

3rd Hand Device



Turn This. . . .
Harbor Freight
Item #5645
\$12.99

Into This!



3rd Hand Device

- **Here's a handy tool for soldering SMT parts onto a printed circuit board. It holds SMT parts securely to the board while soldering. In addition, the weight of the tool is such that you will no longer have to chase your pc board around the work bench while you are soldering.**

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- **Harbor Freight Tools sells a device they call a 'Magnetic Arm' for \$12.99. With a couple of minor modifications it becomes a 'Third Hand' for securing SMT devices during the soldering process.**

I did not use the magnetic feature of the tool; instead I drilled and tapped the base and mounted it to a piece of scrap oak board (6" X 11" X 3/4") using countersunk flathead 8-32 screws.

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- **I then snipped 5 1/2" off of the top end of an old mobile whip stinger that was no longer in service (a trip to the hobby shop is in order if you don't have a 'spare' stinger) .**

At Home Depot, I found a hex head metric bolt that would screw into the 'chuck' at the end of the arm. I drilled a hole that was slightly larger than the diameter of the stinger material down the center of the entire length of the 3/4" bolt.

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- **I filed the end of the stinger so that it would have a nice flat surface where it contacts the SMT component; coated the other end of the stinger with some JB Weld epoxy, and inserted it into the bolt to dry.**

I then fastened a small halogen light fixture to the arm using plastic cable clamps.

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