

Redline Engineering Tire Changing Stand

by Mark Barnes

WITH DEALERS ROUTINELY charging \$25-\$40 for tire changes, I've saved big bucks over the years by doing it myself. But let's be honest, tire changing can also be a major pain, figuratively and often literally. Compared to a shop's expensive hydraulic tire machines, simple hand tools can leave a lot to be desired. One problem is holding the wheel still while you lever with the tire irons. Another is the awkwardness of doing everything on the floor while you're squatting or bending over. And you have to be very careful to keep those precious brake rotors from getting bent in the process.

Using the new tire as a support platform while you pry off the old one (and vice-versa) helps keep the rotors safe, but does little to stabilize the work or save your knees. After half an hour of sweaty groaning and cursing, those shop charges can start to look pretty reasonable.

Well, don't pay them just yet. Consider Redline Engineering's Tire Changing Stand. This rugged, powder-coated steel unit solves both problems. Any normalized dirt or street wheel is accommodated, work can be done without any back strain, and when you need a third hand to hold down one tire iron as you work the



Simple but very effective: The stand adjusts the wheel height between 28"-36" off the floor; the padded ring supports the spokes, the drop center protects the brake rotors and the axle support in the center keeps things steady while you lever the rubber on and off.

next two, the lowest setting makes it easy to hook a leg over the iron that would otherwise be hard to secure.

The stand itself is reasonably stable on four wide-spread legs. However, it's sometimes necessary to step on one of the legs and use your weight to hold it down as you apply pressure above. For maximum stability, the legs are pre-drilled for bolting to the floor, though this is certainly not required.

Tip: The work will be much easier if your tires are warm, so leave them in the sun or near a heat source before starting.

We found the Redline Tire-Changing Stand to be well worth its \$99.50 price, and it paid for itself with several tire changes. We've seen what looks to be identical stands available from other vendors, with widely varying price-tags (up to \$150). The only advantage we could see to paying more was gaining a choice of color. (Redline offers only blue.) Ours also came with an adapter that allows the stand to accommodate rims as small as 10" in diameter; some of the others didn't.

Redline Engineering—1849 Yellow Dog Rd; Senatobia, MS 38668; 901-351-4764; www.redlinestands.com



My handy JC Whitney bead breaker works on both car and bike tires (use blocks).



A warm tire makes it easier, but be sure to use a bead lubricant like soapy water.



Long tire irons give better leverage, and rim protectors will prevent scratches.



Once the first bead is released, it's fairly easy to get the next one free. The rim's drop center provides extra clearance.



Reinstall by pushing the lower bead over the rim. Check directional arrows and align painted dots with the valve stem.



With the final bites of your tire irons, the tire popping onto the rim will be your reward. That, and the money you saved!