

Testfire

Rebar under the wheel of my Hilux.



HOW TO KILL A LEATHERMAN

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Brand: Leatherman **Model:** Rebar Multi-Tool

Multi-tools have been around for a while now, with varying degrees of quality - ranging from cheap knock-offs that would break if you simply tried to open them, through to those that are built to actually work. Leatherman, along with a few others, are well regarded as being able to produce the real deal when it comes to these sorts of tools.

The new Leatherman Rebar multi-tool looked to be no exception and, according to the maker, comes standard with the strongest pliers they have ever produced. To me the most useful tools on these sorts of devices are always going to be the pliers and the main knife. The pliers need to be able to cut through a reasonable diameter of steel without bending around their own grip hinges, and they need to be able to resist a fair degree of torque applied to the jaws without permanently twisting the body out of shape.

The Rebar is made from premium steel and has replaceable wire cutter blades secured to the jaws with a torx #8 screw. You can take them off and sharpen them with the file on the tool. It was time to see if I could break the tool with just my

hands. With the pliers unfolded the first test I gave it was to simply squeeze the blades together with one hand with as much force as I could. This would have damaged some multi-tools I've handled before, but the Rebar barely flexed. Next I tried two hands, getting the handles to flex quite a bit, but everything returned to normal when I released the pressure. I felt the need to chop some things with it now, so cast about the workshop and found some roll pins and screws etc. The Rebar got through all of them, including a 12.9 grade M3 screw and a 316 stainless M3 cap screw. Unfortunately I couldn't quite get through a hardened M4 bolt with it - close though.

OK, the pliers seemed to work well and were certainly strong, so what else comes in the Rebar's arsenal? Leatherman have chosen a selection of their most popular tools and I think they have chosen well. You get: needle nose pliers, regular pliers, electrical crimper, 420HC knife, 420HC serrated knife, wood/metal file, saw, small screwdriver, large screwdriver, phillips screwdriver, awl with thread loop, ruler (20cm), bottle opener, can opener, wire stripper and lanyard ring



Dealing to a sambar is hard work for any blade, I think because of the sand in the hair, and it did prove tough for the Rebar's small blade, but I got through it OK.

Other features the Rebar has are comfort grip handles that feel great in the hand, even when you are giving the tool everything you've got, plus large cut outs in the handle that make it easier to deploy the tools with gloves on or when your hands are cold.

The tops of the handles are also sloped, which lets them get into tighter spaces than other models.

All the components are made from hardened stainless steel to resist corrosion and wear. The 20cm ruler is engraved into the handles and is metric on one side,



Up Close

Needle nose pliers
Regular pliers

Electrical crimper
Wire stripper

420HC
serrated knife

Saw

420HC knife

Wood/metal file

Ruler
(20cm)

Small
screwdriver

Phillips
screwdriver

Awl with
thread loop

Large
screwdriver

Bottle opener
Can opener

Lanyard ring

and imperial on the other. To get the full length of the ruler the handles need to be opened and pressed together. When measured against a steel rule the Rebar's ruler was accurate to within a millimetre.

I took the Rebar with me on a sambar hunt and used it to gut and dress out a sambar hind, removing both the back steaks and hind legs. Dealing to a sambar is hard work for any blade, I think because of the sand in the hair, and it did prove tough for the Rebar's small blade, but I got through it OK. The blade itself is a good shape for this type of work, being reasonably deep and with a slight drop point. Obviously a larger blade would have been more suited, but it proved the Rebar was capable. An hour or so later, I used the Rebar's blade to get halfway through a sambar spiker before I gave up and switched to my own knife to finish it. Not a bad effort though. On the way out I remembered to find a piece of No.8 wire to see if the pliers would cut it, something that it needed to be able to do in this country. No problem there, it chopped right through.

The Rebar opened and closed smoothly but firmly with no play

in any of the tools. Each tool is well positioned so it can be folded out as easily as possible with a finger or a fingernail. As well as this, each tool is safely locked into its open position with a thumb released safety lock, ensuring nothing can fold back onto unprotected fingers during use. All cutting edges were razor sharp as supplied, including the saw and the file.

CONCLUSION

Just before writing this I was thinking what else I could do to test the Rebar, so I laid it on my concrete driveway in the open position. Then I simply backed over it a few times with my Hilux. The handles were a bit scuffed, but everything still worked fine; it folded up easily and nothing appeared bent or broken.

I like the new Leatherman Rebar, with its strong pliers and solid construction - I can think of a few occasions in the past where it would have come in handy. Leatherman back up their claims with a 25 year warranty, so if you're in the market for a tool of this type that needs to go the distance, it would certainly be worth taking a look at the Rebar. I certainly couldn't kill it. **R&R**