

## **OPTIONS**

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OK, we call them "alternates", but still, aren't options really neat? The choice to do, or not do; the choice of one from among many--such power in hand is awesome!

Well, yeah, in some instances. On the "option" play in football, when the quarterback is about to be smeared into a grease spot on the turf, he can pitch out and let the running back take the hit. Good option!!! (Hope they are good friends!). Which road to take at the unmarked fork in the roads is obvious--go the way she tells you to go!!! As in really NO option!

In design and construction, we have options/alternates galore--so many that the minds swims, vacillates and usually picks the most conservative solution (much like the QB pitching out in football). In fact, we may have too darn many options. We see this in the astute discussion on [www.4specs.com](http://www.4specs.com) for example, where various contributors exercise their options (as "opinions", standard operations or results of in-depth investigations) in solving the many and varied situations that arise.

The problem is, how can we come to know at least the greater part of all these options? The secret is two-fold--wide, in-depth construction knowledge (as in what options are available that produce the desired results) and broad, grind-it-out experience (to know which will work the best for the circumstances--oh, and what will not work!). We see and discuss all these in direct relationship to what we have run-upon, experienced, tripped over, or bled for! We learn from mistakes (hopefully, and with cooperative contractors and owners) which allows us to store away more options, for future reference if needed.

That, friends, puts our brains at far higher value than the few pints of blood, massive amount of water, and the traces of other chemicals we each are made of. Maybe we should start a Specs Writers Brain Transplant Bank, where our families could "trade" our cranium occupant in, for cash (or in these times, other valuables). Now think--how else is all this "good stuff" we've gleaned, gathered, received by sharing and "stolen" going to be put to good use, after.....

Can't waste all this, and simply discard it! Just look at the wonderful interfaces and discussions we have and the insight provided by one, countered by another, until no firm conclusion comes out, but all come by a trove or possibilities, and.....yes, more options! Maybe we all should have an operation (like a pacemaker) to implant a recorder so there is automatic recording of our "optional" thoughts-- uh, keep on the topic, folks, we don't need biases, adverse comments, spousal arguments, etc.--somehow just record the good technical "stuff".

One place we really have NO option is how we can transfer, give-to, provide for and otherwise give-over what we have and know as options to those following us. Would be a shame to lose all that we've gained, and have to start "re-inventing the wheel" over again! Sure there are new materials, devices, equipment and techniques to be learned, but then much remains the same as to application, interfacing, timing, and alternative construction details, etc. Here the implanted recorder (noted above) could be a most wonderful resource.

But in the meantime, until that happens, be sure you keep getting with and giving over to those emerging professionals and those of similar ilk, so they (like we as youngsters) have good resources, a good invaluable base of sound and flexible knowledge to work with. Not a lot being done like this in other venues, so why not us? Better to give than to have all lost and forgotten!