

Sketchbook

By Dick Everitt

Stubborn Screws

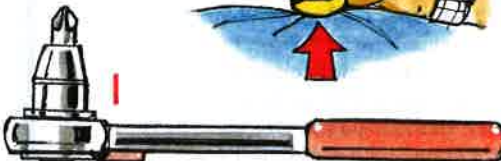
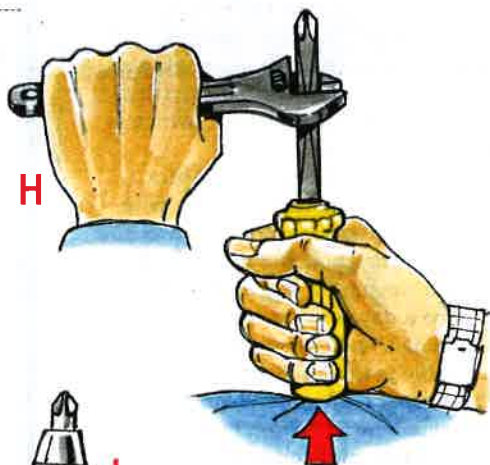
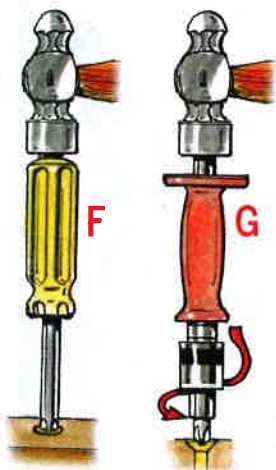
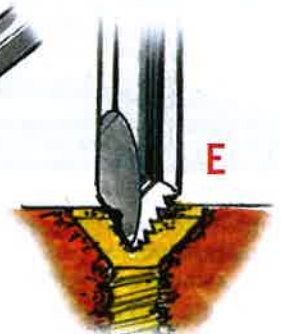
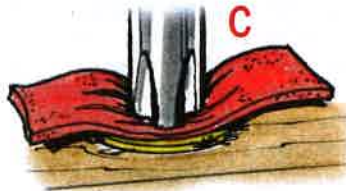
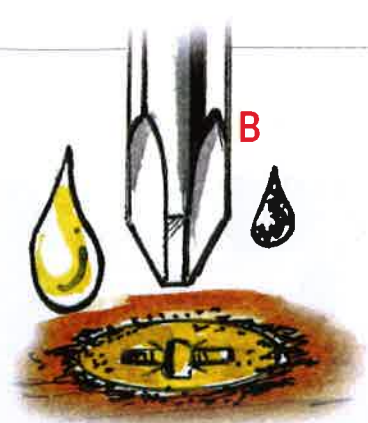
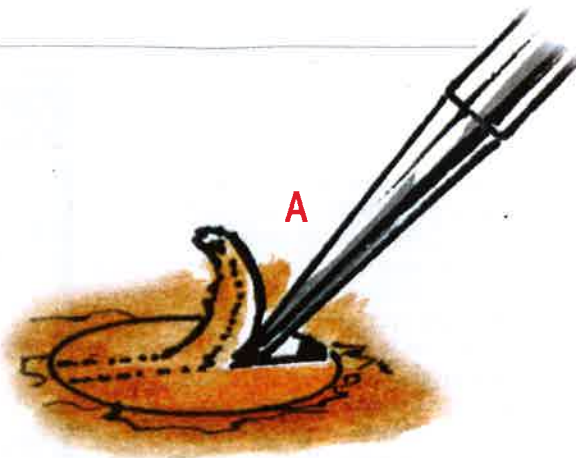
A Remove any paint or varnish and clean out the slot in the screw so the screwdriver's blade will seat properly.

B Lemon juice or soda will soak in and remove some types of corrosion. Grinding paste helps the blade grip the slot better.

C A thin bit of rubber helps the blade bind into damaged screw heads.

D If that doesn't work, tap the screw round with a thin cold-chisel to jar it free.

E A screw extractor in a high-torque drill will bite into a damaged screw.



F Use the biggest screwdriver that fits the screw's head and tap it in with a hammer. This helps it fit better and may dislodge anything gripping the screw. If it won't budge, try doing it up half a turn.

G An impact driver imparts a massive turning force when you strike it hard with a hammer. Make sure the surrounding structure can withstand a hefty wallop.

H You can increase turning force by putting a wrench or a pair of pliers on a screwdriver with a square shaft.

I A screwdriver bit set in a socket-wrench also increases torque.

J A brace with a screwdriver bit is a powerful tool. It's easy to push down on it and turn the bit at the same time.

K If you cut a washer square at one end, you can create a big screwdriver bit.

L Heat sometimes helps to break a screw loose. If you don't have a heat source, a wooden dowel running counter-clockwise in a drill will generate heat through friction. You'll need to support the drill or it will skid off the screw head.

M A metal rod heated with a gas torch works better.

N If the screw is stripped and just spins when you turn it, put the tip of an old chisel under the edge of the head to ease it up.

O If it all goes wrong, try to get a hacksaw blade behind it to cut the screw. One friend of mine, when replacing several planks, made up a big dolly like this to stop the wood splitting as he drove out the screw heads. Note the hole in the other end to knock out the heads.

P If a screw head twists off and you need to replace it, you can file teeth on a metal tube and drill out around the screw.

Q Another trick is to use a 10mm drill bit to take out both the screw and the wood around it. Fill the hole with a standard plug and drill a new pilot hole for a new screw.

