

TOOLS

WHAT TO BRING WHEN GOING JUNKIN'

BY CALIN HEAD
PHOTOGRAPHY: CALIN HEAD

FOR THE YARD

As gearheads, we spend a lot of time and money collecting tools to support our hobby or sometimes job. Everyone knows the guy who has the 6,000-dollar tool chest stuffed with every fancy gadget and screwdriver you can imagine, but do you really want to lug all that crap around a junkyard? We don't think so. So, we compiled this little guide to get you thinking and maybe help you fight the urge to strap your entire roll-away to your back. We look at it this way; less is more when it comes to tools for the junkyard trip, as long as you pack smart. ■



Out of everything in this guide, this has to be, by far, the best thing. These bucket inserts, like this one from Craftsman, will not only hold almost all the tools you could need but will also hold most of the smaller parts you take off. Not listed below but a must-have is a nice hammer, kind of like the one you see here.



Reference and Storage

Speaking of smaller parts, it's a good idea to take a few baggies and a marker. That way, if you are ripping apart a set of doors, you can keep the left and right hardware separate. A note pad with any measurements you might need is essential because this will be the only thing to reference other than your own memory.



Hand Stuff

Gloves of some sort and some hand cleaner may not be necessary for some, but they are for us—not because we have delicate girly hands but because we don't want our steering wheel to get all greasy. Remember you still have to get your grubby butt home.



Pliers

You should bring at least one of each type. Needle-nose, side-cutters, channel locks, regular, and locking pliers will cover all your bases. The locking type might become your best friend out there, because sometimes there is just no way one person can hold both the nut and the bolt.



Wrenches

A good set of ratcheting wrenches, combined with a small assortment of adjustables, should cover any size you might need. One thing to note before you leave is what type of truck you are looking to pull parts from. This will determine if you need to bring either the metric or standard increments.



Screwdrivers

Pick up a universal-style screwdriver and an assortment of tips. This should cover any screw you might come across, even the smaller Torque heads. Then, all you need is one flat tip and Phillips just to be on the safe side, and if you have room, throw in a large prybar.



Electric

Not many yards have available power, so if you take an electric impact, screw gun, or reciprocating saw, just make sure you charge the battery before you leave. There is nothing worse than grabbing the screw gun, pulling the trigger, and having it go *click*. Not only do you have to pull the screws manually, now, you still have to lug the thing around. Talk about dead weight.



Battery Power

All of the engine-checking procedures (mentioned later) will necessitate you turning the motor over, and most yards pull the batteries when the vehicles come in. Booster boxes, like this one from Peak, will allow you to crank the motor over and run your checks. This will also help you check other electrical components like power windows and power seat tracks.



Mobile Air

Here is our favorite setup for getting sheet-metal pieces. The Powertank CO₂ bottle holds 3,000 psi of the non-flammable gas, which will run the saw long enough to cut any filler piece you might need. Not only that, if you don't have an electric impact, this will run your air impact for those real stubborn bolts.



Engine-Checking Tools

If everything looks good in the filter (see below, *right*), then you might want to do some of the basic tests to find out if all is well. You will need a dual leak-down tester to check the condition of the rings and valves. A starter button will help you turn over the motor to see if it will even move and if there is any vacuum being produced. ProForm's self-powered timing light works great, because it doesn't require a battery in the vehicle to run it and it doubles as a flashlight.



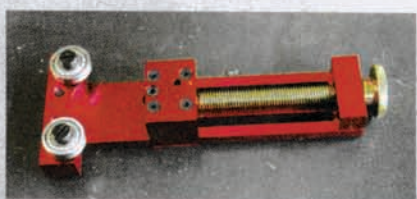
Sockets

The 1/4-inch drive sets work great for the yard, and they don't take much room. Combine that with just the bare essential in the larger drive and you should be fine. Remember to bring an assortment of extensions and at least one wobble socket for those off-angle nuts.



Allen Keys

There are many options for Allen keys—straight, bent, and assembled sets—but whatever you choose, just bring one. We prefer to take the assembled set with us to the yard, and it has never let us down yet.



Oil Filter Cutter

If you are looking to buy a motor for the yard, you'll want to do some pre-checks just to make sure it's worth the purchase. An oil filter cutter will give you some insight to the condition of the internals. If there are a lot of metal shavings in the filter, you might want to move on to a different vehicle.



Miscellaneous

Make sure to bring a small can of penetrating fluid for those rusted bolts and a small flashlight just in case you have to look under a dash.

SOURCES:

CRAFTSMAN
www.craftsman.com

FREE ALL OIL
(800) 660-6140
www.freealloil.com

MECHANICS WEAR
(800) 222-4296
www.mechanix.com

PEAK
(800) 323-5440

POWERTANK
(209) 366-2163
www.powertank.com

PROFORM
(586) 774-2500
www.proformparts.com

SNAP-ON TOOLS
(800) 225-5786
www.snapon.com