

## Recycling

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Mary's car is in the shop just now. We're prepping for a road trip, our first of the Covid era, and we wanted to make sure the brakes and fluids are up to snuff. We expected maybe a few hundred dollars spent on an overnight touchup. After all, we had a new transmission dropped in just a couple years ago and we're pretty good about keeping up with stuff like oil and filter changes.

You know where this is going, right? Yeah, most of a week and just under 5 grand. Enough to make you wonder why we didn't just throw in the towel and get a new car.

The thing is, for 5 grand we will have a car that will last us at least another 5 years. A thousand per year is wa-a-a-ay less than we would pay for a new or lightly used replacement. And besides, we truly enjoy this vehicle. It's Mary's 'always car' and our family primary and it fits us. Interior is nearly pristine, except for the occasional 'stuff' invasion and we already have a cartop carrier that fits it for if and when we get back to serious road tripping.

And, not to start a whole enviro rant, but we do find value in recycling. We view this repair, expensive as it is, as a sort of recycling event.

Our other vehicle, my primary is a 1997 pickup truck with a bed liner and kayak racks. We don't drive it more than once every couple weeks as a rule, but it runs well and we're used to it and when we need a half yard of topsoil or a few sheets of plywood, it's just the thing. But truth to tell, we're hearing noises. So, we'll have it in to the mechanic soon for a going over and we could end up with a choice to make. But for now, it's our second vehicle.

Most of the shelving and hangers we've used moving into this house came from our former house. Some of it, from two houses past. Our electric skillet is all dinged up but it still works, it's not a fire hazard so it's still the go-to implement for making taco filling.

I have some new tools in my shop. After the burglary cleaned me out a few years back, I replaced some pieces with new and frequently upgraded versions. My physical challenges due to both age and that epic ladder fall a few years back have meant some new purchases of equipment that allow me to continue woodworking. So, confession: if you look at my power equipment, much of it is new.

But turn around and look at my tool wall and you behold a pretty fair history of hand tool design over the last 200 years or so. Yes, my mortise chisels are pretty new and I have one really nice, recently purchased bench plane. But for the rest - including saws, bench chisels, gouges, files and rasps, bench planes, molding and combination planes - they're more old than new.

I buy old tools when I can and restore them to usefulness. Not because I'm a collector; I'm not. Don't have and don't care to have that elusive Stanley #1 or a complete engraved set of, well, anything. I buy tools I find useful and tune them up to make the work we do together accurate, efficient and pleasant. The average age of all my hand tools, taken together, is at least pre-war. Even our basic carpenter's hammers, Mary's and mine, are both at least 30 years old.

Our tools, automotive or otherwise, are items of utility. And through repeated use over time, they become trusted friends, the look and feel of which we find familiar, even reassuring. At our ages, that counts for something.