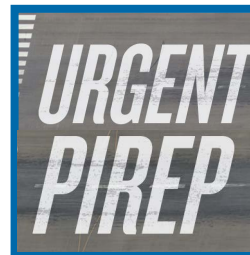




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THINGS IN MY HANGAR YOU MIGHT NOT KNOW YOU WANTED IN YOURS

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By Jason Blair, ATP, CFI-I, MEI-I, FAA Designated Pilot Examiner, AGI

Hangars seem to collect “stuff,” some of it useful for aviation, much of it in many cases just things we needed to put somewhere and had extra room in the hangar. But what about the things that might be useful for your aviation-related activities? Some things we keep in hangars are more commonly recognized, but a few I have collected over my years are probably a little less obvious and present in fewer hangars.

As I was looking around my hangar the other day, that thought struck me, and I thought it might be interesting to share with other aircraft owners a few things from my hangar that they might want to add to their own.



Clip-On Shop Light

It's cheap, it's mobile, you can clip it on a cowl, a strut, inside the plane on the dash or yoke, and it gets you stable light when you need to work or find something you dropped. Available from pretty much any home improvement store, these basic lights coupled with an extension cord have been highly useful more times than I can count in my hangar. One upgrade I always make? Put an LED light bulb in them instead of an incandescent. They will continue to work through more instances of dropping the light. (Personal experience showing through here.)

Single Step Stool

Just reaching the top of cowlings, a nav light to change a bulb (on a high-wing aircraft), or to clean the upper part of the fuselage requires just enough extra step much of the time for which a ladder would be overkill. Check your local hardware store, and you can get one of these, most of the time, for under \$20.00. I prefer ones without wheels, for obvious reasons.



Rolling Storage Cart

Running back and forth in the hangar for parts, tools, or cleaning supplies as you work around your aircraft gets tedious. Bring those supplies with you with a rolling storage cart! I have two in my hangar. I roll them around, I store parts on them when we are working on stuff, I keep tools in the bottom of them, and I don't have to run back and forth to the table in the corner. It's partially an organizational thing, partially convenience, and it is just good money spent. I got mine delivered from an online store, for less than \$100 per cart. A little shopping around might find them locally, or even cheaper, but it was an easy solution for me. It may be one of the more costly items on this list, but in the grand scheme of things, it has been well worth it to me.



Rolling Creeper

Crawling under the plane to clean the belly, pull inspection panels, or just find that screw you dropped can be hard on the knees, the back, and your head when you get up too quickly. I find that keeping a rolling creeper in the hangar makes all of these things just a little bit easier and more convenient. These are easily found at your local hardware chain, and even some auto supply stores. Yeah, online stores will deliver them also. Expect to spend \$50-70 unless you want to upgrade to the deluxe model, which you can certainly do. There are lots of options for creepers. Mine is pretty basic and gets the job done.



Yoga Mat

One of my personal favorites is available from any sports store. Large department stores now carry them, or it is possibly just lying around your house already. An extra thick yoga mat can be laid down on the floor while you are working, over a hot engine while you check something, put on an aircraft wing to protect it or to lay tools on without having them slip off, or any number of other creative uses. Oh, you could put it on that rolling creeper I mentioned above also to make laying down softer as you clean that belly also. I honestly can't imagine not having one in my hangar ever again! 15-20 dollars will easily get you one.



There are certainly more common things people keep in their hangars; hopefully, you find these tips a little less common and helpful. If you already had them all in your hangar, you are either ahead of the game or have been snooping around where I keep my plane!

Jason Blair is an active single- and multi-engine instructor and an FAA Designated Pilot Examiner with over 5,000 hours total time and over 3,000 hours instruction given and has flown over 100 different makes and models of general aviation aircraft. In his role as Examiner, over 1,500 pilot certificates have been issued. He has and continues to work for and with multiple aviation associations that promote training and general aviation. He also consults on aviation training and regulatory efforts for the general aviation industry. Jason Blair has published works in many aviation publications, a full listing of which can be found at www.jasonblair.net.