

Hex wrenches, universally known as Allen keys or Allen wrenches, are six-sided manual tools designed to loosen or tighten fasteners with a recessed hexagonal socket.

Originating from the Allen Manufacturing Company in 1910, the terms "hex key" and "Allen wrench" refer to the exact same tool. They are indispensable for assembling furniture, performing bicycle and motorcycle maintenance, and repairing industrial machinery. [

Core Sizing Systems

Hex wrenches are measured by the exact distance across the flat sides of the hexagonal shaft. It is critical to use the precise standard required, as attempting to interchange them will easily strip and permanently damage the fastener head.

- **Metric System:** Measured in millimeters (e.g., 1.5mm, 4mm, 5mm, 10mm). This is the global standard for consumer electronics, most modern vehicles, and European imports.
- **SAE / Imperial System:** Measured in fractional inches (e.g., 1/16", 5/32", 1/4", 3/8"). Primarily used in older machinery, automotive components, and equipment manufactured in the United States. [