

Tool Handle Modifications for Farmers and Ranchers with Arthritis

Everyone, including farmers, ranchers, and farmworkers cope with arthritis and can benefit from improved hand tools. Farmers and ranchers with decreased grip strength can benefit from using built-up handles on their hand tools.

Building up the handles on your tools is one easy practical solution to help decrease vibration and facilitate a better grip. But, remember no one hand tool is perfect for every user and should be taken into consideration when modifying tool handles. Here are some practical solutions to building up your tool handles:

- Add FOAM RUBBER to the handles to reduce the grip torsion.
- Wrap a WASHCLOTH around the handle and secure it with tape.
- Wrap SELF-ADHESIVE ACE BANDAGE around the handle until desired thickness is achieved. The Ace Bandage is reusable, can be purchased at pharmacies and other stores, and costs less than \$7.00 per roll.
- Wrap CRAFT FOAM around the handle and secure it with tape. Craft foam is typically sold in 8"x11" sheets in a variety of colors. Craft foam can be purchased at craft stores for less than \$1.00 per sheet.
- Wrap pieces of RUBBER HOSE around the handle and secure it with tape. An old rubber hose is an item that can be found around the house, purchased at a garage sale, or purchased new at a hardware store.
- Wrap ELASTACK SPIRO-WRAP around the handle. Elastack Spiro-Wrap is a reusable elastic band ¼" thick by 6" in length that provides cushioning and suction adherence to handles. It can be purchased from Sammons Preston Rolyan 1 for \$5.95.
- Wrap ELASTACK TAPE around the handle. Elastack Tape can be wrapped to form any size handle and is not reusable. It can be purchased in rolls that are (0.8" wide x 0.0045" thick x 2' long) from Sammons Preston Rolyan 1 for \$4.95 per roll.
- Form a grip with DYNA-FORM-IT, a putty-like material that can be manipulated and formed into any shape. Dries in 24 hours. Available from Sammons Preston Rolyan 1 for \$13.95 per 4 oz. can.