

How To Use A Hammer

Years ago, Mr. Ubell was apprenticed to a master cabinetmaker where he performed his tasks with great dexterity. The master was displeased with only one thing in his apprentice: he observed how young Mr. Ubell, when working with a hammer, did not hold the tool at the end of its handle, in the proper fashion. Time and time again the master would remind: "Hold the handle!" But the apprentice, otherwise agile and talented for the trade, refused to learn. One day, in a fit of rage at the inability of his apprentice to comprehend that one simple rule, the master grabbed the tool from Mr. Ubell's hands, brought it to a bench, and cut off all but three inches of the handle. "Now," he said, returning it to the flabbergasted youth, "here is your hammer. Use it!"

We relate this incident because many will feel insulted by the title of this recipe. Most people, in truth, can hammer a nail with a degree of efficiency. But before long, they grow weary. This recipe will illustrate a method whereby even the beginner can hammer for an hour and not be overcome with exhaustion.

Utensils

Hammer, 16 ounce with handle vulcanized into head (fig. 2A)

Ingredients

Piece of wood, 2" inches by 3" inches, 12" inches long
Assorted nails
Piece of wood 3/4" inch by 3/4" inch, 12" inches long

To Hammer in Nail

1. Grasp hammer with claw facing upward. Don't choke up on handle (Fig. 1 B).
2. Hold wrist stiff.
3. Arm should be cocked 90 degrees at the elbow.
4. Take a few practice swings at the 2" inch by 3" inch piece of wood.
5. Gently tap a nail into the wood at 90 degrees (perpendicular).
6. Raise hammer as described above and strike confidently, but without great force, at the head of the nail.
7. Repeat, adding force and velocity with each swing, until nail has been completely driven into wood.

To Remove Nail

1. Using the edge of one claw of the hammer, pry the head of the nail from the wood until it can be slid into claw slot.
2. Place the 3/4" inch by 3/4" inch piece of wood beneath the head of the hammer for additional leverage (Fig. 1 C).
3. Jerk the nail out.

Note: Repeat this recipe several times until you become proficient in both driving the nail into the wood and removing it.

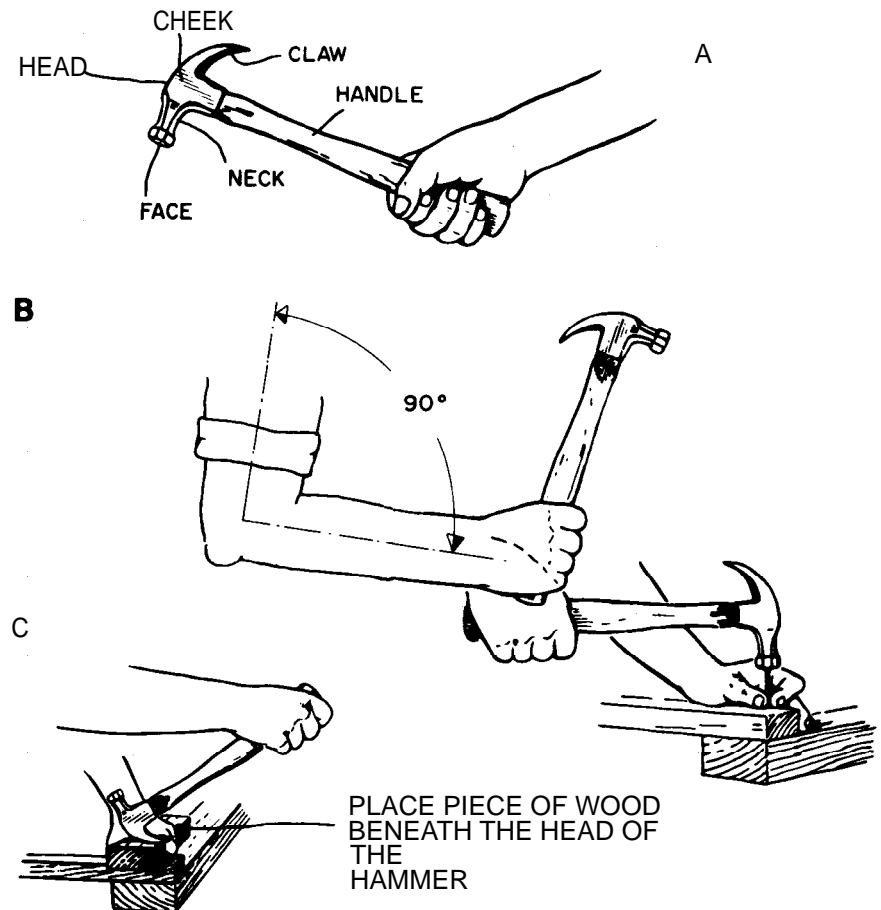


Figure 1.
Hammer Technique