Painter's Tape and a Homemade Dispenser,　Version 1.1

By R. G. Sparber

Protected by Creative Commons.[1]

I keep a roll of painter's tape in with my rigging straps, another in my desk drawer, and a third in with my adhesives. Can't say I've ever used the stuff when painting. This tape is wonderful for lightly holding things that must be taken apart quickly. It also does not leave a sticky residue behind.

But trying to find the end of the roll, especially when I'm in a hurry, is one of life's more annoying tasks. Almost as bad is then tearing off a length and leaving a long thin strip behind.

Sure I can buy a fancy tape dispenser and they are sometimes worth it. My packing tape dispenser is heavily used. But my many rolls of painter's tape do not rise to that level of importance.

---

[1] This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License. To view a copy of this license, visit http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/ or send a letter to Creative Commons, PO Box 1866, Mountain View, CA 94042, USA.

My solution was to make tape dispensers from old hacksaw blades.

The teeth do a fine job of tearing off the tape and the face of the blade provides a surface for the end of the tape to stick.

You will need part of a hacksaw blade with a hole in it, a 6-32 bolt longer than the tape is wide, and a 6-32 wing nut. Tools include two pliers, a grinder, a torch, and some water. It goes without saying that you will also need to wear your safety glasses.

Locate an end of the hacksaw blade with a hole in it. Use the torch to heat up the blade about 1 inch from the end.

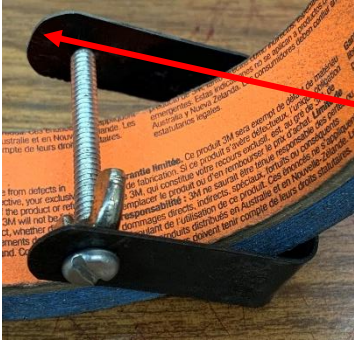Once cherry red, it will be soft enough to use the pliers to bend the blade at an included angle of a little less than 90 degrees. Quickly cool the metal with water to restore its hardness.

Eyeball the width of the tape and make your second bend so the square U that is formed straddles the tape. Again, bend it with an included angle of a little less than 90 degrees. In this way, the end of the bolt will push the flanks apart and make secure contact when tightened.
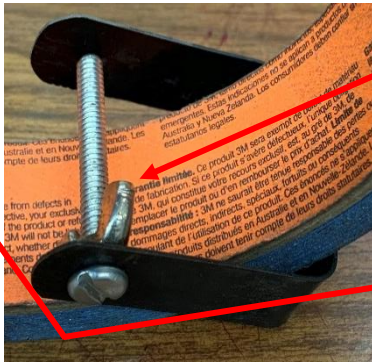
Next, use your pliers to break off the blade so the two flanks are of about equal length. Use your grinder to round the end and remove the hacksaw blade's teeth on both flanks.

The bolt's length is cut long enough to force the two flanks to be parallel.

Install the tape dispenser around the roll with the teeth facing towards the end of the tape.

Tighten the wing nut so its ears are parallel to the inside of the roll and you are done.

When not in use, the tape sticks to the face of the dispenser so the end is obvious.

Lift up on the dispenser to access the end of the tape.

Pull off the needed tape.

To cut, stick the tape back on the face of the blade, tilt it so the teeth point up, and pull the tape along the teeth.

Acknowledgment

Thanks to John Herrmann for adding clarity to the angle bending text.

If you wish to be contacted each time I publish an article, email me with just "Article Alias" in the subject line.

Rick Sparber
Rgsparber.ha@gmail.com
Rick.Sparber.org