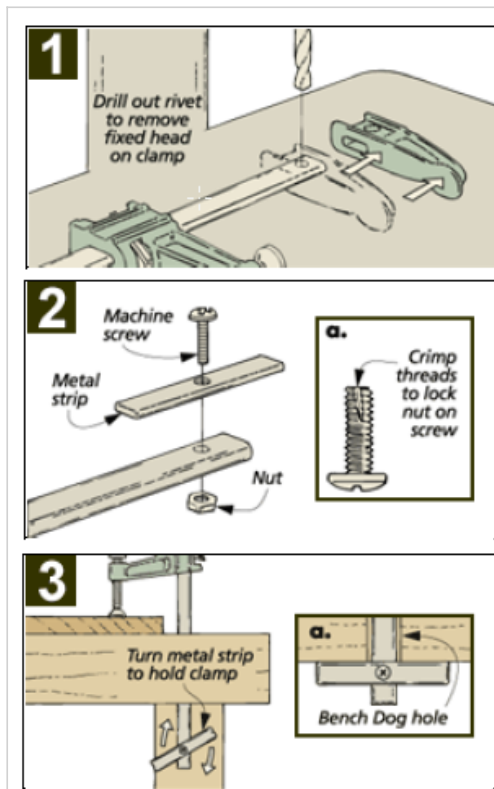


Bench Hold-fast



It seems to me that bench hold-fasts are a lot less common these days than they used to be. That's too bad – they're really a great way to secure boards to a workbench. But don't take my word for it. If your bench has holes for bench dogs, you can build one for yourself. All you need is a common bar clamp, a scrap piece of bar stock, and a few minutes.



To make a hold-fast, first remove the fixed jaw from the clamp by drilling out the rivet that holds the jaw to the clamp bar, as you can see in Figure 1. Next, take a small metal strip and fasten it to the bar with a machine screw and nut, as shown in Figure 2. Then to complete the hold-fast, you can “lock” the nut in place by crimping the threads of the screw at the end (Figure 2a).

To use the hold-fast, just swivel the metal strip so it's parallel to the bar and slip it through a dog hole in the workbench. Then swivel the strip back to hold the clamp, as shown in Figure 3a. I store my hold-fast under the workbench so I don't confuse it with a regular bar clamp and so it's handy when I need it.

