair dealer.
- Keep dry leaves swept away from outdoor lighting, outlets and power cords.
- Make sure electric blankets are in good repair, certified by an independent testing lab such as UL, CSA or ETL. Power cords should not be frayed, cracked or cut.
- Do not tuck your electric blanket into mattresses or under children and don't put anything on top of the blanket while in use, such as comforters or bedspreads.
- Never allow pets to sleep on the electric blanket.

Kids' Corner Safety Poster



"Do not cut trees by power lines"

Andrew Pospishil, 9 years old

Andrew is the son of Debra and Rich Alexander and Dan Pospishil, Gayville, S.D. They are members of Clay Union Electric Corporation, Vermillion, S.D.

Kids, send your drawing with an electrical safety tip to your local electric cooperative (address found on Page 3). If your poster is published, you'll receive a prize. All entries must include your name, age, mailing address and the names of your parents.

Wonderful Wild Game

Venison Meat Balls

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| 1 lb. ground venison | 1 tsp. parsley flakes |
| 1 lb. ground pork | Dash oregano |
| 1 small onion, chopped | 2 eggs |
| Pepper and salt to taste | 1 tsp. parmesan cheese |
| Dash garlic salt | Spaghetti sauce |

Combine all ingredients except spaghetti sauce; shape into meat balls. Brown well on all sides. Add to spaghetti sauce and simmer until meat is cooked through.

Glenda Morton, Sioux Falls
Cooperative Connections

Pheasant Wild Rice Soup

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| 1 pkg. long grain wild rice blend | 1/2 cup flour |
| | 1 cup milk |
| 1 can mushrooms, drained | 8 cups chicken broth |
| 1 large onion, diced | 1 pkg. onion soup mix |
| 1/2 cup butter | 1 pheasant, cooked and cubed |

Prepare long grain wild rice blend according to package directions. Sauté mushrooms and onions in butter. Sprinkle in flour, stirring until flour is mixed in but not browned. Slowly add milk and broth with a wire whisk, stirring until well blended. Add rice blend, onion soup mix and cubed pheasant meat. Simmer for 30 to 45 minutes.

Christie Gabel, Pierre
Cooperative Connections

Cajun Pheasant Strips

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| Pheasant breasts | Flour |
| Beaten egg | Cajun seasoning |

Cut pheasant breasts into thin strips. Dip in beaten egg and dredge in flour seasoned with Cajun seasoning. Fry in hot oil until golden brown. Drain on paper towel.

Kay Brandenburg, Alpena
Cooperative Connections

Pheasant Casserole

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| Pheasant, cut-up | 1 tsp. soy sauce |
| 1 medium onion, diced | 1/2 cup diced celery |
| 6 to 8 slices bacon | 1 cup sour cream |
| Salt and pepper to taste | 1-1/2 cups grated Swiss cheese |
| 1 can cream of mushroom soup | |

Brown pheasant pieces; set aside. Sauté onion and bacon and season with salt and pepper. Place pheasant pieces, bacon and onion in a large casserole. Combine soup, soy sauce, celery and sour cream; spoon over pheasant mixture. Top with Swiss cheese. Bake at 325°F. for 1-1/2 hours.

Catherine Jungworth, Ashton
Cooperative Connections

Spice-rubbed Duck Breasts With Cranberry-Apple Chutney

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| 4 (6 oz.) duck breast halves |
| 1/2 tsp. ground allspice |
| 1/2 tsp. cinnamon |
| 1/2 tsp. ground white pepper |
| 1/2 tsp. salt |
| 1/4 tsp. olive oil |
| 1 (16 oz.) can whole berry cranberry sauce |
| 1 small Granny Smith apple, peeled, cored and chopped |
| 1/2 cup chopped walnuts |
| 1/2 tsp. ground ginger |

With small sharp knife, remove skin from duck breasts. Mix together allspice, cinnamon, pepper and salt; season breasts on both sides with spice mixture. In 10-inch nonstick skillet, heat oil over medium-high heat. Add duck breasts; brown on both sides, about 2 minutes per side. Place skillet in oven; bake duck breasts at 425°F. about 6 minutes for rare, 8 minutes for medium-rare and 10 minutes for medium, turning breasts once after 4 minutes. While duck breasts are in the oven, make Cranberry-Apple Chutney. In saucepan, combine cranberry sauce, apple, walnuts and ginger. Heat over medium heat, stirring occasionally, about 5 minutes or until hot. Cut each breast crosswise on a slight angle into 4 to 5 slices about 1/2-inch thick; fan 1 breast on each of 4 plates and spoon Cranberry-Apple Chutney alongside, dividing it equally.

Pictured, Cooperative Connections

Elk Swiss Steak

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| Elk steak | 1/8 cup sherry |
| Flour | 2 cups chicken broth, divided |
| Salt and pepper | 1-1/2 T. butter |

Lightly salt and pepper elk steak, then pound in flour. Pound in as much flour on both sides as steaks will hold. Cut into serving pieces and quickly brown on both sides in butter or margarine. Pour in sherry and 1 cup chicken broth. Cover and bake at 350°F. for 1 to 1-1/2 hours or until fork tender. Put steak on a warm platter. Add remaining chicken broth to pan drippings. Combine 1-1/2 T. butter and 1-1/2 T. flour; stir into broth. Cook until thick, smooth and bubbling. Season to taste. Pour over steak and serve with butter rice with herbs.

Sophia Hoff, Tripp
Cooperative Connections



Please send your favorite favorite holiday treat and soup recipes to your local electric cooperative (address found on page 3). Each recipe printed will be entered into a drawing for a prize in December 2006. All entries must include your name, mailing address, telephone number and cooperative name.