

Ask Jon Eakes

A draft free mail slot - a counter top garbage trap - a central vac sweep door:</p> Three of the most useful SLOTS you have ever seen.

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Slots are simply small passageways through something. In this segment we looked at three very nifty Slots -- all completely different.

THE INSULATED MAIL SLOT

How about a through the door mail slot that does not give you cold drafts?

The Draft Dodger has two gasketed and spring loaded doors, one on each side of the door to really keep out the cold air.

It even has brushes to block the cold air if someone left a letter in the middle of the slot rather than pushing it all the way through. And the double doors helps increase security for the door, you can't reach through from the outside easily.

You can purchase this great device from the Insulated Draft Dodger Mail-Slot Store.

COUNTER TOP GARBAGE CHUTE

The counter top butcher block is cut into the counter. A small frame under the counter holds it in place and at the right height.

Place a garbage can under this "slot" and all you have to do is tilt up the board and all the scrap slides into the garbage. Nothing falls on the floor. This is a great idea for salvaging a counter top where you have burned the laminate. Cut out the burn and install this cutting board. You could even just put a garbage tray on a shelf below the slot to maintain storage space.

BASEBOARD VACUUM DOOR

Central vacuum cleaners are great but there are times when it is just too much trouble to haul out that long hose to pick up a spill in the kitchen.

Install this "VacuSweep" trap door, compatible with all models of central vacs, and use your old fashioned broom to sweep the junk right into the central vac.

Lift the lever with your toe, it opens the slot and activates the vacuum cleaner. Sweep in the general direction of the Vac Sweep and it sucks up whatever is thrown it's way. Push on the lid with your toe and it closes the slot and shuts down the machine.

TIPS FOR CUTTING SLOTS

When you are cutting slots there are some tips to make the job easier. If your slot will show, that is there is no flange to cover the edges like with the counter top butcher block, you will need to drill your blade holes well inside of the slot outline and then go back with the jig saw and clean out the corners square after you cut the slot. However, if you have a flange, like on both the Vac Sweep and the Draft Dodger, drill the holes centred right at the corners of the slot. This will actually give you clearance for the corners of the insert as well as make the cutting job quicker and easier.

When cutting on a surface that you do not want to scratch, cut out a piece of construction paper slightly larger than the slot. Place this over the work and have the jig saw ride on this protective covering. You will have no scratch marks on that newly painted door.

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