

Improved Huntsman Breech Plug Tool

Get rid of that old knuckle-buster and start living!



I decided to make an improved breechplug tool based on ideas from other members of the H&R 1871 Talk board, but without the welding or machining...

First, I went to my local Sears. Their hardware department had the 12 pt, 21mm socket for about \$6.00, and a 3/8" to 1/2" ratchet adapter for around \$3.50. I took the tool with me to check the fit between a 21 and 22mm socket. It slid into the 21mm so tight, I had to knock it out through the drive hole with a wooden dowel when I got home.

I stopped by the local AutoZone as well, and bought the stubby 3/8" ratchet and a pack of JB Weld Kwik. Total for all parts was about \$20.00.

I had to find something to set the plug tool out about 3/16" to 1/4" from the socket to allow it to reach into the breech recess. Brands of sockets have different depths, but the breech plug tool must stick out from the socket a bit to work. I put the 3/8 to 1/2" adapter in the drive hole, turned the socket so the opening was up and the adapter was down and put a 5/16" nut down into the socket as a spacer. To give the JB Weld something to bite onto, I roughed up the sides of the breech plug tool with some 100 grit sandpaper in a crosshatch pattern. Finally I degreased the parts and mixed up the JB Weld according to the package instructions.

Then I filled the socket with the JB Weld and tapped the plug tool in until it hit the nut/spacer. The finishing touch was to wipe off the extra JB Weld with some paper towels.

Let the assembly cure overnight (or longer) before using. The second pix shows how the JB Weld filled the gaps in the 12 pt socket against the plug tool.

Sears didn't have the JB Weld and their stubby ratchet was \$20.00; AutoZone had the 3/8 to 1/2" adapter as well, but their 21mm socket was a 6 pt - not nearly as gripping for this job. Since doing this job, I have found that Lowe's had all the supplies and Home Depot didn't have the socket. I have had one person tell me that they had found a 12 pt, 21mm socket with a 3/8" drive hole, so they didn't need the adapter - so much the better.

Some last insights; at home it is best to use a full-sized ratchet to pull the plug - leverage is your friend. Don't waste your money on the breech plug greases from T/C, Knight etc. - they don't work well for the huntsman. Go to an auto parts store and get either the Permatex Anti-Seize Lubricant or Copper Anti-Seize Lubricant. These are made to allow removal of O2 sensors and spark plugs after 50,000 miles in a hot engine and protect up to 1600 to 1800 degrees. Since using them I can pull the plug easily while the barrel is still on the frame after 10-15 range shots.

- perklo