

A Layout Punch Guide, Version 1.2

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The standard way to accurately locate a drill on a flat piece of stock is to start with a dot of layout dye. Then a knife is used to scribe perpendicular lines. And finally, a layout punch is dragged along one line until you feel it go into the groove. Follow this groove until you feel it drop into the second line.



Push down on the punch, and you have a divot right at the intersection. The point of a small drill will drop into this divot. For larger drills, the divot can be enlarged with a bigger spring-loaded punch.



But what do you do if you can't tolerate cuts into the surface? There would be nothing to catch with the point of the layout punch.

My solution was to make a layout punch guide.

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I started with a small piece of aluminum flat stock. It is commonly used in roofing and cuts with scissors.

Then, I selected a corner that was true and put down a dot of Dykem. Next, I scribed lines 0.100-inches from the edge.

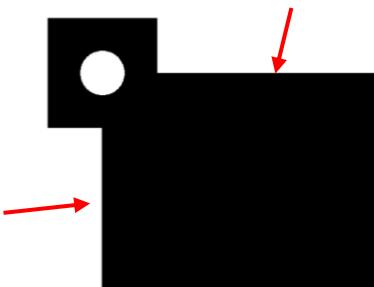
I used my layout punch to follow the scribed lines to their intersection. By repeatedly pushing on the punch, I was able to raise a little bump on the backside.



I then filed the bump off and verified that the point of the punch barely poked through.

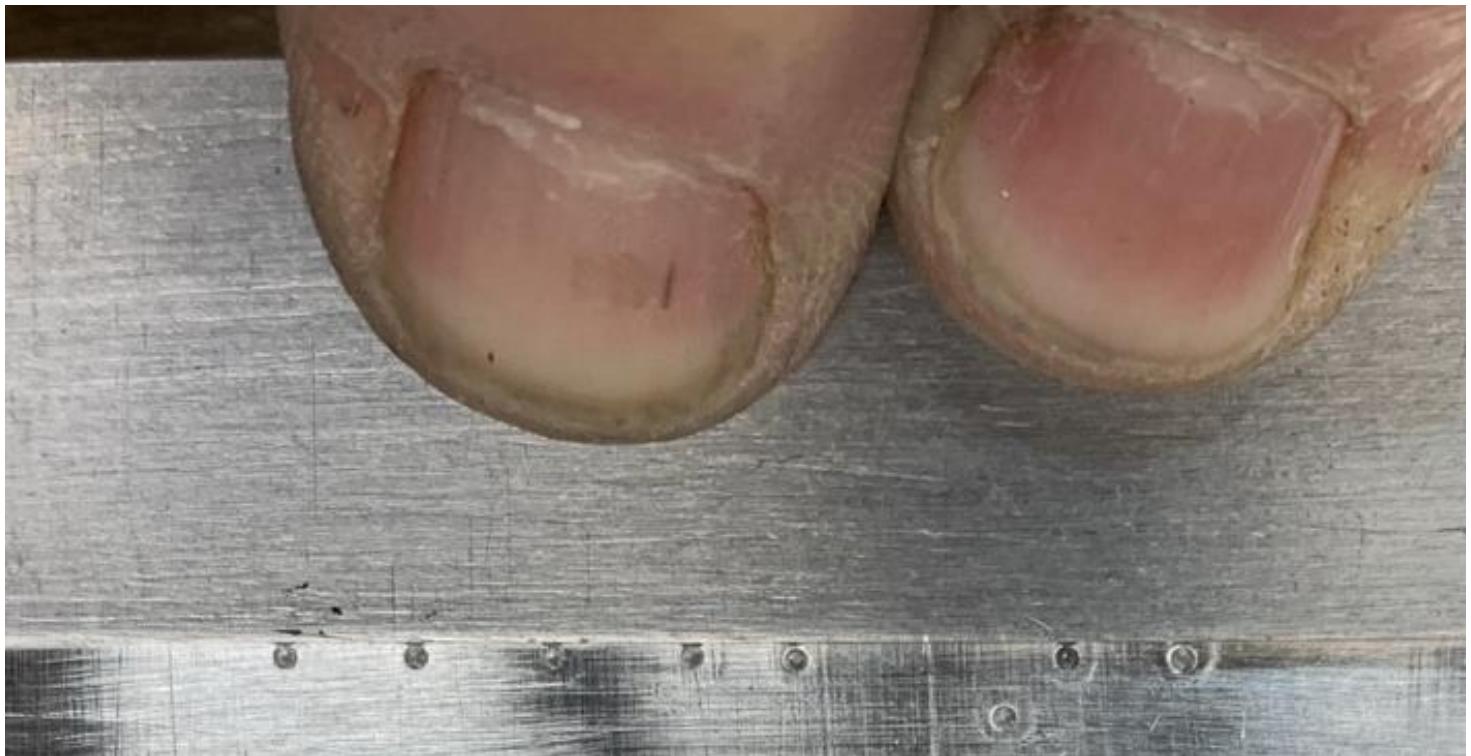
Using a file, I beveled the two reference edges. This reduces parallax as I sight the scribed lines.

To use the tool, I scribe lines that are 0.100-inches from where I want to punch. Line up these lines with the two reference edges on the tool, and push down on the punch.



For a little more effort, you can cut new reference edges that do not have this offset.

To test this tool, I put down Dykem on a piece of scrap aluminum and then lightly scribed a line. Then I used the tool to guide my punch along this line. When done, I polished the surface so I could clearly see the divots.



I'd say this is not bad given I did it by eye.

“JoeH” from homemadetools.net, made a brilliant observation: you can punch a series of holes in the piece of flat stock and have a template.

I welcome your comments and questions.

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