

# Best Hardware Store



Ace Hardware is in 60 countries.

## 1. ACE HARDWARE

Locations throughout Orange County;  
866-290-5334

[www.acehardware.com](http://www.acehardware.com)

- Ace Hardware was founded in Chicago in 1924 by a group of hardware store owners.
- Each store is owned by a retailer who belongs to the Ace cooperative based in Oakbrook, Ill.
- “People come in for lightbulbs, house-cleaning products, gardening supplies, tools and paint,” said Kevin Wagner, manager of Ace Hardware on Adams Avenue, one of two in Huntington Beach. “We get a lot of people here that need new keys, and we make chip keys for vehicles at a much lower price than they can get at dealerships.”

**Why they’re No. 1:** Friendly faces, convenient locations and helpful employees are what Bryan Tapella, spokesman for Ace Hardware, says bring folks to Ace neighborhood hardware stores. “Our format lends itself to shoppers who want to get in and get out,” he said. “They’re individually owned and operated, so owners can tailor their inventory for their location.” Near Boston, one hardware store carries marine products, and in Tucson another carries a wide selection of air conditioners. “Familiarity with shoppers has built trust in the community,” he added. “The goal is to offer everything to everybody.” Employees can offer tips about projects and recommend professionals when homeowners don’t know where to turn.

**Claim to fame:** The key categories at Ace Hardware are small hardware items, paint, lawn and garden equipment, and barbecues, Tapella said. “We’re the destination for paint. We even carry our own paint label, Ace Royal and Ace Royal Finest, which includes Scotchgard, and that’s good when you have kids.” A business is only as good as its team members, he said. And Ace team members take an active in-

terest in the community as members of chambers of commerce, members of service clubs and sponsors of youth sports teams. Ace is international with retailers in 60 countries.

**Fan favorite:** “Just the way it’s supposed to be – experienced help around every corner and inventory from nuts and bolts to gourmet kitchenware. Awesome!” – Gloria Robbins, Fullerton

**Fun fact:** In 2009, J.D. Power and Associates ranked Ace Hardware highest in customer satisfaction among home improvement stores for the third year in a row. That same year, Business Week magazine ranked Ace among its top 10 in “Customer Service Champs.”

– Lois Rothschild

## 2. THE HOME DEPOT

Locations throughout Orange County;  
800-466-3337

[www.homedepot.com](http://www.homedepot.com)

- Home Depot experts can teach inexperienced do-it-yourselfers about power tools, their uses and safety.
- How-to videos can help you install a sink, replace a switch or learn the basics of plumbing.

**Claim to fame:** “Home improvement experts at The Home Depot can help – they sell the most commonly used and vital tools to help homeowners outfit the toolbox for weekend projects, as well as be prepared for those simple repairs that save money,” said Kathryn Gallagher, senior manager in public relations. Home Depot experts know the perfect hardware to handle a wide range of household projects, from hanging a ceiling fan to fixing a toilet to installing blinds, she said. “We’re committed to providing customers with the most innovative and distinctive selection of products, services and solutions at everyday low prices,” she added. “Home Depot’s customers include professional contractors and facility maintenance workers.”

**Fan favorite:** “Best prices and always

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Sat. 9am-2pm

Located at

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Irvine, Ca. 92618

949-279-4550

Check out the event calendar

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