

Speed Sorting Nuts, Version 1.1

By R. G. Sparber

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A long time ago, I figured out that sorting my selection of nuts into little tins saves me a lot of frustration and time. A label, on the end of the tin, tells me the contents.



These tins are placed on end for easy access.

This worked great until I had a “senior moment.” I don’t know when I did it, but I dumped some of my 10-24 nuts in with my 10-32 nuts. They look identical on the outside. Yes, I can carefully look inside of each nut to see if it has 24 or 32 threads per inch, but this takes time. It also doesn’t catch any damaged threads. Once in a while, a metric nuts creep in too.

I needed a way to quickly sort these nuts plus detect both damaged and metric threads.

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My solution was to chuck up a length of 10-24 rod in my battery powered, variable speed drill.



I pick up a handful of nuts and place them, one at a time, against the end of the *slowly* turning rod. If it freely engages, I run the nut all the way in. If it catches, I manually turn the nut backwards about $\frac{1}{4}$ turn and place it aside.

Do not run the drill above dead slow. If the nut catches, it can cut your fingers. And please do not wear gloves as that just makes it more dangerous if it catches.



When the rod is full of tested nuts, I hold the group and reverse the drill. This spins them all into my hand.

Since I'm not looking at each nut's threads, the work goes quickly. Yet all threads are fully tested.

Acknowledgment

Thanks to Andrew L. Ayers for pointing out the dangers of running the drill too fast.

I welcome your comments and questions.

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