

How to use an Adjustable (Crescent) Wrench, Pipe Wrench and Tongue & Groove (Channel Locks) Wrenches

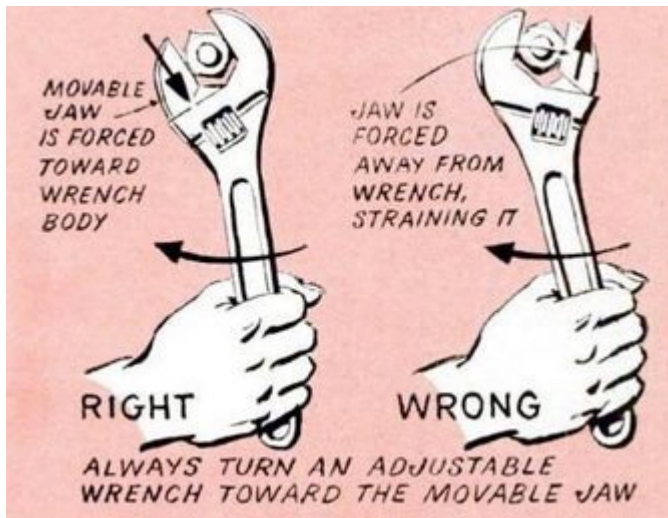


My Grandfather is a really interesting guy. He grew up working in the Pennsylvania coal mines starting at the age of 7 or 8 and then worked as well driller, and a plumber, also went to HVAC school, and did some gas work worked a while as an electrician, welder, diver and ended up as an aircraft salvage man.

One of his favorite phrases is to call adjustable wrenches and channel locks (slip groove or tongue and groove pliers) “**shoemakers tools**”. I literally have no idea WHY he would call them that, or why he thought it was so funny to call them that but he certainly didn't mean it as a compliment.

It is usually best to use a properly sized socket or wrench to

do a job rather than reaching for a “multi-purpose” wrench, but every tool has a purpose and if you are going to use a tool it’s best to use it properly. I know this is basic, but we cant assume everyone has a grandpa like mine.



Pull Don't Push (When You Can)

Whenever possible orient the wrench so that you are pulling rather than pushing (Yes, I know I'm awkwardly pushing in the GIF below) . This is a much more smooth and natural motion and you will be able to apply more force.



Pipe Wrenches are Special

A pipe wrench is only for working with pipe, NOT nuts, and bolts. I know this should be obvious but I worked with a guy once who treated a pipe wrench like a regular wrench and left a lot of damaged bolt heads in his wake.

A pipe wrench has sharp, angled teeth that will grip in one direction and release in the other direction. Open the jaw wide enough that the pipe sits in about the center of the pipe wrench unlike a typical where the object to be turned sits all the way in the back of the jaws.

Keep in mind that a pipe wrench will leave marring on the surface of the pipe, if you don't want it to be damaged you can use a leather (or even rubber) strap around the pipe to protect it before using the wrench. A leather belt can do the trick.

Loosen



Loosen



Turn the Wrench Toward the Bottom Jaw

Maybe there is an exception to the rule, but not in any of my wrenches. If you turn the wrench toward the bottom jaw they will grip properly and be less likely to slip. In order to tighten vs. loosen just flip the wrench over and turn the opposite direction

Righty Tighty is Annoying

Half my childhood was HAUNTED by the phrase righty tighty, lefty loosey. IT IS ROUND! there is no right or left unless it is a reference to another direction (the top). It's better said as clockwise tighty... and yes, I know that doesn't sound cool.

– Bryan