

Using Nail Sets with Finishing Nails

Finishing nails are often used for putting finishing touches on trim or molding. Sunken into the surface, the holes they create are often filled in with putty and painted over. These nails have small heads, so you'll need a nail set to drive them into the surface. Follow these steps:

- Drive the nail in until it's almost flush with the surface. Use the technique described in Hadley's workshop on using hand tools. Be careful when lining up the face of the hammer, as the head of the nail is so small.
- Use a nail set that's the same size or slightly smaller than the head of the finishing nail you're using.
- Put the tapered end of the nail set on the head of the nail.
- Make sure the nail set is straight up and down. To do this, hold it between your thumb and index finger. Put your first three fingers along the length of the nail set, with your index finger against the head. Put your thumb against the underside of the head.
- Use your index finger and thumb to center the face of the hammer on the head of the nail set.
- Give two sharp strikes with the hammer.
- Check the position of the nail. If the head isn't exposed and is the desired depth, the nail is properly set.
- Repeat this process if the nail is not at the desired depth.