When considering the tools needed for a job, people immediately think of items such as hammers, nails, screwdrivers, drills, wrenches – typical tools required, depending on the nature of the job. However, an often overlooked accessory that can be immensely time-saving and convenient is the tool belt. A tool belt keeps the user organized and keeps necessary equipment at arm’s reach, saving time and making any job easier. However, another feature of the tool belt that isn’t often considered is the added safety it brings to a job. Whether climbing a ladder, working with sharp or hot equipment or on a hot surface, or working high above the ground, wearing a tool belt is a huge safety feature. Tool belts free up the user’s hands and prevent awkward searching for a tool during a dangerous job.

Choosing a tool belt, just like choosing any other tool for the job, begins with considering the type of work you will be doing. What kind of tools will the job require? How many items will you need your tool belt to safely hold? How often will the tool belt be used (important when considering the durability of the tool belt)? Will the job require you to climb ladders or work at great heights?

Several factors should be taken into account when researching tool belts. An important factor for some users is the waist size the belt will accommodate. You need to ensure the belt will fit, especially if ordering online. Another factor is durability – how long will the tool belt last? Material used to create the tool belt can factor into durability. However, the material is also important when considering the weight of the tool belt. More durable material often weighs more. When wearing the tool belt all day and perhaps even while climbing ladders, a heavy tool belt can bring about user fatigue more quickly than one made of a lighter material. Of course, an essential feature are the types and sizes of tools it will hold. You must ensure the tool belt will hold the most common types of tools your job requires.

Let’s take a look at five of the best tool belts on the market today...

Custom Leathercraft IP489X Suede Nail and Tool Bag with Poly Web Belt

The Custom Leathercraft IP489X is one of the most popular tool belts available today. With a pouch made of heavy duty suede leather and a lighter weight poly web belt, it combines durability and lighter weight. This belt fits waists sized 29 inches to 46 inches and weighs less than one pound. The three pocket belt also features a separate integrated hammer holder and an integrated tape measure holder to fit those two necessities seamlessly onto the belt without using valuable pocket space.

The pouch is somewhat limited in space at only 13 inches by 11 inches and only three pockets. One pocket being smaller to accommodate nails, screws, pencils, or pliers only (or items of a similar size). That leaves only 2 other pockets available for tools. This belt is a better choice for jobs that do not require a great number of tools at hand. Featuring a quick release buckle, this belt is a good choice for someone who needs a smaller, lighter weight belt that is still durable. Perfect for jobs where you only need to keep a few items close at hand for convenience.

Custom Leathercraft 1614, 23 Pocket, Heavy Duty Framer’s 5-Piece Comfort Lift Combo Tool Belt System

The Custom Leathercraft 1614 Framer Rig is almost at the opposite end of the spectrum from the previous Custom Leathercraft belt we discussed. This belt has every feature and convenience imaginable and is made to handle a huge number of tools. Fitting waist sizes from 29 inches to 46 inches, the 1614 weighs almost 5 pounds.
Made of double layered 600D polyester fabric for durability, it also features padded suspenders that go over the shoulders to reduce strain on the back and hips, to distribute weight evenly, and to assist in holding the many tools it can accommodate. Boasting 2 hammer holders and an integrated tape measure clip, the belt also has 6 large pockets and 13 additional sleeves to hold a variety of tools. One of the great features of the pockets on this belt is the Sta Open pocket design that holds pockets open, keeping tools at easy reach. Sleeves are also available for a pry bar, a carpenter’s square, and a combination square. Nails and screws are at fingertip's reach with the large gusset pocket design.

The 1614 is an excellent, full service choice for anyone who requires truly hands-free transport of a large number of tools.

Ergodyne Arsenal 5706 13-Pocket Waist Apron

The Ergodyne Arsenal 5706 is made of gray cotton duck fabric which is a strong woven canvas that is also lightweight and also has a reflective trim for added safety at night. The Ergodyne belt weighs only eight ounces and accommodates a wide range of waist sizes from 28 inches to 52 inches. It offers five large pockets for bigger tools or even your cell phone and eight smaller pockets for pens, pencils, nails, and small tools. Two hammer loops allows you to keep two different sizes or types at hand’s reach.

This item is also available in a 16 pocket apron design that has 3 additional chest pockets. The apron design also reduces strain on the lower back as it is tied around the neck to distribute weight further.

Bucket Boss 80100 Duck Wear Super Waist Apron

The Bucket Boss 80100 weighs in at a 18 ounces and is made of highly durable duck wear canvas that is reinforced with bar tacked seams. This belt accommodates a massive range of waists: 27 inches to 54 inches and has a quick release belt for emergency situations. The Bucket Boss 80100 has 13 pockets to hold tools plus 2 web loops to hold hammers. The apron portion of the belt is 23 inches by 9.5 inches.

This belt is definitely lightweight, but with the thin belt holding up the apron portion, it might struggle with heavier or a greater number of tools.

MagnoGrip 002-382 12-Pocket Magnetic Carpenter's Tool Belt

The MagnoGrip 002-382 is available in either red or black and has a very unique feature not seen in many belts. The MagnoGrip is designed with magnetic pockets to prevent spillage and provide stability quick access to tools, nails, screws, drill bits, and other items. In addition, it has an exterior magnet where items can be placed for extremely quick access or short term placement – far better than placing a nail or a screw on the ground and trying to find it again!

This belt is made with 1680D ballistic polyester with stress points reinforced with rivets for increased durability. Twelve pockets are available on the belt with the main pockets remaining open for constant access. This durable belt weighs about two pounds and the tool holding portion is 23 inches long by 8 inches high.