Which Wrench to Use?

Look at the fastener first. The right wrench follows from its shape.

Six-sided outside, six-sided hole, star-shaped hole, or round head: each has its own answer.

Nuts and bolts with six-sided heads

Any of these four wrenches turns them. Pick by the space you have and how fast you want to work.





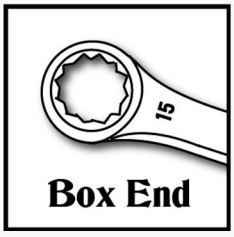




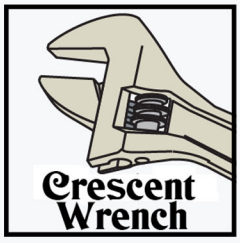


Reach for one of these









Open End

Slips on from the side. Handy when you can't get over the top of the fastener.

Box End

Wraps all the way around the fastener for a firmer grip.

Socket

Fits on a ratchet, which makes repeated turns fast.

Crescent

Adjusts to many sizes. Snug the jaw tight on the fastener first.

Socket Head Cap Screw

Six-sided hole in the head





Hex Key

The L-shaped key slides into the six-sided hole.

Torx-Head Screw

Star-shaped hole in the head





Torx Bit

Only a Torx bit fits the star. A hex key will not.



Trick Question: the Carriage Bolt

The head is round, so there is nothing to grip. Hold the bolt steady and turn the hex nut on the other end instead.

The quick rule

- Six-sided outside: open end, box end, socket, or crescent
- Six-sided hole: hex key
- Star-shaped hole: Torx bit
- Round head: turn the nut instead

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