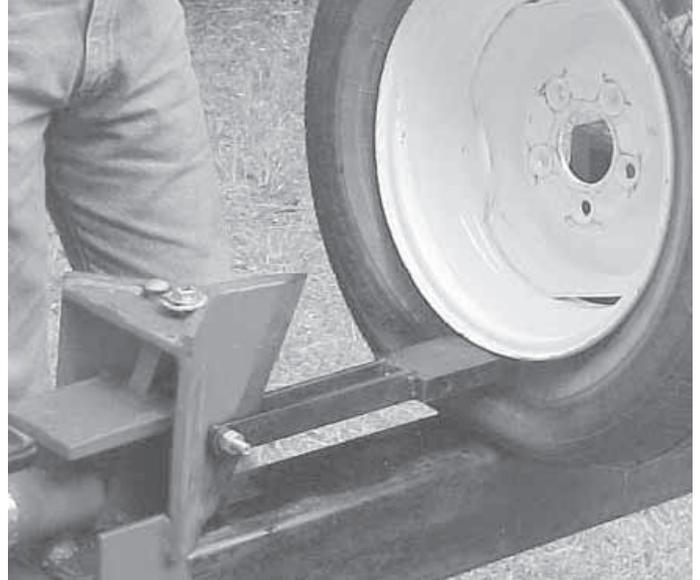




Jack Vines' wood splitter doubles as a tire repair machine, thanks to a set of removable attachments.



A 3-in. wide, 1-in. thick steel "breaker bar" is used to break bead on tire.

Wood Splitter Doubles As Tire Repair Tool

Jack Vines, Allen, Okla., built a unique wood splitter that doubles as a tire repair machine, thanks to a set of removable attachments.

"It takes advantage of the powerful hydraulics already on the splitter. I can repair a flat tire anywhere instead of having to make a trip into town and wait for someone else to do the job. When I'm done I can remove the attachments and go back to splitting wood," says Vines.

The two-wheeled machine is powered by an 8 hp Briggs & Stratton engine. It shaft-drives a hydraulic pump that powers a 4-in. dia., 24-in. long hydraulic splitting cylinder.

To work on a tire, Vines places it over a steel rod that threads onto a heavy screw at

one end of the splitter table. Then he rotates a "spider" at the bottom of the screw to clamp the wheel rim down. A 3-in. wide, 1-in. thick steel "breaker bar" is used to break the bead on the tire. The bar is supported by a pair of 12-in. long metal arms that bolt onto both sides of the splitting wedge.

The same controls that operate the splitter are used to operate the breaker bar. "The splitter has enough power to split almost any size or type of wood. With all that power, I have to be careful not to damage the wheel rim when extending the breaker bar," says Vines. "Where it really shines is on rusty trailer wheel rims that are hard to break down with a manually operated bead breaker. I can use

this machine to break the bead on a 16-in. truck tire with no problem."

A big advantage of the machine, says Vines, is that it can break the tire completely down which allows him to repair the tire from the inside. "For example, if a tire has a nail in it I can remove the tire from the rim and then repair it using a plug and patch combination such as the Bowes seal (Bowes Seal Fast, LLC, P.O. Box 18802, Indianapolis, Ind. 46218 ph 866 428-4301 or 317 549-1723; website: www.bowessealfast.com). Repairing the tire from the inside works much better than patching the outside because I never have to worry about a patch blowing out."

Vines sees no reason why tire changing



The same controls that operate the splitter are used to operate breaker bar.

attachments could not be adapted to any commercial wood splitter.

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6-Volt Alternators Fire Up Older Engines

Randy Rundle's frustration starting old pickups led to a better idea and his own business. Fifteen years later, his Fifth Avenue Auto Parts, located in Clay Center, Kansas, supplies parts and solutions to everything from antique cars, boats, trucks and tractors to old irrigation engines. Anything with a 6-volt system is customer potential for Rundle, who started restoring old trucks while in high school.

"They were always tough to start, and I decided that fixing that was going to be my quest," he recalls.

Part of the problem is that even when 6-volt systems have enough power to crank the starter, there might not be enough left for a strong spark. That's made worse by constant recharging of batteries, which shortens battery life. If the engine isn't run long enough or fast enough, the generator can't recharge the battery between starts and supply energy for lights and other accessories.

"If the engine is warm, it's even harder to start," adds Rundle.

A better answer, says Rundle, is to replace the 6-volt generator with a 6-volt alternator. It produces plenty of power to run vehicle accessories at low rpm's and recharges the battery.

After two years of research and locating a source for custom-built rotors and stators, he produced his 6-volt alternator. It had an output of 60 amps, 7.5 volts, 60 percent more power than produced by original 6-volt generator systems. Today it also includes a solid state regulator built into the inside of the alternator.

For the past fifteen years, he has been installing his alternators and upgrading systems. Projects have included all the cars seen in movies such as LA Confidential to a limousine for the Queen of England. In between Hollywood stars and British royalty, he supplies engines and other parts to antique cars, boats, trucks and tractors as well as old irrigation motors.

"Most conversions are in the \$300 area," says Rundle. "That includes the alternator, pulley, mounting brackets and wiring harness."

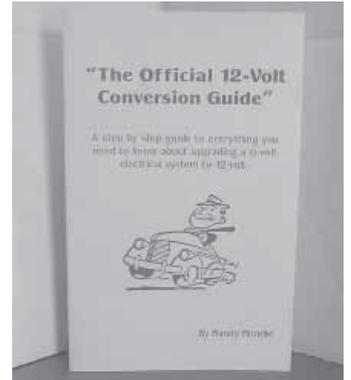
Most of Rundle's business centers on 6-volt systems. He notes that lots of World War II stuff has yet to wear out; it just needs to be upgraded. Upgrading the 6-volt systems from generators to alternators has led to other things. Antique tractor pullers and hot rodders need more power for higher compression engines. Once power is built up, engines tend to run warmer, so cooling has to be upgraded, too.

"One thing that has gotten really big in recent years is conversion of these antiques to 12-volt systems," says Rundle. "The newer generation of collector has grown up with air conditioning and stereos and wants them in their antiques as well."

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Randy Rundle specializes in converting 6-volt electrical systems to 12 volts.



Rebuilt Ford Pickup

"Our 1966 Ford pickup with 98,000 miles burned oil and the ring gear on the flywheel was going out. I bought a 1984 Chevy conversion van with a 6.2 diesel and dropped the sub frame out of it, including the engine, transmission, power steering, air conditioning, and so on.

"I removed the 6-cyl. engine, transmission, cross member, steering, and so on, from the Ford. All that was left on the Ford was the frame rails.

"I slid the diesel subframe, containing the complete suspension, in between the Ford frame rails and it was a perfect fit. I welded it in place so it looks like a factory-built job. At that point I also installed the rear end out of the van in the Ford. I had to weld in some spring hangers to do it but it

all went together without a hitch.

"Usually, on a project like this, you have to shorten or lengthen a driveshaft. But I didn't. Everything fit perfect.

"I replaced the Ford dash with the one out of the van and also the steering column with the adjustable wheel and wiper and cruise controls.

"We also added propane injection. I think when we get it all done it should give us around 30 mpg.

"This was a 'don't try this at home' project. A lot of work, but I believe it will be worth it."

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