

### Tools and Equipment

Almost every deck project involves some demolition, whether it's the surgical removal of siding and trim to install a deck ledger and lateral bracing, or the wholesale removal of an entire deck. Having the right tool to do that efficiently—such as a specialized pry bar instead of a generic crowbar—can cut hours of frustrating labor from the process.

Once framing begins, efficient production is the key to a profitable job, especially for a short-handed crew. For example, most deck frames are put together with dozens of metal connectors, each of which requires a half-dozen or more fasteners. Some deck builders are now attaching metal hardware to the framing with structural screws, but most still use nails, in which case air-powered or battery-powered metal-connector nailers will save hours in installation time.

There are specialized tools for installing decking as well, including pneumatic hidden-fastener systems and specialty drivers designed to accept collated screws. These tools will keep you up on your feet instead of down on your knees, saving time ... and your back.



#### Board Straightener

The Hardwood Wrench can exert a pushing force of about 1,100 pounds, eight times more than any other board straightener on the market, according to DeckWise, and powerful enough to bend more than one board at a time. The tool works with single or double joists and features a self-locking cam with a stainless steel and hardwood handle to make the job a one-person operation. Since the original model was introduced, the company has enlarged the cam for more range and power and modified the pins to improve their grip. DeckWise says the tool also can be used to straighten siding. DeckWise, 941.896.9851, deckwise.com



#### Hidden Fasteners

The Tiger Claw hidden fastener system includes a pneumatic installation gun and clips that engage the slotted edges of deck boards. The Tiger Claw gun has a nosepiece that consistently holds fasteners in the correct position and fires a 'scrail' screw-nail through the clip and into a joist. FastenMaster says an installer using the gun can lay 400 square feet of decking an hour. FastenMaster, 800.518.3569, fastenmaster.com



#### Joist Jaw

Grabber's Joist Jaw holds heavy dimensional lumber accurately in place while you install a joist hanger or work at the opposite end of the plank. The zinc plated-steel Joist Jaw clamps on the top edge of a 2-by with a turn or two of the handle. A tongue extending past the end of the board rests on an adjacent surface and aligns the two on the same plane. Deck joists, for example, will line up perfectly with ledger. Grabber Construction Products, 800.477.8876, grabberman.com



### Fast Fastening

Simpson's Quik Drive is an attachment for a corded drill or cordless impact driver that uses collated self-drilling fasteners. It substantially speeds up repetitive tasks, such as installing decking or assembling light-gauge steel framing. One model has a flat nosepiece for general fastening while a second has a precision-placement nosepiece for use with framing hardware. When used for steel framing, the Quik Drive is too long to fit sideways into joist bays, but it's ideal for use along the ledger side of the deck where access is unrestricted. Simpson Strong-Tie, 800.999.5099, [strongtie.com](http://strongtie.com)



### Cordless Palm Nailer

Milwaukee's M12 Palm Nailer gets surprising performance out of its 12-volt lithium batteries, quickly setting fasteners in cramped quarters where larger tools won't fit. The nailer isn't quite as fast as a single-blow pneumatic gun, but users find the M12 just as fast and powerful as a pneumatic palm nailer. And you'll be able to move quickly around the jobsite because you're not dragging an air hose with you. Milwaukee Electric Tool Corp., 800.729.3878, [milwaukeetool.com](http://milwaukeetool.com)



### Sturdy Demolition Tool

The Deck Demon is simple to use: Rest the head of the deck-specific demolition tool on a single or double joist and apply pressure upward directly under the deck board's connection to the joist. The effort required to pop the board off depends on the type of decking being removed, its thickness, and the fasteners used to install it. The all-steel construction is akin to that of a traditional crowbar, except for the welds that attach the head to the shaft. As a result, the shaft applies 100% of the power and leverage to the task at hand, instead of flexing. Angel-Guard Products, 800.325.4832, [angelguardproducts.com](http://angelguardproducts.com)



### Auto Fastener

The SuperDrive automated fastening system is designed for professionals who drive screws for a living. It handles screws from 1 1/4 to 3 inches long, including Grabber's Barracuda screws for composite and PVC decking. You won't be on your knees driving screws, and you won't be handling fasteners one at a time. The SuperDrive takes collated screws and drives them without jams. There are a variety of models; complete kits come with a screw gun, an extension with a handle, and a nosepiece. Grabber Construction Products, 800.477.8876, [grabberman.com](http://grabberman.com)