

BENCH TIPS, TRICKS, AND TOOLS

January 22, 2023

Presented by Members Present

Minor Burner, used for lampwork glass making is a handy tool for freeing up both hands when soldering.

Lots of things can be used as dappers for curving metals such a trailer hitch. Think out of the box.

Use of small plastic Delrin block with hole drilled to length of ear post great for straightening wire after soldering. You can also make a mark on the block for measuring so all your posts are the same size.

Tweezers with tips bent and touching can be used to determine the best place on a piece to place the bail/holes for the bail so the piece balances well. There are tweezers used for lampworking that are called Handy Annie that would work the same way.

Best hole punch for 20 gage wire is the 1.8 mm by Eurotool.

Looping pliers and One-Step Loopers were demonstrated. One-Step Loopers will make a loop and cut off the excess with one motion which is good for production work. They come in 3 sizes; the best size is medium.

Use of square knot when adding more wire to wire weaving project was demonstrated. Saves time and you don't have to "weave the tails" into your project.

BBQ tongs with spark plug covers over the ends can be very helpful when gripping hot glass beads.

A product to prevent creating a mark/stamp where you don't want it when texturing/stamping a metal project called "Tuff Brake" was discussed. Google the name for the manufacturer.

A product called "Surface Saver Tape" was discussed. Good for preventing mars to your metal when riveting and dapping. It is available from Industrial Metals in Cottonwood, AZ.

Nail sets can be used for creating patterns and embossed surfaces on metal. Tapping the nail set over various substances (such as wood and plastic) will create varied patterns. Lots of substances that can be use are available at Lowe's or Home Depot in their throw-away bins. Harbor Freight is a great place to get the nail sets. Nail Sets can also be used to make a small hole without drilling too.

Us a pin vise fitted with a 30-35 gage drill bit to ream the edges of a drilled or punched hole in your metal to clean up the excess metal around it.

Metal Clay workers can benefit from making their own tools to create leaves and hearts in clay. Form a "v" on the end, roll a small piece of clay in the shape of rice, press into the center and you have a leaf. Roll a pea size of clay, pinch to create a point and then use the dowel to make a divot for the heart. Various size dowels can be used depending on the size you want. A household spatula with curves you like can be used as well. Think out of the box.

Eurotool makes great plyers with plastic ends so it won't mar your metal for creating curves. They are made for ring/bracelet bending but work well for a variety of metal smithing projects.

Hocky-Puck light with magnifier that works on battery was shown.

Rolling solder through a rolling mill is a good way to flatten it. Keep various types (soft, med, hard) in marked "Ice Breaker Gum" container.

Small piece of white chalk in zip-lock bag with sterling will prevent tarnishing.

The "Cutter's Helper" tool was discussed. Great for cutting sets for thick-walled bezel material and for facets. May be available on "Otto Frei." Rio Grande doesn't carry them.

Dan Hunt presented eight wonderful Tips and Tricks. See his excellent writeup and pictures.