

Hacksaw blade makes quick work of cleaning shower drain



SuperHandyman

By AL AND KELLY CARRELL

Most shower clogs are caused by hair that gets trapped in the drain. The fastest way to remove these clogs is with an old hacksaw blade. The blades are thin and easily can be slipped down into the average tub or shower drain. Hold on to the end and give it a little wiggle or a slight twist to grab on to the hair. Then pull it back up and out of the drain, usually with a clump of hair attached. It's a nasty job, but someone has to do it, and this is a quick and easy way to take care of the problem.

DEAR CARRELLS: I like to store a lot of my shop compounds, like paint thinner and paint, in jars with screw-on lids. These materials keep better this way, and it's usually easier to spot them, too. One small problem that I've run into is that the lids sometimes get stuck on the jars, so I have a little trick I use to avoid this. I run a strip of Teflon tape around the threads before screwing on the lid. This keeps the lids on tight but makes them easy to open when you are ready to do so. The Teflon tape is cheap, and one roll will last a long

time. — G.R.

A SUPER HINT — Want to have an automatic door? Just install a "spring hinge." This type of hinge has a built-in spring that will close your door automatically when you let go of it. It would be perfect for a patio door or the door to your garage. Think about where you might use a hinge like this to make your life easier.

DEAR AL: Our patio table has an umbrella running through the top of it, so finding a planter for decoration was hard. My wife came up with a great idea. She bought a Bundt cake pan, which is just a cooking pan with a hole in the center of it. She planted some flowers in it, and they have grown and are spilling over the sides now. You can't see the pan any longer, and the flowers look really nice on the table. I thought it was a clever idea, and wanted to share it with you. — H.S.

Q: Our dishwasher racks are starting to crack, and rust is showing through. What can we do? — M.T.

A: If the problem isn't serious, you might be able to use a paint-on repair kit for dishwashers. They also make little caps that fit onto the tips of the racks, where rust usually begins. If the racks are damaged badly, you can replace them. An online source we have used is repairclinic.com.

DEAR KELLY: I've been

taking care of my daughter's children this summer so she can work. We've had a lot of fun, but we've had to make some adjustments around our home. One of my grandchildren locked himself in the bathroom and couldn't get out. My husband wanted to remove the lock from the door. I came up with the idea of putting a rubber band over the lock to prevent it from going into the strike plate. I looped the rubber band over the doorknob, twisted it and then looped it on the knob on the other side of the door. The twisted part fits right over the lock and prevents it from engaging. Problem solved — and without hardware removal! — J.A.

SHOPTALK — You ought to have a Slide-N-Pump on hand. We tried one, and it's so easy to use, doesn't need electricity and works like a champ. You can use it to empty a pond, drain your fish tank, pump out a small flooded area or empty a washer that needs repairs. The Slide-N-Pump is made to last, and it comes in two sizes. To find out more and see it in action, go to www.slide-n-pump.com.

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