

Tool Review

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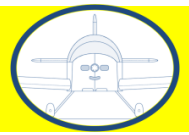
May 23, 2013

Another indispensable set of tools in my shop, for working on metal aircraft, are my angle die grinder and grinding pads. This small, cheap, and portable, setup can be used for many different tasks. However, I mostly use this tool combined with a 2 or 3 inch pad and a Scotch Brite Roloc disc. I routinely use this setup to grind away excess aluminum material from the Sonex kits parts.



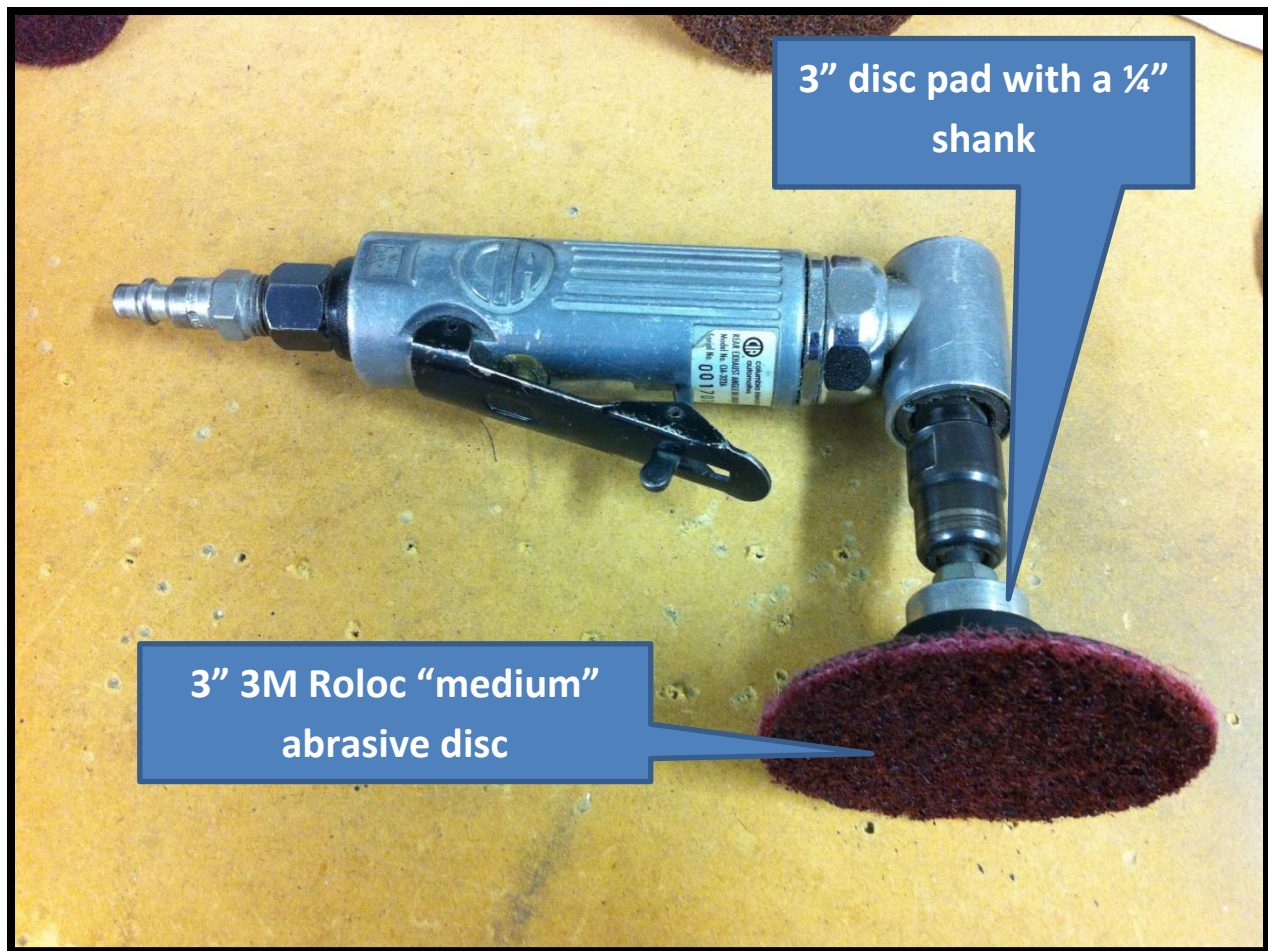
By purchasing this setup (currently \$14.00 for the angle grinder at Harbor Freight), I have avoided buying and mounting a bench grinder in my shop. I can easily use the angle grinder anywhere in my shop where the air hose will reach.

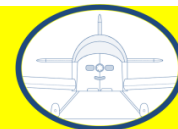
<http://www.harborfreight.com/air-angle-die-grinder-32046.html>



In order to use the angle grinder with the Scotch Brite Roloc abrasive pads, you'll need to obtain a disc pad assembly. I have two sizes that I commonly use: 2" and 3". These two sizes work well for removing aluminum, cleaning scratched and damaged surfaces, as well as smoothing phenolic material after you've run it through the band saw. You can obtain these pad assemblies at Harbor Freight or at most hardware and automotive stores.

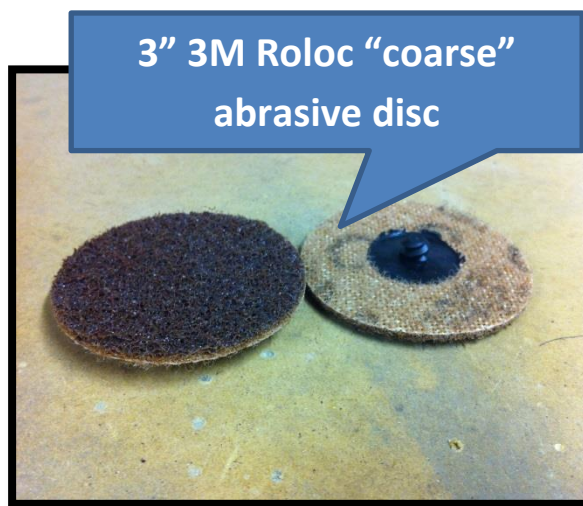
<http://www.harborfreight.com/3-inch-disc-holder-with-1-4-quarter-inch-shank-99560.html>





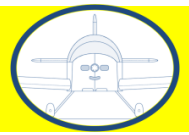
The best place I've found to purchase a box of disc pads is from ToolTopia.com. Your results may vary, but I found their selection to be good, prices to be reasonable, and I received free shipping with my order of more than \$99. My suggestion is to buy the 3M brand. I found that the cheaper versions at Harbor Freight and other retailers don't hold up nearly as long as the 3M line of pads.

<http://www.tooldtopia.com/search.aspx?find=roloc+disc&manufacturer=881&page=2>



Before and after shots when smoothing the laser cut edges of the Sonex kit parts.





Tip: When you purchase an angle grinder, it will come with a set of metal wrenches that are used to tighten and release various attachments. Tie these two wrenches together with a lanyard so that they do not run away!



Note: Operating this type of pneumatic angle grinder will quickly use a large volume of air from your compressor tank. Smaller air compressors (30 gallons or less) will run almost consistently when using this tool at high speeds for prolonged periods of time.