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✓ **Your Best Values**

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to Woodworking Tools**

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#90 Fall 2001

Display until
December 31, 2001



A READER'S DIGEST PUBLICATION



Grizzly Industrial®

PURVEYORS OF FINE MACHINERY™

MODEL G1022Z

10" HEAVY-DUTY TABLE SAW WITH CAST IRON WINGS

- * TABLE SIZE W/ EXTENSION WINGS: 27 1/2" x 40 1/2"
- * RAIL DIMENSIONS: 44" x 1 1/2"
- * CUTTING CAPACITY AT 90°: 3 1/4"
- * 1 1/2 H.P., SINGLE-PHASE, 110/220V MOTOR (PRE-WIRED TO 110V)
- * REDESIGNED HEAVY-DUTY RIP FENCE WITH MICRO-ADJUSTMENT KNOB
- * APPROX. SHIPPING WEIGHT: 250 LBS.
- * MAX. RIPING CAPACITY: 48"
- * CUTTING CAPACITY AT 45°: 2 1/2"



INCLUDES
FREE 10" CARBIDE-TIPPED SAW BLADE!

Reg. ~~\$449⁰⁰~~
SALE PRICE
\$395⁰⁰

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MODEL G1023S

10" TILTING ARBOR SUPER HEAVY-DUTY TABLE SAW

- * TABLE SIZE W/ EXTENSION WINGS: 36 1/2" x 27 1/2"
- * CUTTING CAPACITY: 8" LEFT AND 25" RIGHT OF BLADE
- * 3 H.P., SINGLE-PHASE, 220V MOTOR
- * ALL SEALED BALL BEARINGS
- * APPROX. SHIPPING WEIGHT: 360 LBS.

"You won't find a more solid performer than the Grizzly G1023S for under \$1000 - You will never get bogged down cutting with this 3 H.P. animal."

Wood Magazine
November, 2000



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TOOL BUYING GUIDE!
Editor's Choice

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MODEL G1021Z

15" PLANER WITH CABINET STAND

- * 3 H.P., 220V, SINGLE-PHASE MOTOR
- * RATE OF FEED 16 F.P.M. & 20 F.P.M.
- * CUTTERHEAD SPEED: 5000 R.P.M.
- * MAXIMUM CUTTING WIDTH: 14 1/4"
- * MAXIMUM CUTTING HEIGHT: 6 1/4"
- * MAXIMUM CUTTING DEPTH: 1/4"
- * NUMBER OF KNIVES: 3
- * APPROX. SHIPPING WEIGHT: 540 LBS.

INCLUDES
JACK SCREW AND SPRING LOADED KNIFE SETTING!

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MODEL G1182HW

6" X 47" JOINTER WITH HANDWHEELS

- * 1 H.P., SINGLE-PHASE, 110/220V MOTOR (PRE-WIRED TO 110V)
- * HEAVY-DUTY ONE PIECE STEEL STAND W/BUILT IN CHIP CHUTE
- * SUPER HEAVY-DUTY, CENTER-MOUNTED FENCE - POSITIVE STOPS @ 45° & 90°
- * 3 KNIFE BALL BEARING CUTTERHEAD
- * TABLE SIZE: 6" x 47"
- * 1/2" RABBETING CAPACITY
- * APPROX. SHIP. WEIGHT: 215 LBS.



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MODEL G1018

8" X 65" SUPER HEAVY-DUTY JOINTER

- * 1 1/2 H.P., 220V, SINGLE-PHASE MOTOR
- * 3-KNIFE CUTTERHEAD
- * 3-HSS KNIVES ARE 8" x 1/4" x 1" MAX. CUTTING DEPTH: 1/2"
- * MAGNETIC SAFETY SWITCH PROTECTS THE MOTOR AND THE OPERATOR
- * BOTH INFEED AND OUTFEED TABLES ARE FULLY ADJUSTABLE
- * INFEED TABLE HAS RABBETING LEDGE
- * APPROX. SHIP. WEIGHT: 450 LBS.



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MODEL G1035

1 1/2 H.P. SHAPER

- * 2 INTERCHANGEABLE SPINDLES: 1/2" AND 3/4" * 3" SPINDLE TRAVEL
- * HEAVY-DUTY 1 1/2 H.P., 110/220V MOTOR
- * TWO SPINDLE SPEEDS: 7,000 AND 10,000 R.P.M.
- * SPINDLE OPENINGS: 1/4", 3/8", AND 5"
- * PRECISION-GROUND CAST IRON TABLE
- * TABLE SIZE: 20 1/2" x 18"
- * FLOOR-TO-TABLE HEIGHT: 33 1/2"
- * ALL BALL BEARING CONSTRUCTION
- * MAX. CUTTER DIAMETER: 5"
- * APPROX. SHIPPING WEIGHT: 220 LBS.



SHOWN WITH OPTIONAL WING (G1706)

Reg. ~~\$449⁰⁰~~
SALE PRICE
\$395⁰⁰

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MODEL G7297

12" DISC SANDER

- * 1 H.P., 110V, 10 AMP MOTOR * MOTOR SPEED: 1750 R.P.M.
- * LARGE 17 1/2" x 8 1/2" ALUMINUM TABLE TILTS FROM 0° TO 45°
- * SAFETY TOGGLE ON/OFF SWITCH
- * NON-SLIP RUBBER FEET
- * COMPACT AND PORTABLE
- * INCLUDES MITER GAUGE
- * ACCEPTS 12" PSA DISCS
- * APPROX. SHIPPING WEIGHT: 60 LBS.



Reg. ~~\$149⁹⁵~~
SALE PRICE
\$129⁹⁵

MODELS G1183 & G1276

HEAVY-DUTY COMBO SANDERS

6" x 48" BELT - 12" DISC

MITER GAUGE INCLUDED!

- * MOTOR: SINGLE-PHASE, 1 H.P., IN 3,450 OR 1,725 R.P.M.
- * TABLE SIZE FOR BELT: 7" x 12 1/2" * TABLE SIZE FOR DISC: 7" x 16 1/2"
- * 3" DUST PORT * BASE MEASURES: 16 1/2" x 14"
- * G1183: 5,000 F.P.M. BELT SPEED, 3450 R.P.M.
- * G1276: 2,500 F.P.M. BELT SPEED, 1725 R.P.M.
- * APPROX. SHIPPING WEIGHT: 155 LBS.



G1183 Reg. ~~\$399⁰⁰~~
SALE PRICE
\$379⁹⁵

G1276 Reg. ~~\$439⁰⁰~~
SALE PRICE
\$419⁹⁵

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MODEL G1140

6" x 80" FLOOR MODEL EDGE SANDER

- * 1 1/2 H.P. TEFC, 110V/220V MOTOR * 1725 R.P.M. DIRECT DRIVE
- * 22" x 10 1/2" CAST IRON TABLE * 35" TABLE HEIGHT
- * 60° - 0° - 60° TABLE TILT * BELT SPEED: 1,800 F.P.M.
- * BELT SIZE: 6" x 80" * 90° SANDING BELT TILT
- * 16/8 AMPS
- * PLATEN: 6 1/4" x 29 1/4"
- * END TABLE: 4 1/4" x 8"
- * 4" DUST PORT
- * APPROX. SHIPPING WEIGHT: 250 LBS.



Reg. ~~\$475⁰⁰~~
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AND DETAILED INFORMATION!**



MODEL G1033

20" PLANER

- 3 H.P., 220V, SINGLE-PHASE MOTOR
- CUTTERHEAD SPEED: 4833 R.P.M.
- RATE OF FEED: 16 F.P.M. & 20 F.P.M.
- MAX. CUTTING WIDTH: 20"
- MAX. CUTTING HEIGHT: 8 1/2"
- MAX. CUTTING DEPTH: 1/2"
- NUMBER OF KNIVES: 4 H.S.S.
- ALL BALL BEARING CONSTRUCTION
- APPROX. SHIPPING WEIGHT: 785 LBS.



**4 BLADE
CUTTERHEAD!**

Reg. \$1,295⁰⁰

**SALE PRICE
\$1,195⁰⁰**

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MODEL G1019Z

14" BANDSAW

- 1 H.P., 110/220V, SINGLE PHASE MOTOR
- 2 BLADE SPEEDS: 2500 & 3350 F.P.M.
- MAXIMUM CUTTING WIDTH: 14 1/4"
- MAXIMUM CUTTING HEIGHT: 6 1/2"
- TABLE TILTS: 15° LEFT AND 45° RIGHT
- BLADE LENGTH: 98"
- BLADE WIDTH: 1/4" TO 3/4"
- CAST IRON AND STEEL CONSTRUCTION
- INCLUDES 1/2" BLADE, FENCE AND MITER GAUGE
- COMING WITH 1/2" BLADE
- OVERALL SIZE: 66"H x 26"W x 22"D
- APPROX. SHIPPING WEIGHT: 165 LBS.



Reg. \$335⁰⁰

**SALE PRICE
\$310⁰⁰**

\$48 SHIPPING
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MODEL G1073

16" BANDSAW

- 2 H.P., 110/220V, (PREWIRED FOR 220V) TEFC MOTOR WITH CAPACITOR START
- 3 BLADE SPEEDS: 2275, 2720, 3265 F.P.M.
- MAXIMUM CUTTING WIDTH: 16 1/2"
- MAXIMUM CUTTING HEIGHT: 7 1/2"
- TABLE TILTS: 10° LEFT AND 45° RIGHT
- TABLE SIZE: 17" x 17"
- BLADE LENGTH: 113"
- BLADE WIDTH: 1/4" TO 1"
- OVERALL HEIGHT: 72"
- INCLUDES 1/2" BLADE, FENCE AND MITER GAUGE
- APPROX. SHIPPING WEIGHT: 456 LBS.



Reg. \$625⁰⁰

**SALE PRICE
\$595⁰⁰**

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MODEL G1026

3 H.P. SHAPER

- 3 INTERCHANGEABLE SPINDLES: 1/2", 3/4" AND 1" • 3" SPINDLE TRAVEL
- HEAVY-DUTY 3 H.P., SINGLE-PHASE, 220V MOTOR WITH REVERSING SWITCH
- TWO SPINDLE SPEEDS: 7,000 AND 10,000 R.P.M.
- SPINDLE OPENINGS: 1 1/2", 2 1/4", 4", AND 5 1/2"
- SURFACE GROUND IRON TABLE
- TABLE SIZE WITH STANDARD WINGS ATTACHED: 30 1/2" x 28 1/2"
- FLOOR-TO-TABLE HEIGHT: 34"
- APPROX. SHIPPING WEIGHT: 353 LBS.



Reg. \$850⁰⁰

**SALE PRICE
\$795⁰⁰**

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MODEL G1029

2 H.P. DUST COLLECTOR

- MOTOR AMP DRAW: 12 AMPS (220V ONLY)
- 2 H.P., 220V, SINGLE-PHASE MOTOR
- R.P.M.: 3450
- STANDARD BAG FILTRATION: 30 MICRON
- PORTABLE BASE SIZE: 21 1/2" x 33 1/2"
- AIR SUCTION CAPACITY: 1550 C.F.M.
- STATIC PRESSURE: 12.3"
- APPROX. SHIPPING WEIGHT: 130 LBS.
- FREE CYCLONE SEPARATOR



Reg. \$279⁹⁵

**SALE PRICE
\$239⁹⁵**

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MODEL G1030

3 H.P. DUST COLLECTOR

- 3 H.P., 220V, SINGLE-PHASE, 3450 R.P.M. MOTOR
- MOTOR AMP DRAW: 15 AMPS (220V ONLY)
- AIR SUCTION CAPACITY: 2300 C.F.M.
- STATIC PRESSURE: 16.7"
- STANDARD BAG FILTRATION: 30 MICRON
- APPROX. SHIPPING WEIGHT: 170 LBS.



FREE 4 x 10 HOSE!

Reg. \$455⁰⁰

**SALE PRICE
\$425⁰⁰**

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MODEL G9922

OSCILLATING SPINDLE SANDER

- 1/2 H.P. SINGLE PHASE 4.6 AMP TEFC MOTOR
- GROUND CAST IRON 14 1/2" x 14 1/2" TABLE TILTS TO 45°
- STROKE LENGTH: 3" • BUILT-IN 2" DUST COLLECTION PORT
- FLOOR-TO-TABLE HEIGHT: 39 1/2"
- 3450 R.P.M. SPINDLE SPEED
- SPINDLE OSCILLATES AT 64 STROKES-PER-MINUTE
- SHIELDED & PERMANENTLY LUBRICATED BALL BEARINGS
- INCLUDES 80 GRIT SLEEVE FOR SPINDLE, MITER GAUGE AND WRENCH SET
- APPROX. SHIPPING WEIGHT: 95 LBS.



Reg. \$175⁰⁰

**SALE PRICE
\$169⁰⁰**

\$20 SHIPPING
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MODEL G1071

OSCILLATING SPINDLE SANDER

- 1 H.P. SINGLE PHASE 110/220V TEFC MOTOR
- EXCLUSIVE, CAST IRON 25" x 25" TABLE TILTS TO 45°R & 20°L
- STROKE LENGTH: 1 1/2"
- FLOOR-TO-TABLE HEIGHT: 35 1/2"
- BUILT-IN 4" DUST COLLECTION PORT
- 1725 R.P.M. SPINDLE SPEED
- SPINDLE OSCILLATES AT 72 S.P.M.
- 10 TAPERED AND THREADED SPINDLE SIZES
- INCLUDES 100 GRIT SLEEVE FOR EACH SPINDLE, MITER GAUGE AND WRENCH SET
- APPROX. SHIPPING WEIGHT: 300 LBS.



Reg. \$525⁰⁰

**SALE PRICE
\$495⁰⁰**

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MODEL G1066

24" DRUM SANDER

- 5 H.P. 220V DRUM MOTOR DRIVES 2 ALUMINUM SANDING DRUMS
- 1/4 H.P. CONVEYOR MOTOR GIVES AN 11 FPM RATE OF FEED
- 2 BUILT-IN 4" DUST PORTS FOR EASY HOOK-UP TO COLLECTION SYSTEM
- ALL STEEL CONSTRUCTION
- STATE-OF-THE-ART COMPUTER BALANCED DRUMS
- HANDLES STOCK UP TO 237 1/2" WIDE x 4 1/4" THICK
- APPROX. SHIPPING WEIGHT: 430 LBS.



Reg. \$1,095⁰⁰

**SALE PRICE
\$1045⁰⁰**

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IMPORTANT: Cover removed to show woodplaner components. Do not operate machine without cover.

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AMERICAN
WOODWORKER

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Oscillating Drill Press



*Includes DRUM SANDER SET
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Mortising Machine

*The unique SWIVELING
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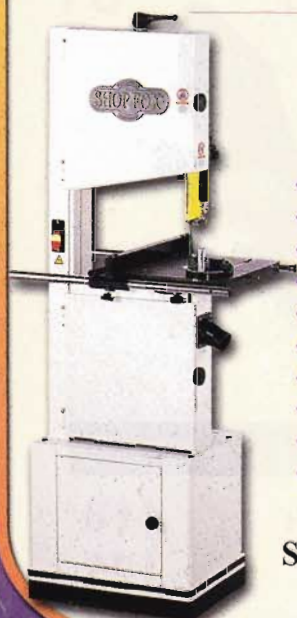


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QUICK BLADE TENSION LEVER*

16" BANDSAW

- ◆ MOTOR SIZE: 1 1/2 H.P. 110/220V
- ◆ MAX. CUTTING WIDTH: 15 1/2"
- ◆ MAX. CUTTING HEIGHT: 8 1/2"
- ◆ TABLE SIZE: 16" x 16"
- ◆ TABLE HEIGHT: 42"
- ◆ BLADE SIZE RANGE: 1/4" - 1 1/4"
- ◆ BLADE LENGTH: 115"
- ◆ BLADE SPEEDS: 2300/3300 F.P.M.
- ◆ WARRANTY: 2 YEARS
- ◆ WEIGHT: 250 LBS.

W1673
SHOP FOX®
16" Bandsaw



2 H.P. DUST COLLECTOR

- ◆ MOTOR SIZE: 2 H.P., 110/220V,
SINGLE-PHASE, 3450 R.P.M.
- ◆ MOTOR AMP DRAW: 18/9
- ◆ 5" INLET WITH A REMOVABLE "Y" FITTING
WITH (2) 4" OPENINGS
- ◆ PORTABLE BASE SIZE: 21 1/2" x 33 1/2"
- ◆ BAG VOLUME: 5.4 CUBIC FEET
- ◆ HEIGHT (WITH BAGS INFLATED): 78"
- ◆ BAG SIZE (DIA. x DEPTH): 19" x 33" (2)
- ◆ AIR SUCTION CAPACITY: 1550 C.F.M.
- ◆ STATIC PRESSURE: 12.3"
- ◆ STANDARD BAG FILTRATION: 30 MICRON
- ◆ WARRANTY: 2 YEARS
- ◆ WEIGHT: 130 LBS.

W1666
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2 H.P. Dust Collector



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Tool tests you can trust



When I was buying my first shop tools in the late 1970s, there wasn't much good buying advice out there. I made good choices for the most part, but I also made my share of bonehead buys. There was the inexpensive belt sander that gouged everything it touched (for the longest time I thought my technique was the problem). Then there was the great deal I got on a used band-saw; it only needed new tires, and wheel balancing, and a new motor, and new guides, and a new switch. Oh yes, I mustn't forget the new lathe that worked great, but cost twice as much as I should've paid.

Now, there are tool tests to help you out in most woodworking magazines. I'm partial, but I think ours are the most thorough and reliable you can find. I'd like to tell you why.

How We Do Tool Tests

With a whole pile of tools waiting in the shop to test, we feel like the proverbial kids in a candy store. But getting to that point is plenty of work. Our policy is to test *every* brand, not just the big names. (There are some great buys

among the lesser-known brands.) Every tool has to be unpacked, assembled, and tuned up. Not a big deal on sanders, but try it on 25 jointers!

Then the editors get a crack at them. Our editors are all former professional woodworkers, so they bring many years of experience to our tool evaluations. Not that they generally agree, but that's good; no single editor's idiosyncratic preferences can bias our recommendations. Then we conduct a second test, one that's unique to AW. We bring in a panel of consumer woodworkers, of varying ages and skill levels, short and tall, righties and southpaws, men and women, to evaluate the tools. Why? Because as pro woodworkers we have our share of prejudices, and we balance them with the perspective we gain from regular woodworkers. Finally, we talk to manufacturers, engineers and tool-repair shops. After all the information has been gathered, our dedicated fact-checking department ensures that specifications and facts are correct.

All of this is to make sure that when you purchase an AW Editors' Choice or Best Buy tool, you'll be happy with it.

You'll find more buying advice in American Woodworker than any other magazine. Period. I hope it helps you avoid an "Oops!" when you're outfitting *your* shop.

Ken

ken_collier@readersdigest.com

How to reach us

We welcome your comments, suggestions, or complaints. Write to us at: **American Woodworker**, 2915 Commers Dr., Suite 700, Eagan, MN 55121 Phone: (651) 454-9200 Fax: (651) 994-2250 e-mail: amwood@concentric.net

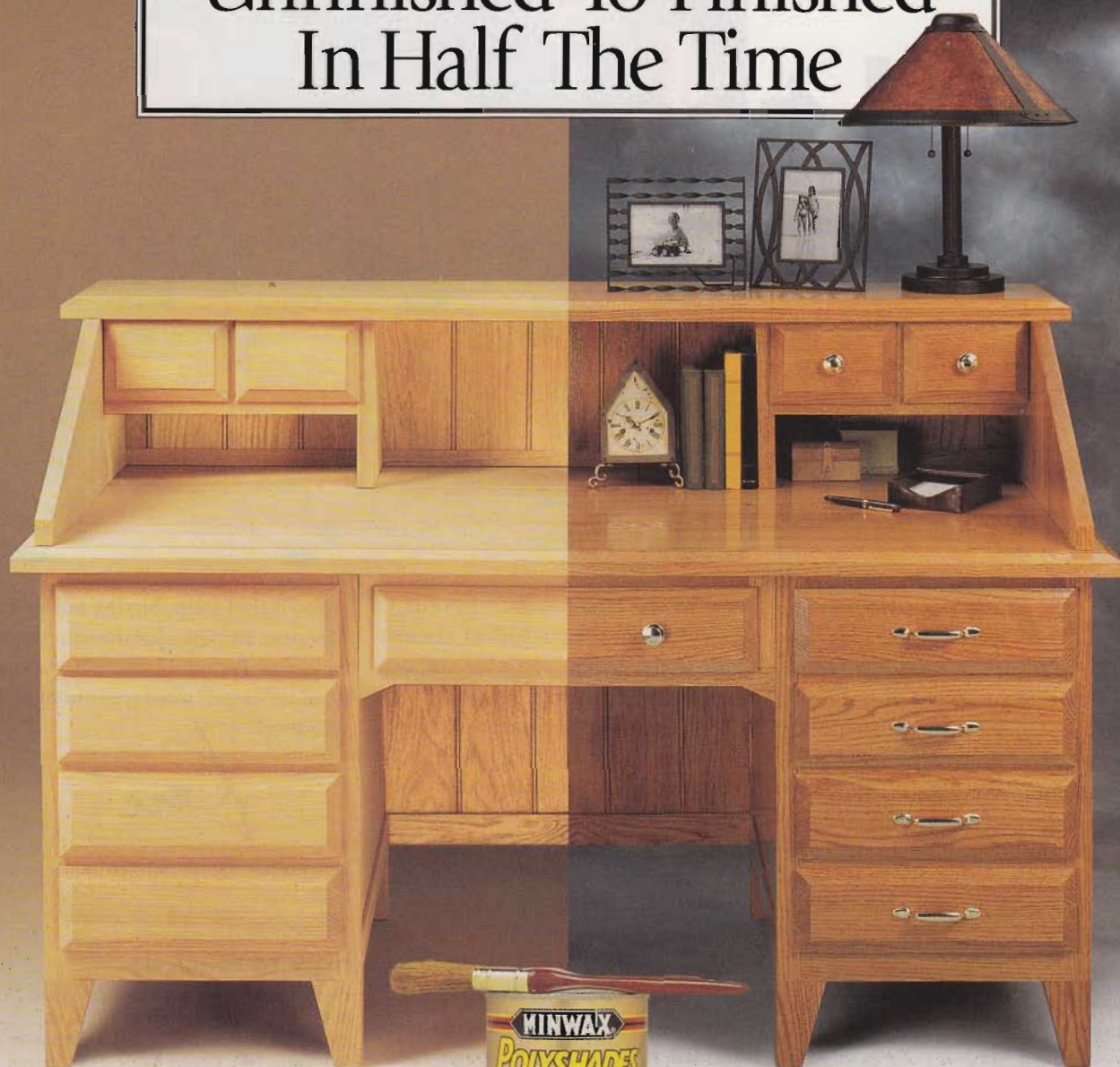
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Read This

How to Use this Tool Buyer's Guide

The AW Tool Buyer's Guide is a composite: one-half is the printed magazine you have in your hands, and the other half is the set of charts on our Web site that detail specifications and prices for a wide variety of tool categories.

Charts on the Web

You'll find the charts at www.americanwoodworker.com. These detailed charts are updated each summer, and checked with each manufacturer for accuracy. It would be great if we could include all of them in the print portion of the Guide, but they're simply too cumbersome. The tool categories that we cover on the Web include:

- Air Compressors; from small to industrial size
- Air Nailers
- Bandsaws
- Belt/Disc Sanders
- Cordless Drills; various voltages
- Drill Presses; benchtop and floor models
- Dust Collectors
- Jigsaws
- Lathes; mini, benchtop and jumbo-size
- Routers; large, medium and trim
- Jointers; benchtop up to industrial
- Tablesaw; contractor and cabinet models
- Miter Saws; regular and compound
- Planers; portable and stationary

Woodworker's Library

ROUTERS

Fixed

KEY: Trigger Location B = body, H = handle Plunge Lock: L = locked when pressed, unlocked when pressed, T = twist handle to lock/unlock *Soft-start **Has depth-adjustment knob. *New models in red.*

Brand & Model	List Price	HP	Speeds (rpm)	Collet Sizes (in.)	Trigger Location	Depth Adjustment Range (in.)	Weight (lb.)	Comments & Features
Black & Decker RP400K	109	2	8,000 - 25,000	1/4	H	2	9	Electric variable speed with soft start, rack & pinion weight adj.
Black & Decker RP200	79	1 3/4	25,000	1/4	H	2	9.2	Dust extraction port; spindle lock.
Bosch 1616EVS	381	1 3/4	25,000	1/4, 3/8, 1/2, 8mm	H	1 7/8	8	Precision centering system; magnesium body; soft start D handle.
Bosch 1617EVSX	373	1 3/4	25,000	1/4, 3/8, 1/2, 8mm	B	1 7/8	7.5	Precision centering system; magnesium body; includes case.
Porter-Cable 100	\$219	7/8	22,000	1/4	B	1 1/2	6.8	Calibrated depth-adjusting.
Makita 3601B	352	1 3/8	23,000	1/4, 1/2	H	2	8	Calibrated depth-adjustment.
Makita 3606	174	1	30,000	1/4	B	3	5.5	Calibrated depth-adjusting; D-handle.
Craftsman 17504	70	1 1/2	25,000	1/4	H	1 1/2	8	Depth-adjusting; work zero reset ring; spindle lock.
DeWalt DW610	270	1 1/2	25,000	1/4, 1/2	B	2 3/8	7.3	Rack & pinion depth adjust.; all metal housing and fan.
Milwaukee 5660	357	1 1/2	24,500	1/4, 3/8, 1/2	B	2 1/4	8.5	Calibrated depth-adjusting.
Porter-Cable 601	284	1 1/2	23,000	1/4, 3/8, 1/2	B	1 1/2	8	Self-eject collet.

Random Orbit Sanders
Plate Jointers
Scrollsaws
Thickness Planers

Editors' Choice and Best Buy Tools

You'll notice that we often make a specific recommendation, either an Editors' Choice or a Best Buy. These are the result of our exhaustive tool tests involving all the brands available in that category. An Editors' Choice is the tool that we feel delivers the best performance in its category, regardless of price. The Best Buy tool is the one that delivers the best balance between performance and price. Every tool category is different, and in some we may choose one but not the other.

A full list of the tools we have tested rigorously enough to make recommendations begins on page 118, along with tools that have come on the market since the test and which particularly impressed us.

Feedback

We are always looking for feedback on tools, either your reactions to tools that you own, or your votes for tools that you would like to see reviewed. Send your comments to: **Tool Buyer's Guide, American Woodworker, 2915 Commers Drive, Suite 700, Eagan, MN 55121 or amwood@concentric.net.**

AW

Question & Answer

Best Grinder for Woodworking

Q. I'd like to buy a grinder that will handle a variety of maintenance projects and also be good for sharpening my woodworking tools. What should I look for?

Walt Vita
Winona, MN

A. Finding a bench grinder that's good for general home use is easy; finding one that's right for woodworking isn't. For under \$50 you can find a reasonable 6-in. grinder, one that'll run at 3,400 rpm or so, with a worklight, medium and coarse wheels, and general-purpose tool rests. For sharpening woodworking tools, the best setup is more specialized. You don't need a larger, 8-in. or 10-in. grinder, but the majority of experienced woodworkers would recommend:

- **Stiff, fully adjustable tool rests.** It's impossible to sharpen plane irons so the edge is straight if the tool rest flexes under your fingers. It should also be adjustable in and out (necessary for safety as the wheel gets smaller) and for different angles.

- **A friable fine-grit wheel.** Normal gray wheels have a vicious tendency to overheat the thin edges of chisels and plane irons, even with careful attention. The symptom is a blue color, and the problem is that the temper of the tool is removed, making the edge

hard to sharpen. The softer, friable white or pink wheels are much more forgiving. These wheels are available from specialty retailers for \$30 to \$50. Buy a medium (180) grit for general tool sharpening.

- **Low-speed.** Normal grinders operate at 3,400 rpm, because the grinding is more aggressive, and the motor is cheaper. However, a speed of 1,750 rpm or so is much less likely to burn your tool edges. However, grinders that operate at this speed are harder to find and generally, but not always, more expensive. In practice, many woodworkers are successful on high-speed grinders, as long as they're equipped with a friable wheel and good rests, and are used with a light touch.

Here are three machines you might consider: The Craftsman 6-in. Grinding Center, which has good tool rests

and a variable-speed motor that will slow down to 2,000 rpm, sells for only \$60. Add a friable wheel and you're still under \$100. Delta sells a massive 8-in. grinder with good tool rests that comes equipped with a friable wheel and sells for \$170. And Highland Hardware sells a slow-speed, 8-in. grinder with basic tool rests and friable wheels for \$190.

Finally, equip your grinder with a good wheel dresser to keep the wheels straight and clean. There are several styles of dressers. They all work, but our favorite is a T-shaped diamond dresser; you can get one at Amazon.com for under \$20.

If you have a question you'd like answered, send it to us at: **Question & Answer, American Woodworker, 2915 Commers Drive, Suite 700, Eagan, MN 55121.** Sorry, but the volume of mail prevents us from answering each question individually.



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Question & Answer

What's the Deal with Combination Planer/Molders?

Q. I'm shopping for a planer, and am also planning to do a bunch of trim work in my house: crown moldings, door casings, and the like. I'm intrigued by the planers that also

can be used to make moldings. What do you think of them?

Emily Pederson
Davis, CA

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A. The least expensive molder/planers sell for around \$800 and have a 13-in. capacity. This is around \$500 more than you would pay for a similar-sized portable planer by the same manufacturer. One thing you're getting for the extra money is stability; the molder/planer weighs three to four times as much as the portable planer, and has its own stand. You also get a heavy-duty induction motor, rather than the lighter universal motor of the portable planer. Simply put, you're getting a heavier-duty machine that will put in more miles of planing, but also costs more and takes up more space.

Whether you can save money making your own molding depends on how much you cut, and how much you pay for lumber. In our neck of the woods, 1x4 oak sells for around \$1.60/ft., and oak crown molding sells for around \$2.50/ft., so you can save about \$1.10/ft. The cutters for crown molding cost around \$100, so you break even at 90 ft. of molding, which is a couple average-size rooms.

Cost aside, a molder/planer gives you the unique capacity to make moldings from cherry, white oak or other interesting woods. You won't find these moldings at the lumberyard!

Which Square Should I Buy?

Q. I'm starting off in woodworking and am confused



by the number of squares available. Some look pretty sophisticated and are fairly pricey. What should I look for in a good, all-around shop square?

Alan Powers
Castle, CO

A. "My first choice for an essential kit of layout tools is a good square," says John Economaki, president and CEO of Bridge City Tool Works (Portland, OR, www.bridgecitytools.com). Economaki notes that many established shops have a collection of squares, usually acquired one after the other, when the previous squares proved insufficiently accurate.

In our experience, it's very useful to have one very precise square in your shop. You can rely on this square for machinery setup, such as setting your jointer fence and your table saw blade square to the table. It is possible to test your tools—and quite accurately, too—by cutting test pieces of wood, but it's slow and cumbersome. A small, accurate square is much easier.

When choosing a square, Economaki says you should expect to spend \$10 to \$20 per inch of blade length for a good-quality square. Your very accurate square need not be large; between

3 and 6 in. is fine. It can be a combination model that has a 45 degree angle, or one that simply does 90 degrees. Watch out for "machinist's squares" selling for very low prices—there's nothing magical about the word "machinist's," nor

are machinist's squares necessarily more accurate. Most woodworkers also have a larger, less precise (and less expensive) square for general use in checking their project parts. If you happen to drop it you're not out \$100.

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Question & Answer

Anti-Kickback Router Bits

Q. I've noticed some router bits are available with an "anti-kickback" feature. If this works, this seems like a great thing. Does it? What's the downside?

Frank Sherer
New Orleans, LA



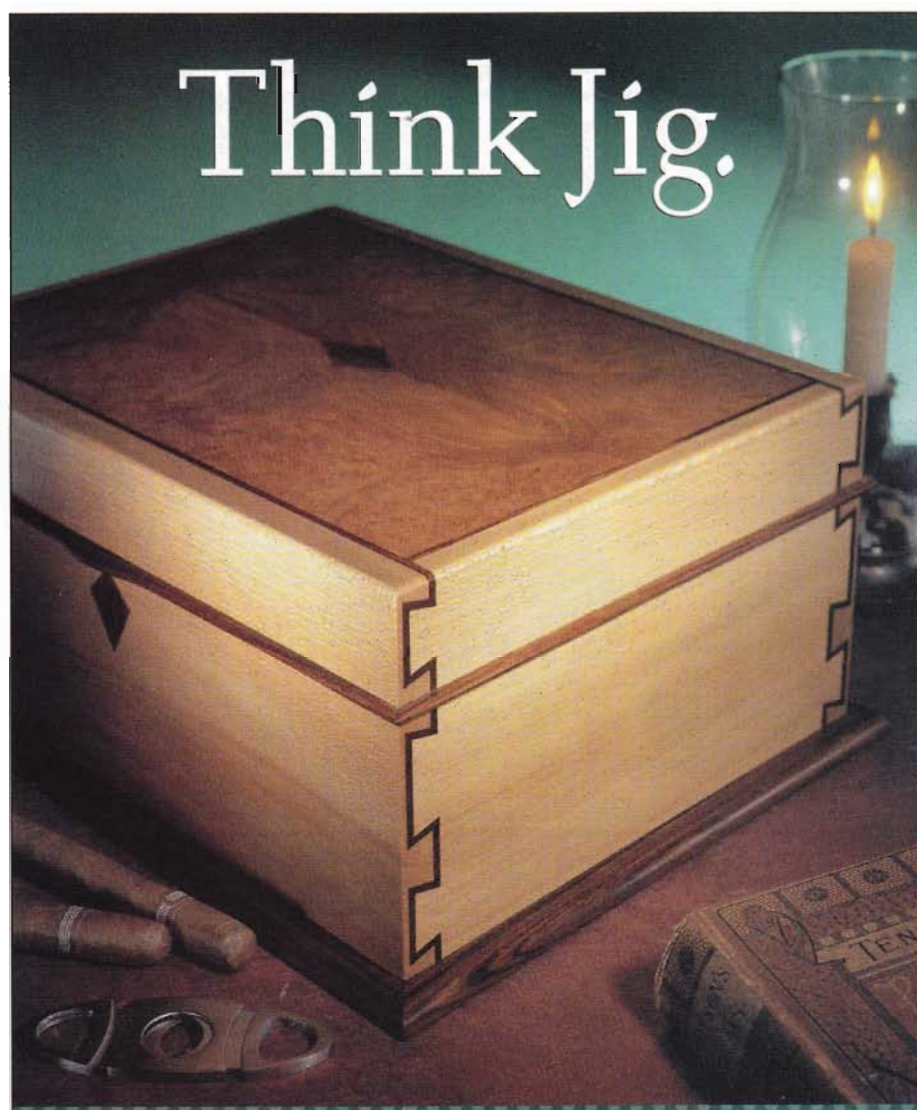
A. Yes, anti-kickback router bits are safer, and they don't cost more.

We talked to Jim Brewer, Vice President of operations for Freud, one company that makes anti-kickback router bits. He described the principle: "Basically, the amount of bite that each flute can take is limited to 1.1 millimeter. This prohibits the operator from over-feeding the material (or 'hogging the cut'), which in turn reduces the risk of kickback." The anti-kickback design "doesn't impose any access problems during the sharpening process. It also doesn't impair the cutting ability of the bit, and it doesn't raise the cost of the bit. There's no reason not to use these bits."

We use anti-kickback bits routinely in our shop. However, an anti-kickback bit alone can't produce a safe cut. Here are some safety rules that help:

- **Avoid heavy cuts.** Make multiple passes instead.
- **Don't rout small pieces.** Either make the cut on a larger piece and cut it down to size, or attach the small piece to a larger piece of wood for routing.
- **Use featherboards.** On a router table, they make it harder for the wood to be kicked back. (They save fingers, too!)
- **Feed AGAINST the rotation!** This is most important. If you're feeding the wood so it's going *with* the rotation of the bit, watch out; the router can snatch the wood out of your hands to create a dangerous kickback. Feeding wood in this direction is called climb-cutting. Once in a while it is the only way to get a clean cut, but do it with featherboards, push blocks and extra care.

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Nickel-Metal Hydride or Nickel Cadmium?

Q. I see some cordless tools with nickel-metal hydride and some with nickel cadmium batteries. What's the difference between them?

Fritz Stein
Pittsboro, NC

A. This is a complex question, one that industry experts do not agree on.

We talked to folks from DeWalt, where cordless tools have nickel cadmium (NiCad) batteries, Makita, where most tools have nickel-metal hydride (NiMH) batteries, and Panasonic, which sells drills with both battery types. In simple terms, the differences are: NiMH batteries give you a longer run time per charge, but do not have as long a lifespan (total number of charges) as NiCad batteries under laboratory conditions. A NiMH battery can be thrown in the trash, but it *should* be recycled. A NiCad battery must be recycled. A drill with a pair of NiMH batteries will cost around \$15 more than a similar NiCad-equipped tool.

Where the disagreements lie is in how long the two kinds of batteries last in real-world conditions, where ambient heat, the intensity of the work, the pattern of recharging, and many other variables affect a battery's lifespan. To further complicate this, there is no industry standard to define when a battery is "dead." If it originally drove 100 screws per charge, is it dead when it can only drive 75? 50? Or 1? Though NiCads last for significantly more charge cycles in the laboratory, proponents of NiMH will say that in the real world, the difference is small.

Our opinion: If you're a woodworker, choose your drill based on other features than battery type. Run



Question & Answer

time is simply not a big deal when you're close to a charger and have a second battery ready to go. It's not like you're up on a scaffold or working all over a big construction site. For shop-based work, handling is much more important.

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Question & Answer

Planer or Small Drum Sander?

Q. I'd like to try using more rough lumber, but I'm not sure whether to choose a portable planer at around four bills, or a drum belt sander at around eight. What insight can you offer to help me make up my mind?

Patrick McGregor
Sperryville, VA

A. Like most tool purchases, this decision depends on what kind of work you plan to do. For almost all woodworkers, the tool to buy first, the one that's most useful for general woodworking, is the planer.

The advantages of the planer are speed, economy and compact size. With a \$300 machine you can quickly bring a pile of material down to final thickness, then pick up the planer and store it on a shelf. The disadvantages are the relatively narrow bed (12 to 13 in.), compared to a drum sander (24 to 32 in.), the tendency of most small planers to snipe the boards (make a slightly deeper cut at the ends) and their inclination to tear out the grain on highly figured wood. Without a wide jointer, it's a little tricky to plane rough lumber so it's dead flat; the planer squashes a cupped board as it goes through, making it thinner, but most of the cup returns when the board exits the machine.

Good, affordable drum sanders are a new addition to the woodworker's arsenal. The 'open' style drum sander, where the drum is supported only on one end, allows users to sand from both edges, effectively doubling the sanding width.



PHOTO COURTESY OF MANUFACTURER

They're great for wide, glued-up panels. Drum sanders are also perfect for figured wood, because there is no tear-out, and for small and thin pieces, which get torn up in planers. Prices start at around \$800.

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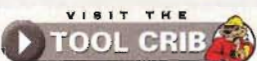
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What Kind of Saw for Dovetails?

Q. I'd like to try hand-cutting dovetails for the drawers of a sideboard I'm building. What kind of saw do I need for this job?

Mike Scully
Mobile, AL

A. Dovetailing can become something of a religion among woodworkers, with passionate true-believers in one approach or another. There are many tools and techniques that work, but when it comes to the saws, there are two types: Japanese and Western.

Japanese-style saws cut on the pull stroke, have fine, thin teeth and produce a very thin kerf. This means less effort, and consequently, more control for many people, especially beginners. Western saws cut on the push stroke and produce a thicker kerf. They have either a pistol-style handle, like the Lie-Nielsen saw we show at right, or a simple straight handle like a chisel. Prices range from \$15 up to well over \$100.

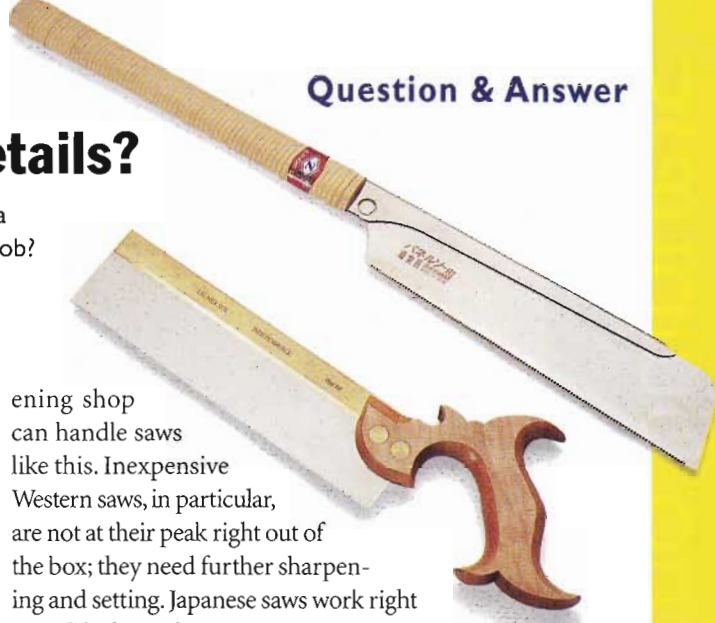
A good, sharp saw of either type will allow you to cut perfect dovetails. But sharpening can be a problem. The teeth on these saws are very fine, and sharpening them by hand is no picnic, and doesn't always work. Be sure your local sharp-

ening shop can handle saws like this. Inexpensive Western saws, in particular, are not at their peak right out of the box; they need further sharpening and setting. Japanese saws work right out of the box. There are some very appealing Japanese saws that require no sharpening; they use inexpensive super-hard replaceable blades.

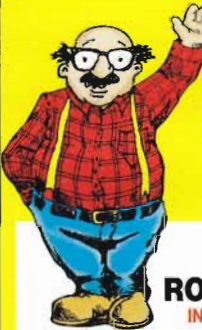
What kind of saw you use is much less important than having your wood flat, and using softer species like pine, and walnut. Then, just practice. Cut a bunch of dovetails before you try them on a project, and even if you've done them lots of times before, warm up (and remind yourself how they go together) with a test piece. **AW**

American Woodworker 2002 TOOL BUYER'S GUIDE

19



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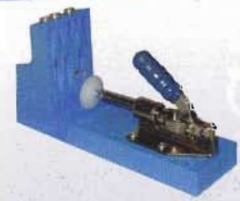


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1



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2



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3



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boxes of sandpaper FREE
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Tools not shown:

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SAVE \$149

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How to Buy a BANDSAW

Want a versatile tool? Buy a bandsaw. You'll be able to make puzzles and boxes, rough out turning and carving blanks, add curves to your furniture and resaw large chunks of wood. Few other machines can do as much in a woodshop, and in such a user-friendly fashion.

Bridgewood PBS440; \$1,795.

The Family

Two branches, floor models and benchtops, make up the bandsaw family tree.

Floor Models, General Use

These stationary tools are more versatile than the benchtop machines. Their large motors and heavy frames offer fast cutting and less vibration. Capacities are significantly greater than benchtops. Floor models rest on either an open or enclosed base.

Craftsman
22414; \$500.

Floor Models, for Resawing

If you plan on doing mostly heavy-duty cutting (like resawing), with your bandsaw, have a look at the big brothers in the family. They've got European-style guides, large tables and can handle wide blades. The motor also separates these workaholics from the rest of the family. At 3 hp and up, they're ready to handle the toughest resawing with no babysitting. You'll also appreciate the brake that's on many of these machines. No more waiting and waiting for those big wheels to come to a stop.



Bridgewood
PBS440; \$1,795.

Benchtops

If your shop space and budget are tight, and you only plan on using a bandsaw for light cutting in thin stock, a benchtop saw might work for you. They're less expensive and can be tucked under a bench when you're done with them. However, don't expect to do much heavy-demand cutting.

BRAKE

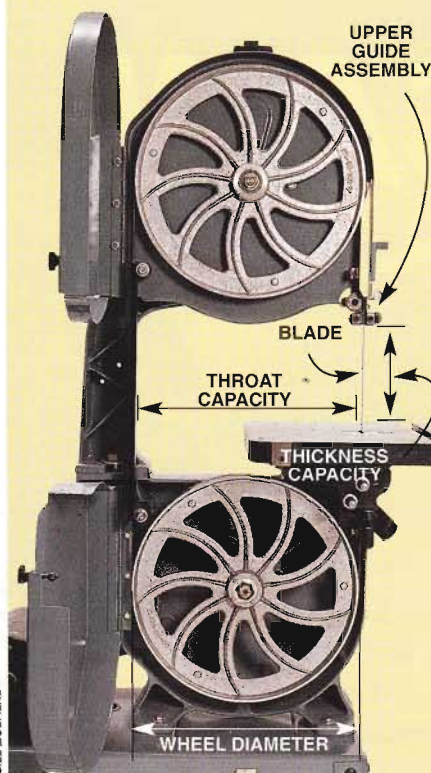


Ryobi BS90I
benchtop
bandsaw; \$170.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF MANUFACTURERS

Visit www.americanwoodworker.com for a complete list of manufacturers, models and costs.

BILL ZUEHLKE



Anatomy of a Bandsaw

Most bandsaws are two-wheel machines. A continuous blade, or band, travels around the wheels.

Two numbers tell you a lot about a bandsaw; wheel diameter and maximum-thickness capacity. Wheel diameter creates categories within each family; 8 in., 10 in., 12 in., 14 in. and larger. Actual throat capacity of the saw, the distance from the blade to the housing, is always slightly less than the wheel diameter.

Maximum thickness capacity is given in the saw specifications. This is the distance from the table to the upper guide assembly at its highest position, and tells you the thickest piece of wood that can be cut on the saw.

Three-wheel bandsaws offer greater throat capacity than the two wheelers, but there are some drawbacks.

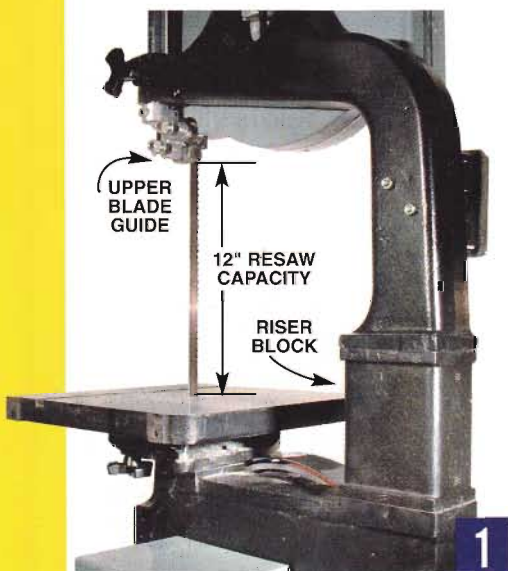
It's sometimes harder to track the blade on three-wheel saws, and the small-diameter wheels put more strain on the blades, which can make them break more frequently.



Tradesman 8160A three-wheel bandsaw; \$138.

PHOTO COURTESY OF MANUFACTURER

Features

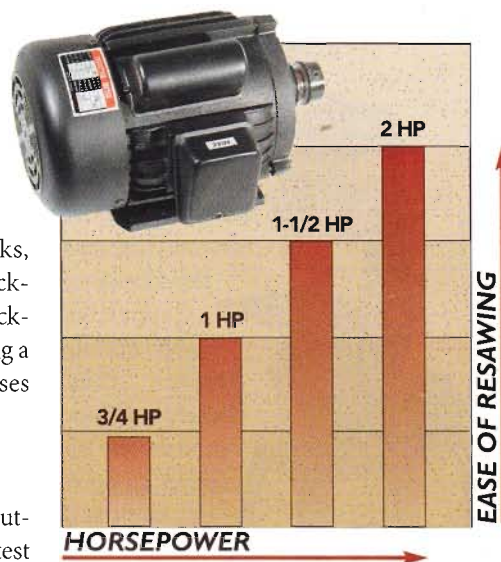


Capacity

A thickness capacity of 6 in. on a saw with 14-in. wheels will serve most woodworkers very well. If you'd like to use a bandsaw for resawing wide boards or roughing out large carving or turning blanks, look for a machine with greater thickness capacity. You can double the thickness capacity of some saws by adding a riser block (Photo 1). This increases their capacity from 6 to 12 in.

Horsepower

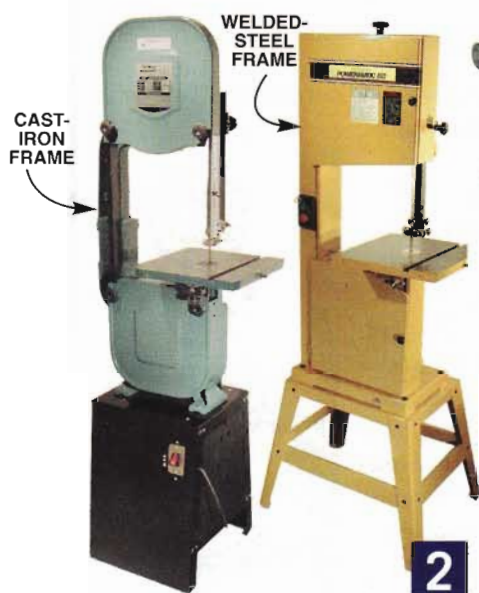
Saws with 3/4 hp or less are fine for cutting curves in thin stock, but will test your patience on thicker material. If you'll frequently be cutting stock thicker than 6 in., get a saw with at least 1 hp.



We tested bandsaws with 3/4- to 2-hp motors. We found that 1 hp is a minimum requirement for wide resawing in hard wood.

Visit www.americanwoodworker.com for a complete list of manufacturers, models and costs.

Features



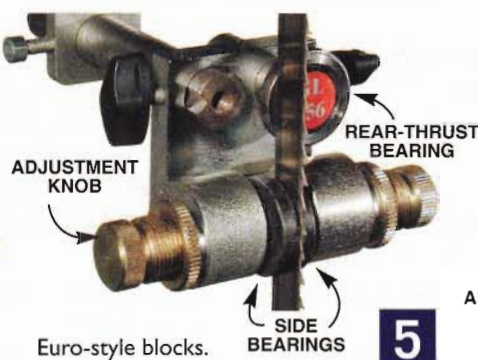
A rigid frame limits vibration and prevents blade chatter.



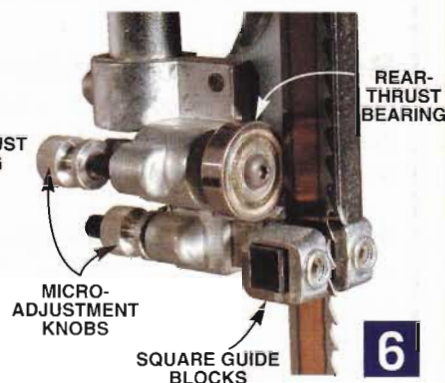
Good dust collection is a must for fine bandsaw dust.



Rack-and-pinion height adjustment makes raising and lowering the guard easy.



Euro-style blocks.



Square guide blocks.



There are four basic bandsaw base styles.

Rigid Frame

Heavy cutting, like resawing, can create machine vibration, blade chatter and even frame flexing.

Frame style can help minimize vibration. There are two distinct frame styles; welded-steel and cast-iron. Welded-steel frame machines do the best job of controlling vibration under heavy cutting loads.

Dust Collection

Bandsaws produce very fine dust that easily becomes airborne. Good dust collection on these machines is a must.

A 2-1/2-in. dust port and shop vacuum will suffice for general bandsawing. If you plan on frequently cutting thicker stock, look for a saw with a 3-in. or larger dust port, and plan on hooking it up to a dust collector.

Blade Guides

Square guides are a versatile choice. They work well for supporting wide

blades and are also capable of supporting blades as narrow as 1/16-in. Micro-adjustment knobs are a big help when fine-tuning the position of the guides.

Euro-style guides are great for supporting wide blades, and work very well for heavy jobs like resawing. They can be difficult to use with blades less than 1/4-in. wide.

Sturdy Base

A sturdy base also helps control vibration. For this reason, we favor the closed- and floor-base styles over the panel- and open-base models.

Guard

Height adjustment is easier on machines with rack-and-pinion guards. This setup also keeps the guard from crashing to the table when the locking knob is loosened.

Visit www.americanwoodworker.com for a complete list of manufacturers, models and costs.

Our Recommendations

Bandsaws for Resawing

Reviewed in August 2001, #88, page 84.

We tested 17 bandsaws priced at less than \$1,350. Here's what we found out:

In choosing our favorites, we considered a saw's ability to do wide resawing in hard and soft wood. We balanced that with an eye toward user-friendly features and general bandsawing.

The Laguna 16 in. and the Jet 18 in. won Editors' Choice awards. Both have Euro-style guides and welded-steel frames. The Delta and Jet 14-in., 1-hp saws are our Best Buys. These saws both accept riser blocks and have 12-in. resaw capacity. Other machines that are excellent for the money were the Lobo and Grizzly 18-in. machines. They both have welded-steel frames with 2-hp motors, good dust collection and easy-to-adjust rack-and-pinion front blade guards. But they both lack a blade-tension gauge which could lead to over tensioning. Lobo's lower blade guides were difficult to adjust and the Grizzly had more vibration than the other welded-steel frame machines.

In selecting a saw, don't overlook its electrical requirements. Some require 220 volts and some 110-volt saws have pretty high amperage requirements. Make sure your

work area has the necessary wiring and circuitry. Check with a licensed electrician if in doubt.

Editors' Choices

Laguna LT 16 in.; \$1,345.

Pros

This machine has a 1-1/2-hp motor, 3,600 sfpm blade speed, 12-in. resaw capacity and a welded-steel frame. Nonmetallic block guides are available. It features two 4-in. dust ports, a one-piece front guard and it comes prewired and fully assembled.

Cons

It requires 220-volt service and lacks rack-and-pinion guard adjustment.



Laguna LT 16 in.; \$1,345.

BANDSAWS

Manufacturer/ Model #	Price	HP	Volts	Amps	Blade Speed(s) SFPM	Resaw Capacity	Frame Style	Base Design	Dust Collection
Delta 28-275	\$600	3/4	115	9	3,000	12"	Cast-Iron	Open	Fair, 1-1/2" port under table
Delta 28-280 <i>Best Buy</i>	\$790	1	115/230	9.6/4.8	3,000	12"	Cast-Iron	Closed	Fair, 1-1/2" port under table
Grizzly G1019	\$320	3/4	115/230	12/6	3,300	10"	Cast-Iron	Paneled	Fair*, 2-1/4" port under table
Grizzly G1019Z	\$335	1	110/220	12/6	3,350	10"	Cast-Iron	Open	Good, 1-1/2" port behind lower
Jet JW14CS <i>Best Buy</i>	\$650	1	115/230	10/5	3,000	12"	Cast-Iron	Closed	Fair*, 2" port under table
Jet JW14OS	\$570	3/4	115/230	10/5	3,000	12"	Cast-Iron	Open	Fair*, 2" port under table
North State	\$395	1	110/220	15/7.5	3,000	11"	Cast-Iron	Closed	Good, 4" port in front of lower
Reliant DD90	\$300	1	115/230	9/4.5	625; 1,061; 1,683; 2,578	12"	Cast-Iron	Paneled	None
Ridgid BSI400	\$500	3/4	120	10	2,800	12"	Cast-Iron	Open	Fair*, 2-1/4" port under table
Enco 199-9090	\$700	2	220	12	3,000	8-1/2"	Cast-Iron	Open	Poor, 3/4" port under table
Grizzly G4186Z	\$895	2	110/220	14/7	3,166	10"	Welded-Steel	Floor	Good, 4" port under table
Jet JWBS-18 <i>Editors' Choice</i>	\$1,099	1-1/2	115/230	16/8	3,000	10"	Welded-Steel	Floor	Good, 4" port under table on
Laguna LT16 <i>Editors' Choice</i>	\$1,345	1-1/2	220	7.9	3,600	12"	Welded-Steel	Floor	V. Good, one 4" under table, one 4" behind lower wheel
Lobo BSO183	\$789	2	110/220	24/12	2,000; 3,000	10-3/4"	Welded-Steel	Floor	Good, 4" port under table, but down near the floor
North State WA-18	\$795	2	110/220	24/12	850; 1,000; 1,280	10"	Cast-Iron	Paneled	Poor, 1-1/4" port behind lower
Powermatic 44	\$670	1	115/230	7/3.5	3,000	9"	Welded-Steel	Open	Good, 3" port behind lower
Transpower SB800	\$602	2	110/220	25/12.5	850; 1,000; 1,280	10"	Cast-Iron	Open	Poor, 1-1/4" port behind lower

Visit www.americanwoodworker.com for a complete list of manufacturers, models and costs.

Our Recommendations



Jet JWBS 18 in.; \$1,099.

Jet JWBS 18 in.; \$1,099.

Pros

This machine has a 1-1/2-hp motor, 3,000 sfpm blade speed and it works with either 110 or 220 volts.

It features a welded-steel frame, a one-piece front guard with rack-and-pinion guard adjustment and a well-designed rip fence.

Cons

This machine is only available with Euro-style guides and has only a 10-in. resaw capacity.

Best Buys

Jet JW14CS 14 in. with riser block; \$650.

Pros

You'll get a 1-hp motor, 3,000 sfpm blade speed,

Jet JW14CS 14 in. with riser block; \$650.



and 12-in. resaw capacity with this saw. It runs on 110 or 220 volts, has a closed base, a telescoping front blade guard and it accepts nonmetallic guide blocks.

Cons

You'll have to put up with a small dust port and hard-to-access micro-adjustment knobs on the bottom blade guide.

Delta 28-280 with riser block; \$790.

Pros

This machine features a 1-hp motor, 3,000 sfpm blade speed, 12-in. resaw capacity and a closed base. It accepts nonmetallic blade guide blocks, works with either 110 or 220 volts and has the heaviest cast-iron frame among the 14-in. saws.

Cons

You'll deal with a front blade guard that's difficult to keep aligned and a small dust port.



Delta 28-280 with riser block; \$790.

*Dust port steps down in size, reducing air flow.

Guide Style	Front Guard Style	Column-Mounted Switch	Hinged Wheel Covers	Easily Accessible Tensioning Knob	Rip Fence
Blocks	two-piece	No	Yes	Yes	Optional
Blocks	two-piece	Yes	Yes	Yes	Optional
Wheel	Blocks	one-piece	No	Yes	Stock
	Blocks	one-piece	Yes	No	Stock
	Blocks	telescoping	Yes	Yes	Optional
Wheel	Blocks	telescoping	Yes	Yes	Optional
	Blocks	telescoping	Yes	Yes	Optional
	Blocks	telescoping	No	No	Optional
back side	Blocks	telescoping	Yes	Yes	Optional
	Blocks	one-piece	Yes	No	Stock
	Blocks	one-piece with rack-and-pinion	Yes	Yes	Stock
Euro Guides	Euro Guides	one-piece with rack-and-pinion	Yes	Yes	Stock
	Euro Guides	one piece	Yes	Yes	Stock
	Blocks	one-piece with rack-and-pinion	Yes	Yes	Stock
Wheel	Blocks	one-piece	Yes	No	Stock
Wheel	Ball Bearing	one-piece	Yes	Yes	Optional
Wheel	Blocks	one-piece	Yes	No	Stock

AW

See pages 125 and 126 for a listing of manufacturer phone numbers and Web sites.

Visit www.americanwoodworker.com for a complete list of manufacturers, models and costs.

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If you're seriously into woodworking, you need to seriously consider the TS2424 from RIDGID. Featuring a heavy-duty dual voltage thermally protected motor, vibration dampening cast iron construction and machined pulley/Poly "V" belt drive, it delivers unmatched smooth-running performance. And with its state-of-the-art seamless extruded aluminum fence system you're assured of ultra accurate rips up to 24" left or right. Only the



*Runs so smoothly, a nickel will stay standing with the saw running.**

RIDGID TS2424 comes with the patented Herc-U-Lift® caster set for simple, one-step 360° mobility and a micro-adjust

trunnion to effortlessly eliminate any out of square heel tolerance. Built in the USA and backed by a lifetime warranty. So stop by The Home Depot® to see this deluxe saw along with the complete line of our precision woodworking tools. RIDGID. A name trusted by professionals for more than 75 years. Now it's your turn.

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TOOLS FOR A LIFETIME



How to Buy a DRILL PRESS

Tired of trying to make accurate, consistent holes with your hand drill? When it comes to drilling holes, you can't beat a drill press. It's a surprisingly versatile machine, which can be used as a drum sander and even for cutting mortises. A drill press may not be the first stationary tool you buy, but it's right up there among the basic tools needed for woodworking.

Powermatic 1170; \$390.

The Family

There are three types of drill presses; floor models, benchtops and radials.

Floor and Benchtop Models

Except for their height, there's sometimes not much difference between floor and benchtop drill presses. At 52- to 76-in. tall, floor models need a dedicated space in your shop. Benchtops are 22- to 46-in. tall, and rest on top of a workbench.

Some benchtops are lighter duty and have less capacity, while others are exactly like floor models, just shorter. Both styles offer lots of features, from speed range to capacity. The longer column on floor models does accom-

modate end drilling of longer parts. However, benchtops are 10- to 15-percent less expensive. Don't count on a benchtop to be easily portable. Only the lighter duty models are easy to move, and often they'll need to be clamped down for stability.

Ridgid
DPI 500 floor model
drill press; \$500.



Tradesman 806SS
benchtop drill
press; \$177.



PHOTO COURTESY OF MANUFACTURER

Visit www.americanwoodworker.com for a complete list of manufacturers, models and costs.

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The fence opening can be adjusted to match the varying diameters of your router bits.



Unique offset joining system on the fence helps make work edges true

By adjusting the fence, you can offset the outfeed fence so the workpiece is supported for joining cuts.



Includes three table inserts

The varying size inserts provide you with additional workpiece support and proper bit clearance.

Available at Sears, Sears Hardware, and the Craftsman Catalog at 800-437-9686

SEARS

Features

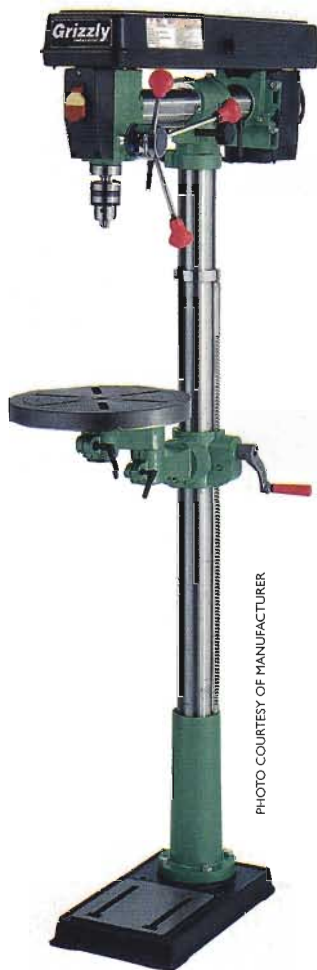


PHOTO COURTESY OF MANUFACTURER

Grizzly G7946 Radial Drill Press; \$180.

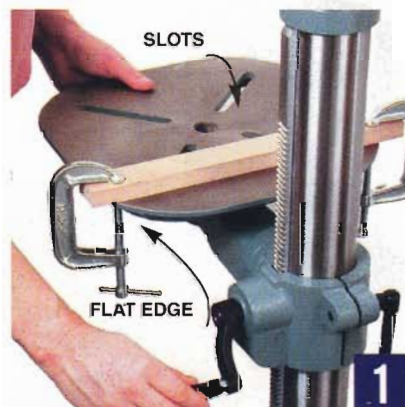
Radial Drill Presses

These are a prime choice for chair-makers and others who drill a lot of angled or compound-angle holes. The head can move in and out on the column (like a radial-arm saw) and tilt left and right to virtually any angle.

Radial drill presses also allow drilling to the center of pieces as large as 34 in.—a capacity not found on conventional drill presses. You've got to really need that capacity, because a manufacturer's radial drill press can cost twice as much as their conventional machine with similar features.

The Drill Press Story

Unfortunately, almost all drill presses are designed more for metalworking than woodworking. However, some features can make them more woodworker friendly.



A drill press table should have a wide, flat rim to make clamping easier.

Features

Tables should have wide, flat rims. This makes it easier to add fences and fixtures. Slots through the top make it easier to fasten things from underneath. Square tables are better than round ones.

Operator's levers need big, round grips and long, stout rods (at least 3/8 in. x 8 in.) for comfort and leverage. The grips should be smooth, so they move easily in your hand as you push the levers. The rods should be threaded so they can be removed if they're in the way.

Wide belts have less tendency to slip, in our experience, than narrow ones. Wide belts have more surface area, so they seem to keep better contact with the pulleys and more effectively transfer power from the motor.

Visit www.americanwoodworker.com for a complete list of manufacturers, models and costs.

YOUR NEW ROUTE TO PRECISE WOODWORKING!



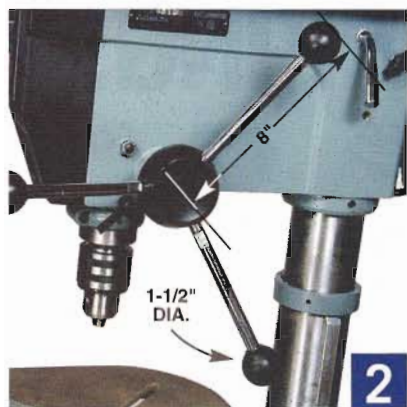
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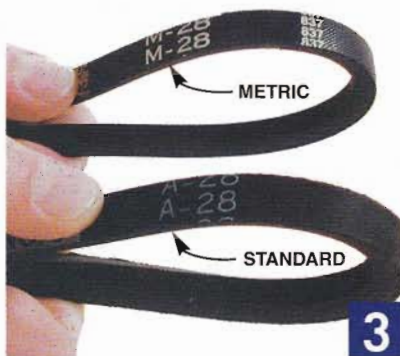


MAKES ANYTHING POSSIBLESM

Features



The operator's lever should be long, with easy-to-hold knobs.



Wide belts generally slip less than narrow ones.



On/Off switches should be easy to reach.



Paddle-style switches are easier to use.



Rod-style depth stops are easiest to set and less likely to slip.



Ring-style depth stops are common, but we find them more difficult to use and more likely to slip.

Switches designed for safety are large, obvious, and front mounted. "On" switches are protected so they can't be pushed accidentally. "Off" switches stand proud so they're easy to hit in an emergency. Paddle switches are the easiest to operate.

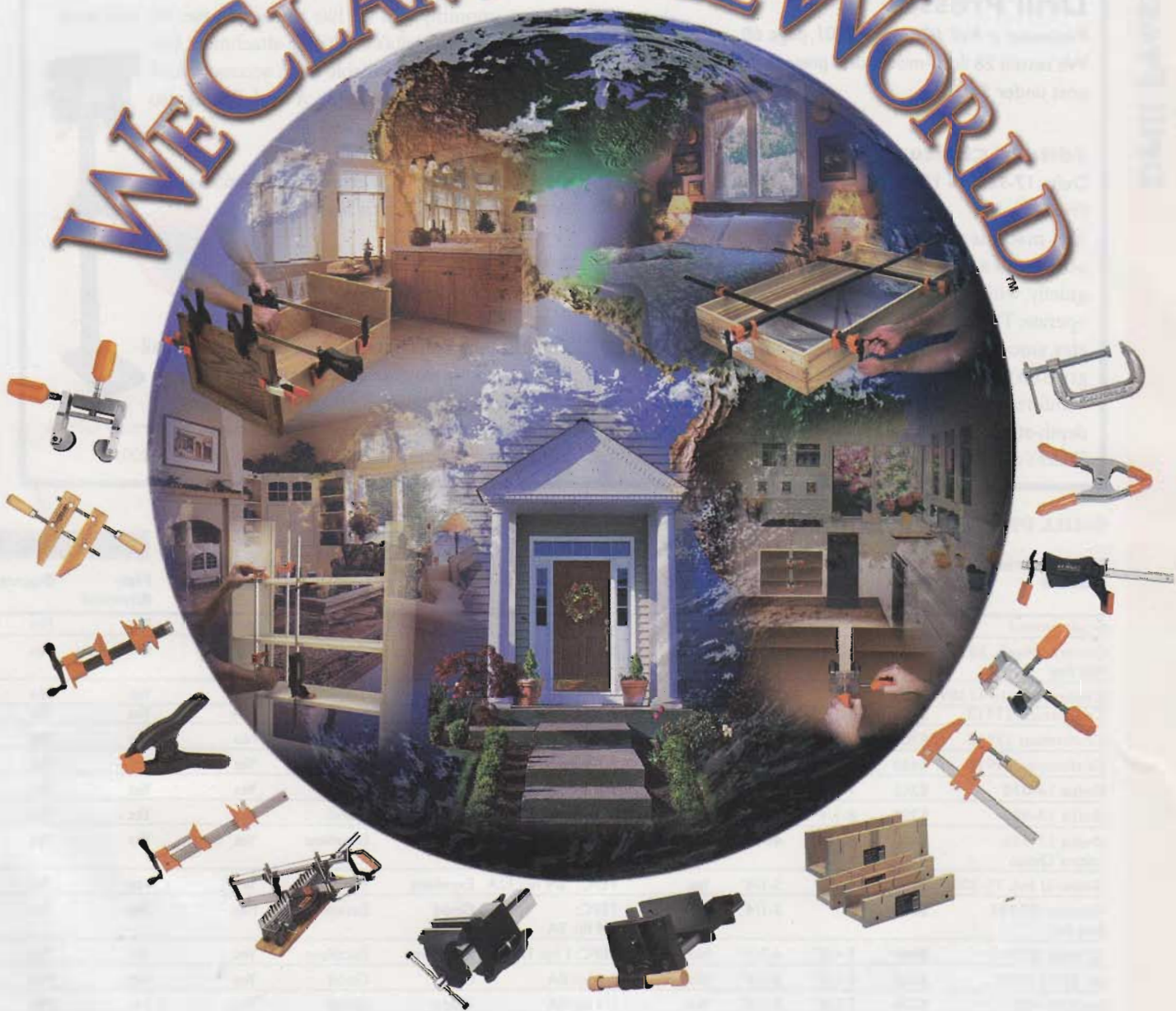
Speed change should be easy. On too many machines, getting belts on and off is difficult because belt-tensioning mechanisms don't have enough travel.

Motors in the 1/2- to 3/4-hp range provide plenty of power for most drill press operations.

Work lights seem like a bright idea for a drill press, but they don't work all that well. They're often poorly positioned, throwing shadows into spots you'd like to see. Stick with a magnet-based aftermarket light (\$20).

Visit www.americanwoodworker.com for a complete list of manufacturers, models and costs.

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Our Recommendations

Drill Presses

Reviewed in AW #86, April 2001, page 68.
We tested 28 floor-model drill presses that cost under \$450.

Editors' Choice

Delta 17-965, 16 1/2-in. swing; \$400.

Pros

This machine was outstanding. It has plenty of power and a long 4-7/8-in. quill stroke. It runs quietly, with minimal vibration, and is a joy to operate. The quill advance mechanism operates smoothly, and the smooth, round grips on the operator's levers are the most comfortable we tested. The quick-action depth-stop nut is unique and works great.

There's a genuine quill lock (it presses the quill against the



Delta 17-965; \$400.

head) that locks quickly and positively. The table raises and lowers smoothly and we like the large base. We also were impressed with Delta's mortising attachment (17-935, \$40), which is available as an accessory and installs easily on this machine. A work light is also available (25-869, \$20).

Cons

Only a couple of minor gripes: the 17-965 has an open motor and a plastic hood.

Best Buys

Grizzly G7944, 14-in. swing; \$200.

Pros

This machine feels better to operate than other small-throat-capacity machines because it's built big (taller and heavier) and it delivers good power. Its operator's levers have long rods with comfortable grips. We like the paddle style on-off



Grizzly G7944; \$200.

DRILL PRESSES

Manufacturer/ Model #	Price	Throat Depth	Quill Stroke	Easy Speed Change	Motor	OPERATOR'S LEVER		Wide Belts	WORK TABLE	
						Leverage	Grip Comfort		Flat- Rimmed	Square
Bridgewood	\$299	8-1/2"	3-1/4"	Yes	3/4 hp; 12A	Good	Good	Yes	No	No
Central Mach. 38144 <i>Best Buy</i>	\$200	6-5/8"	3-1/8"	Yes	3/4 hp; 8A	Fair	Good	No	No	No
Central Mach. 43389	\$285	8-3/8"	3-1/4"	No	1 hp; 12A	Fair	Good	Yes	Yes	No
Craftsman 22913	\$350	6-1/2"	3-1/4"	Yes!	2/3 hp; 5.9A	Fair	Fair	NA	Yes	Yes
Craftsman 22915	\$300	7-1/2"	3-1/4"	Yes	1 hp; 8A	Good	Good	No	Yes	Yes
Craftsman 22917	\$430	8-1/2"	3-1/4"	Yes	1-1/2 hp; 12A	Good	Good	Yes	Yes	Yes
Delta 14-070	\$265	7-1/4"	3-1/4"	Yes	1/2 hp; 8A	Excellent	Fair	Yes	Yes	Yes
Delta 17-900	\$300	8-1/4"	3-1/4"	No	3/4 hp; 10A	Excellent	Good	Yes	Yes	Yes
Delta 17-965 <i>Editors' Choice</i>	\$400	8-1/4"	4-7/8"	Yes	3/4 hp; 10A	Excellent	Excellent	Yes	Yes	Yes
General Int. 75-200	\$450	8-1/2"	3-1/4"	Yes	TEFC; 3/4 hp; 12A	Excellent	Fair	Yes	No	Yes
Grizzly G7944 <i>Best Buy</i>	\$248	7"	3-1/4"	Yes	TEFC; 3/4 hp; 9A	Good	Excellent	No	Yes	Yes
Grizzly G7947	\$443	8-1/2"	4-3/4"	No	TEFC; 1 hp; 10A	Excellent	Excellent	Yes	Yes	Yes
Jet JDP17FSE	\$320	8-1/8"	3-1/4"	No	3/4 hp; 8A	Good	Good	Yes	No	No
Jet JDP14JF	\$370	7-1/8"	3-1/4"	Yes	1/2 hp; 8A	Good	Good	Yes	No	No
Jet JDP14MF	\$400	7"	3-3/8"	Yes	TEFC; 3/4 hp; 9A	Good	Good	Yes	No	No
Jet JDP17MF	\$400	8-1/8"	4-3/8"	No	TEFC; 3/4 hp; 9A	Good	Good	Yes	No	No
Lobo DP-016F	\$250	6-1/2"	3"	Yes	1 hp; 16A	Fair	Fair	No	No	No
Powermatic 1170	\$390	8-1/2"	3-1/8"	Yes	1 hp; 11A	Excellent	Fair	No	No	Yes
Ridgid DP1500 <i>Best Buy</i>	\$297	7-5/8"	3-1/4"	Yes	1/2 hp; 8A	Excellent	Excellent	No	Yes	Yes
SECO SK13FDP	\$207	6-1/2"	3"	Yes	3/4 hp; 12.5A	Fair	Fair	No	No	No
SECO SK17FDP	\$325	8-1/2"	3-1/4"	No	1 hp; 16A	Excellent	Fair	No	No	No
Tradesman 8080S	\$260	6-5/8"	3-1/4"	Yes	1/2 hp; 6A	Fair	Poor	No	No	Yes
Tradesman 8106S	\$330	8-1/2"	3-1/4"	Yes	1-1/2 hp; 11.5A	Good	Good	Yes	Yes	Yes
Transpower DP16	\$165	6-5/8"	3-1/8"	No	3/4 hp; 12.5A	Fair	Fair	No	No	No
Transpower DP17	\$205	8-3/8"	3-1/8"	Yes	1 hp; 16A	Excellent	Fair	No	Yes	Yes
Wood Tek CH18NF	\$409	8-3/8"	3-1/8"	No	TEFC; 3/4 hp; 11A	Excellent	Fair	Yes	Yes	Yes
Yorkcraft YC19FDP	\$259	7"	3-1/4"	No	TEFC; 3/4 hp; 12A	Fair	Good	No	No	No

Visit www.americanwoodworker.com for a complete list of manufacturers, models and costs.

Our Recommendations

switch, although it isn't recessed. The price includes shipping to the 48 contiguous states.

Cons

The G7944 has narrow belts and a ring-style depth stop. There's noticeable side play between the quill and the head.

Ridgid DP 1500, 15-in. swing; \$300.

Pros

This machine is very user friendly. It has long operator's levers with comfortable grips, a recessed paddle-style on-off switch, built-in work light, a decent table, and a chuck key holder. A good mortising attachment is available (AC 60005, \$25), but only by special order. This tool runs quietly and smoothly. What's more, The Home Depot backs it by offering the original purchaser a lifetime warranty.



Ridgid DP 1500; \$300.

Cons

The DP 1500 has narrow belts, a ring-style depth stop, and an open motor. Other similarly priced machines have deeper throat capacity.

Central Machinery 38144, 13-in. swing; \$206.

Pros

This machine performed admirably, appears to be well made, and is available delivered for \$206 (in the 48 contiguous states). You can try it out for 30 days and return it for a full refund if you're not satisfied. If bottom dollar is your top consideration, give this machine a try.

Cons

The 38144 comes with a round table, an open motor, a ring-style depth stop, and narrow belts. The unusual, cast operator's lever takes some getting used to.



Central Machinery 38144; \$206.

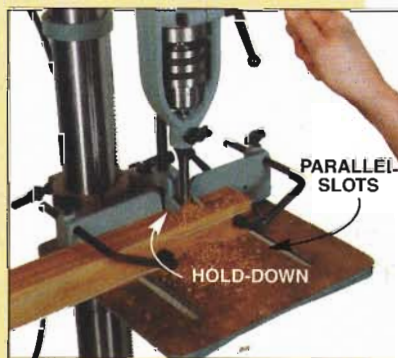
Rod-Style Depth Stop	Mortising Attachment	ON/OFF SWITCHES	
		Front Mounted	Switch Style
No	Yes	No	Push Buttons
No	Yes	Yes	Toggle
No	Yes	Yes	Toggle
Yes; 3 nuts	Yes	Yes	Toggle
Yes; 3 nuts	Yes	Yes	Toggle
Yes; 3 nuts	Yes	Yes	Toggle
Yes; 3 nuts	Yes	Yes	Toggle
No	Yes	Yes	Toggle
No	Yes	Yes	Toggle
Yes	Yes	Yes	Push Buttons
Yes	Yes	Yes	Toggle
No	Yes	Yes	Paddle
No	Yes	Yes	Paddle
No	Yes	Yes	Push Buttons
Yes; 3 nuts	Yes	Yes	Push buttons
Yes; 3 nuts	Yes	Yes	Push buttons
Yes; 3 nuts	Yes	Yes	Push buttons
No	Yes	No	Rocker
Yes	Yes	Yes	Toggle
No	Yes	Yes	Paddle
No	No	No	Rocker
No	No	No	Rocker
Yes	Yes	Yes	Toggle
Yes; 3 nuts	Yes	Yes	Toggle
No	No	No	Rocker
No	No	No	Rocker
No	Yes	Yes	Toggle
Yes	Yes	Yes	Toggle

Mortising Attachments

Mortising attachments on drill presses don't work as well as a dedicated mortiser. Drill presses aren't designed to exert the amount of force required to cut a mortise, especially with large (1/2 in.) sets.

For occasional use, and mortises no larger than 3/8 in., the attachments are adequate.

We like the attachments offered by Delta and Ridgid because of their superior hold-downs. The Delta is the only drill press in our test that allows easy, unrestricted front-to-back adjustment of the fence because of the parallel slots in the table. **AW**



See pages 125 and 126 for a listing of manufacturer phone numbers and Web sites.

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Shaves time off projects.

Spending extra time on a project because of your passion for woodworking is one thing. Time wasted on mistakes, however, is not acceptable. So use the tools that have the power and features to deliver accurate, reliable results. The first time. Every time. Without question, the RIDGID 13" Portable Planer has everything serious woodworkers demand. For starters, there's a healthy 15-amp Emerson motor, and an extra set of dual edge, quick-change knives.



Sure-Cut: Virtually "snipe" free finishes.

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material will be removed, and that every piece exiting the machine is precisely the thickness you want. And there's the Sure-Cut™ mechanism to isolate the cutterhead and minimize snipe, waste and finishing time. So do yourself a favor. Get the only planer backed by The RIDGID Lifetime Warranty. You'll finish your project with far less hassles, and more time to spare.

How to Buy a DUST COLLECTOR

Dust is everywhere when you're a woodworker. It makes your shop a mess, makes machines less safe, it's a fire hazard and can even make you allergic to woodworking! The solution to this pollution? Buy and use a good dust collector.

Ridgid DC 2000; \$300.

Getting Started

The first thing you'll need to do is figure out how large a dust collector you need. Determine what tools you'll be hooking up, how many tools are likely to be in use at the same time and how much pipe it'll take to hook it all together. You can find cubic feet per minute

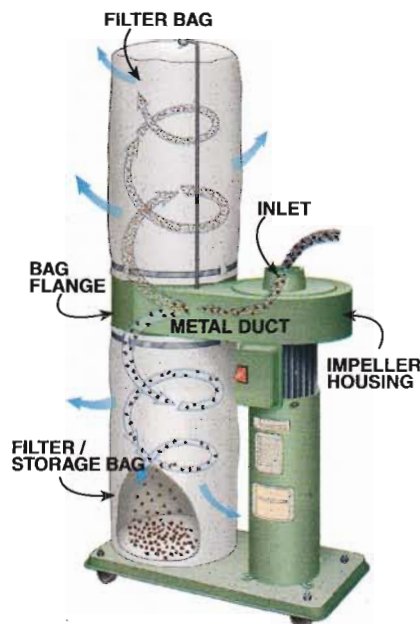
(cfm) requirements for woodworking tools, and lots of other necessary information for sizing and hooking up dust collectors, in *Woodshop Dust Control*, by Sandor Nagyszalanczy, Taunton Press, (800) 243-7252, \$20; and in *Dust Collection Basics: Recommendations for Home Shop Systems*, Woodstock Inter-

national, Inc. (800) 840-8420, \$6.

The Family

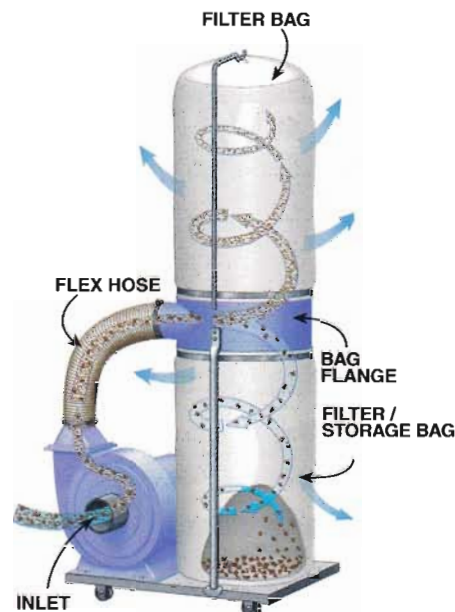
The two types of dust collectors are single-stage and two-stage cyclonic collectors.

Visit www.americanwoodworker.com for a complete list of manufacturers, models and costs.



Single-Stage Collectors

In these machines, chips and dust travel through the impeller and accumulate in the bags, which double as a filter medium. They come in two slightly different forms, depending on motor size: small (left) and large (right). One big drawback to single-stage collectors is the drop in cfm that occurs as the lower bag fills with chips and dust.



One-hp, single-stage collectors have small bags that require more frequent emptying. But their small size is an asset in a shop where floor space is at a premium. The impeller housing is connected directly to the bag flange via a short metal duct. This design is far less prone to leaks than the models with a flex-hose attachment. The 1-hp collectors perform best when connected directly to a machine rather than a central system.

One and one-half-hp and 2-hp single-stage collectors are better able to handle the cfm demands of a small central system. Having a large, 6-in. inlet is more important than hp when it comes to cfm performance. A 1-1/2-hp collector with a 6-in. inlet will outperform a 2-hp unit with a 5-in. inlet. The 1-1/2-hp units can run on a 20-amp, 110-volt circuit while the 2-hp models may require a dedicated 220-volt circuit.

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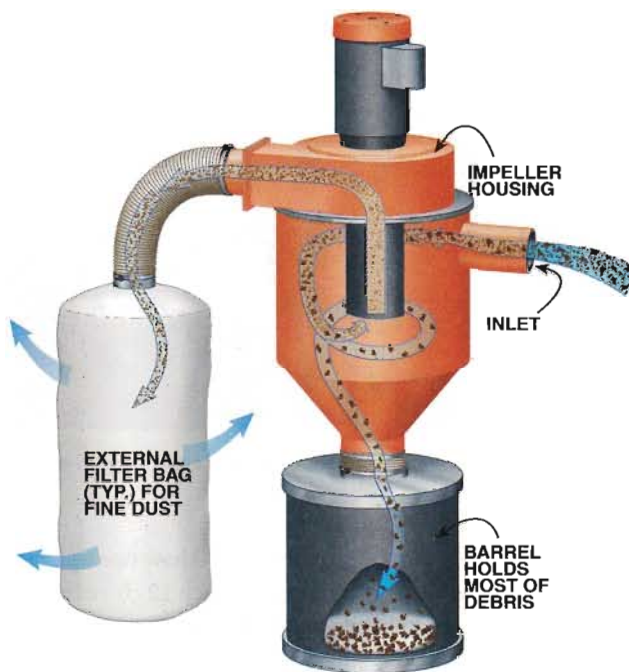
(519-836-2840 in Canada).



Two-Stage Cyclonic Collectors

These machines use a cone-shaped canister (the "cyclone") to separate most of the debris before it reaches the impeller and filter. The dust-laden air travels in a circular pattern, throwing particles outward, where they hit the sides of the cyclone and fall to the bottom. This is a more efficient design because the filter doesn't have to do double duty as a dust bag. Also, barrels are easier to empty than bags.

The drawbacks to this arrangement are that it's more expensive and generally takes up more space.



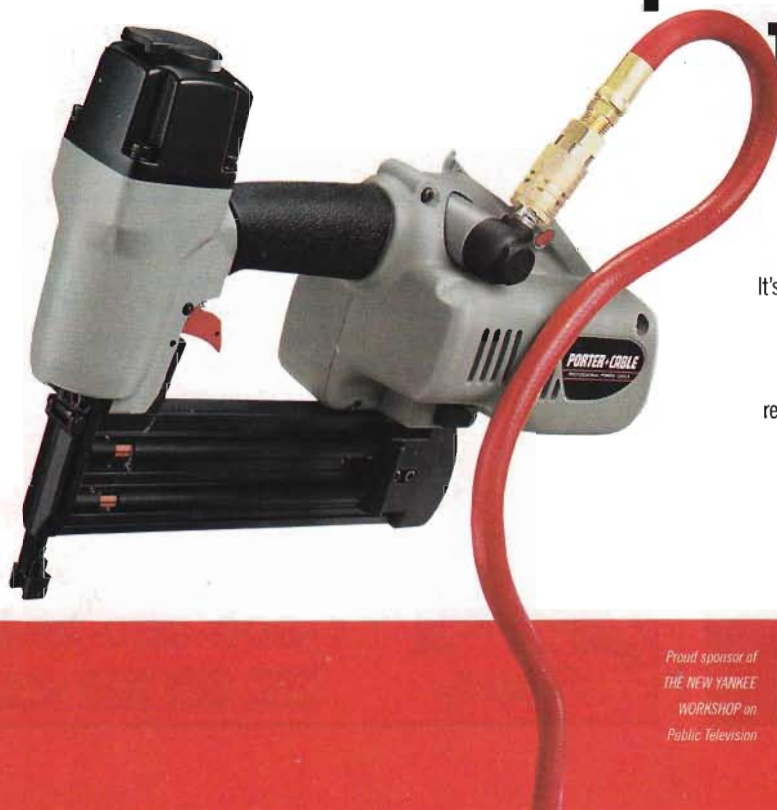
Cyclonic dust collector.

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American Woodworker 2002 TOOL BUYER'S GUIDE

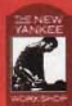
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Features



1

A polyester felt filter is better than woven cloth.



2

Triple-stitched seams keep in more dust.



3

An adjustable spring clamp makes a good seal and is easy to remove.

Filters

There's no sense pulling air and dust into a dust collector if it's going to be spewed right back into your shop. To do a good job, filters should be made from 16-ounce polyester felt (Photo 1). This fabric offers finer filtration than woven

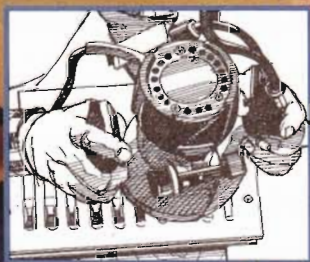
bags. You should have one square foot of filtration for each 10 cfm of airflow. So, if your collector is pulling 500 cfm, you need 50 square feet of 16-ounce polyester felt. Also, the filter should have double- or triple-stitched seams, which are much better at holding in the dust

than single-stitched seams (Photo 2). Look for a filter that's held on with an adjustable spring clamp (Photo 3). These provide the best combination of tight seal and ease of use.

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Impellers

Aluminum and plastic impellers are safe because they won't produce sparks when struck by metal accidentally vacuumed into the collector. Fires started this way are rare, but there is a risk. You can minimize this danger and maximize cfm performance by emptying the bag frequently.



4

Aluminum and plastic impellers are safer because they won't produce sparks.

Dust Leaks

It's not uncommon to find dust leaking around ductwork welds. Silicone caulk can be used to seal them.

Plastic bags for chip collection look like a good idea, but they're really a poor choice. They tend to leak around the bag flange no matter

how well they're attached. They also filter no air and are a pain to attach.

The bag flange seal can be improved by stretching a couple 20-in. bicycle inner tubes around the metal flange to help form a better seal.



Poor welds create leaks, but they can be sealed with silicone caulk. Plastic bags tend to leak because it's hard to get them to seal tightly.

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Our Recommendations

Dust Collectors

We tested dust collectors in June 2000, #80, page 80. The test was limited to machines most likely to be used in a small shop—I- to 2-hp models costing less than \$1,000.

The chart on pages 46 and 47 includes two cfm readings, Max. cfm and Under Load cfm. To determine Max. cfm we hooked up a 10-ft. section of maximum-diameter, smooth-walled duct to each machine and used clean bags.

Under Load represents the real-world performance you can expect when the collector is hooked up to a small central system with bags that have developed a dust cake. Use this figure when sizing a machine for your shop's needs.

Editors' Choice

Oneida Systems 1.5 hp cyclonic collector; \$659.

This unique machine uses a high-quality, internal pleated filter instead of an external bag. This not only saves floor space, but allows the use of an efficient fan design, because it's required to handle only filtered air. The Oneida is the

only machine that seems to do everything right. It performs well Under Load (see chart), its high-efficiency filter captures the fine dust and is easy to clean, rubber gaskets prevent leaks, the barrel is far easier to empty than any bag system and it has a high-quality, American-made motor. Its cost is the only drawback: \$659.



Oneida Systems 1.5 hp cyclonic collector; \$659.

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Our Recommendations

Best Buy

Penn State Industries 1-hp single-stage collector; \$220.

A real standout among the single-stage collectors, this machine is an excellent value. If you're on a budget and want a collector to use on one machine at a time or in a small, carefully designed central system, the Penn State is a great choice.

Its oversize, triple-stitched felt bag is standard, the spring clamps are convenient, and the 5-in. inlet helps it retain high cfm Under Load.



Penn State Industries 1-hp single-stage collector; \$220.

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DUST COLLECTORS

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* With clean bags and 10 ft. of straight pipe.
** Motor voltages vary from 110/220 to 120/240.
W=Woven fabric

F/P=Felt top/plastic bottom
† With dust-caked bags and a small central system.
F=Felt
SB=Spun-bonded filter media cartridge

Manufacturer/ Model #	Price	Inlet Dia.	CFM		BAGS & FILTERS		MOTORS		Size WxLxH	Impeller	Dust Leak
			Max.*	Under Load	Material	Spring Clamps	Amps	Volts**			
Bridgewood BW015A	\$170+	4"	455	350	F/P	Y	16/8	115/230	16x29x56	Steel	Y
Delta 50-840	\$215	4"	440	365	W	Y	9/4.5	115/230	16x29x60	Steel	N
General 10-010	\$299	4"	410	350	F/W	Y	7	115	16x29x60	Alum.	Y
Grizzly G1028	\$265+	4"	515	410	W	N	14/7	115/230	22x38x76	Steel	Y
Jet 650	\$229	4"	455	365	W	Y	11/5.5	115/230	14x27x57	Steel	Y
Penn State DC1B-XL	\$220+	5"	665	420	F	Y	16/8	115/230	17x29x59	Steel	N
Best Buy											
Reliant NN720	\$199+	4"	480	350	W	N	11.5/5.5	115/230	14x28x53	Steel	Y
Craftsman 29978	\$300	4"	410	350	W	Y	7	115	16x28x60	Steel	Y
Sunhill UFO-90	\$165+	4"	490	380	W	N	12/6	115/230	14x27x55	Steel	Y
Woodtek 802-124	\$229+	4"	455	330	W	Y	16/8	115/230	15x29x60	Alum.	N
Delta 50-850	\$299	6"	895	495	W	Y	12/6	115/230	21x37x83	Steel	N
Felder AF-10	\$559+	4.5"	420	345	F/P	N	7.2	230	16x31x78	Steel	Y
Jet DC-1100	\$300	6"	860	495	W	Y	11/5.5	115/230	22x36x79	Steel	N
Penn State DC2-5	\$300+	6"	860	610	F	Y	18/9	115/230	20x37x73	Steel	Y
Bridgewood BW002A	\$280	5"	770	515	F/P	Y	24/12	115/230	22x37x76	Steel	Y
General 10-110	\$469	5"	825	515	F/P	Y	9	230	23x37x76	Alum.	Y
Grizzly G1029	\$280+	5"	825	485	W	N	24/12	115/230	23x38x76	Steel	Y
Jet DC-1200	\$420	6"	1025	555	W	Y	15	230	21x38x79	Steel	N
Reliant NN-820	\$275+	5"	790	420	W	N	24/12	115/230	23x38x76	Steel	Y
Seco UFO-101	\$275	5"	790	485	W	N	12	230	23x38x76	Plastic	Y
Sunhill UFO 101	\$295+	5"	790	515	W	N	24/12	115/230	23x38x77	Steel	Y
Woodtek 805-930	\$399+	5"	770	455	W	Y	24/12	115/2330	22x37x77	Alum.	N

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BW-15P Planer

economically priced yet built like big professional planers, it offers absolutely vibration free finishes

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- Extended stock support rollers
- Anti-kickback fingers across entire width
- 3 spring chip breaker • Heavy cast iron construction • Magnetic switch • Jackscrew knife adjustment



BW-002A Dust Collector

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- 43.5 gal. see-through collection bag attached with quick release metal straps • 2 HP single-phase motor • Metal impeller (not plastic)

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DUST COLLECTORS

Manufacturer/ Model #	Price	Inlet Dia.	CFM		BAGS & FILTERS		MOTORS		Size WxLxH	Impeller	Dust Leak
			Max.*	Under Load	Material	Spring Clamps	Amps	Volts**			
Oneida Cyclone <i>Editors' Choice</i>	\$659+	6"	745	702	SB	NA	17.2/8.6	115/230	24x24x84	Plastic	N
Penn State Tempest	\$539+	5"	420	381	F	NA	18/9	115/230	20x20x90	Steel	Y

See pages 125 and 126 for a listing of manufacturer phone numbers and Web sites.

Other Recommendations

Penn State's DC2-5 is a 1-1/2-hp collector, outstanding in every respect from felt bags to cfm Under Load. Its only failing was a leaky fitting where the exhaust port changes from a square to a round duct. A little judicious caulking would solve the problem and make the DC2-5 an excellent choice for those seeking the most cfm for the buck. It's a bargain at \$300.

The Delta 50-850, the Jet DC-1100 and 1200 were also excellent performers with well-sealed housings and duct-

work. Their only failing was the woven bag material that came with the collectors. You'll need to spend an extra \$60 to \$100 to upgrade the bags to felt. **AW**

Sources for Filter Bag Upgrades

American Fabric Filter Co. (800) 367-3591

Oneida Air Systems (800) 732-4065

Penn State Industries (800) 377-7297

Visit www.americanwoodworker.com for a complete list of manufacturers, models and costs.

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47

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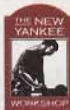
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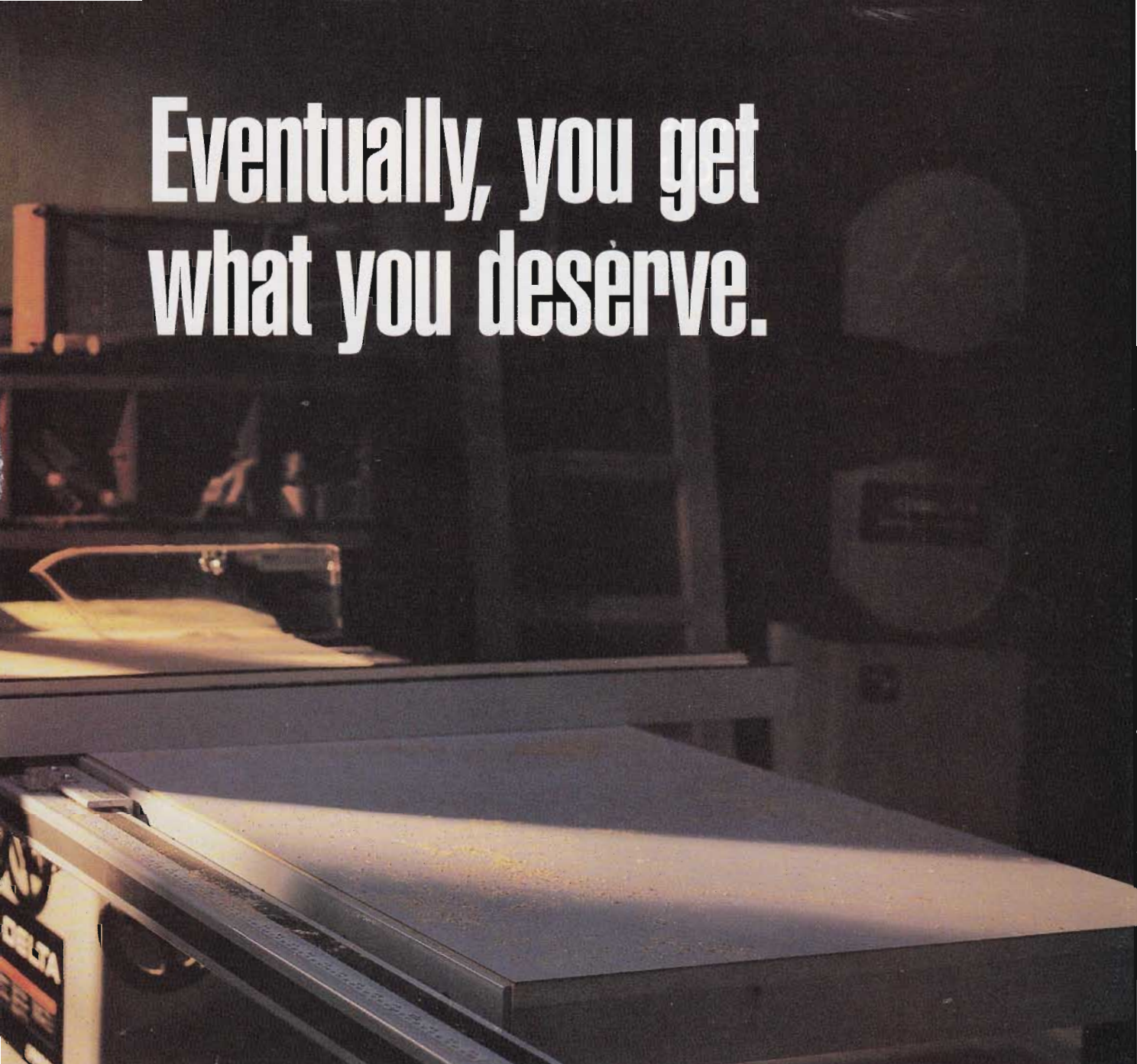
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*Accessory packages vary by product.



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How to Buy a JOINTER

Almost all woodworking requires smooth, straight, flat faces and edges. Jointers excel at this job, and are a basic addition to almost every shop. Use a jointer correctly, and you'll have the best dressed wood in the joint.



Grizzly G1182ZX; \$445.

The Family

When buying a jointer, you have two options: a floor model or a benchtop. Floor models are the best choice for most woodworkers. With beds starting around 42-in. long, they handle larger boards than benchtop jointers. Head width ranges from 6 to 16 in. Benchtop jointers, with bed lengths around 30 in., are adequate for small projects, but difficult to use for big boards. Heads are 4 or 6-in. wide.

Jointer size is based on the width of the cutterhead. So, a 6-in. jointer has a 6-in.-wide cutterhead and can handle 6-in.-wide material. Generally, as heads

get wider, beds get longer. As a rule of thumb, you can joint material twice as

long as your jointer's bed.



Ridgid JP0600 floor-model jointer; \$450.

PHOTO COURTESY OF MANUFACTURER



Craftsman 21724 benchtop jointer; \$120.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF MANUFACTURERS

Visit www.americanwoodworker.com for a complete list of manufacturers, models and costs.

Planer/Jointer Combinations

On these hybrid machines, one motor drives both a jointer head and a planer head. It takes a small amount of setup and adjustment to switch from one

function to another, but the combo package takes up less space than two separate machines.

Robland XSD combination planer/jointer; \$2,695.

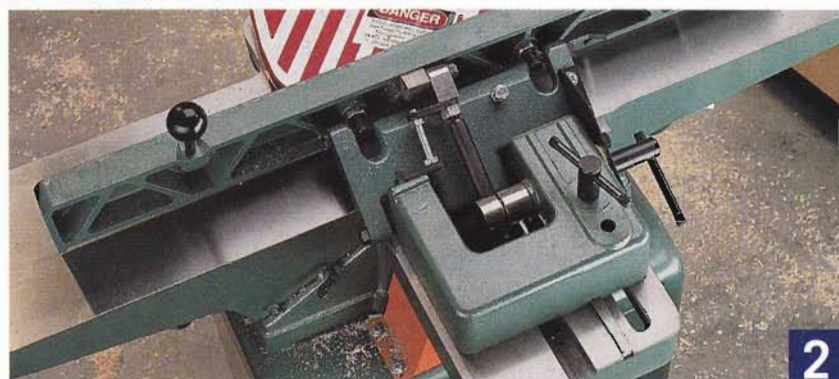


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Features



Post fence



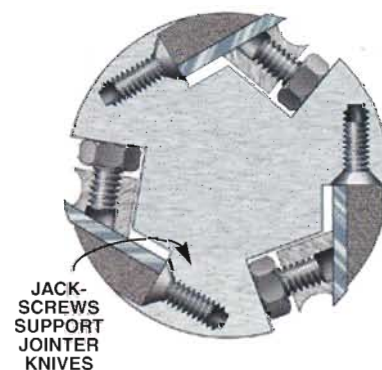
Cast fence



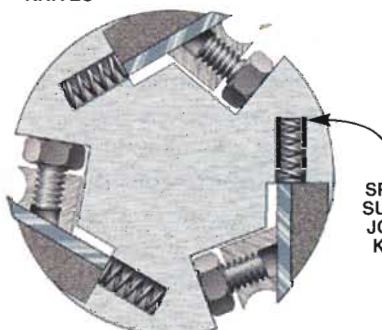
Lever adjustments are fast, but can be difficult to use for fine adjustments.



Wheel-style adjustment offers control of table height.



JACK-SCREWS SUPPORT JOINTER KNIVES



SPRINGS SUPPORT JOINTER KNIVES

Jointer knives are supported by jackscrews or springs. Both work well, although springs are easier.

control they give for fine adjustments. For the greatest convenience, look for hand wheels on the front of the jointer

The Fence

Good fences make good neighbors, and good jointers. A good fence should be flat and stay flat. If not, return it to your dealer. The fence should be tall and long to make jointing easier and it should have positive stops at 90, 45 and 135 degrees. It should slide easily when you adjust it side to side and lock rigidly in place.

Fence Mounting

There are two styles of fence mounts. One rides on a solid casting, the other on a center post. Both work well, but the center post protrudes farther in back of the machine.

Table Adjustments

A lever on the table allows for fast adjustment, but makes it harder to get fine adjustments. Hand wheels are slower than levers, but we like the con-

Visit www.americanwoodworker.com for a complete list of manufacturers, models and costs.

Knife Setting

Jointer knives don't stay sharp forever, so ease of changing is significant.

Knives might be supported by jackscrews or springs. Most woodworkers in our tests found it easier to reset knives with springs. If a jointer has other great features, jackscrews are tolerable.

Horsepower

Look for at least a 1-hp motor in 6 in. and wider jointers.

6-inch or 8-inch?

Everything points to buying the biggest jointer you can fit into your shop and budget. With their manageable footprint and price tag, 6-in. jointers are a good value, and very popular. Taking the next step up to a 8-in. jointer could add 20 in. to the bed length, but it also doubles the price.



Grizzly G1152Z
6-in. jointer; \$375.



Grizzly G1018
8-in. jointer; \$675.

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American Woodworker 2002 TOOL BUYER'S GUIDE

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The Boring Truth

From left to right: tapered drill/countersink, step drill, single-flute auger bit, saw drill, forstner bit, dowel/plug cutter, HSS step drill, lipped brad-point drill, Veritas® Plugger, centering bit, Veritas® Snug Plug® cutter.

While the other guys duke it out over power tool specifications, we search for and manufacture the best selection of quality accessories. After all, it's the boring accessories that actually engage the wood and make the greatest difference in your work.

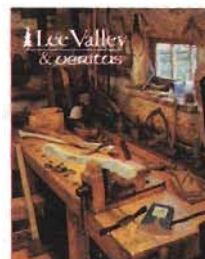
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Our Recommendations

6-in. Jointers

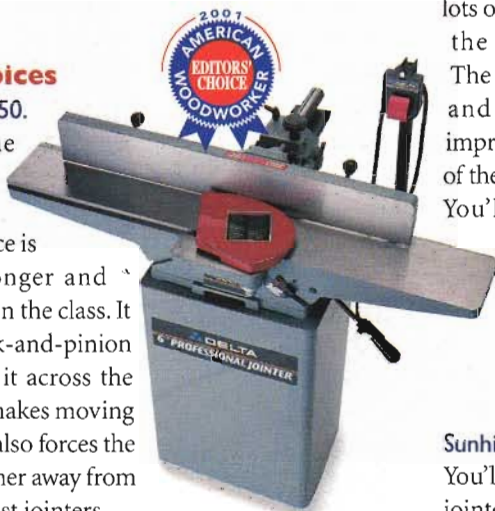
Reviewed in AW #77, December 1999, page 72.

Editors' Choices

Delta 37-195; \$550.

This is a unique machine with several distinct features. The fence is significantly longer and taller than most in the class. It has a unique rack-and-pinion system to move it across the bed. While this makes moving the fence easy, it also forces the tool to stand farther away from the wall than most jointers.

The handles on the fence are conveniently out of the way when edge-jointing. Woodworkers with sore backs will like the high switch placement. The lever on the infeed table locks in place with 1/32-in. increments. This makes it easier to use than most levers.



Best Buys

Bridgewood BW6R; \$399.

This machine offers lots of features for the money. The fence is rigid and we were really impressed with the quality of the machining on the beds. You'll need to wire in the switch, but the owner's manual covers this.

Bridgewood BW6R; \$399.



Sunhill 924028 (CT-60L); \$360.

You'll get the second longest bed in our test with this jointer. The bed length comes from adding extensions to the infeed and outfeed tables. The assembly instructions say nothing about the extensions, but they're easy enough to put on.



General 80-100LM; \$560.

With its bed extensions, this machine had the longest bed in the bunch. We liked the front-mounted hand wheels and the smooth-operating fence.

General 80-100LM; \$560.



Jet JJ-6CSX; \$530.

All the features we like are here, including hand wheels on the front, a smooth-operating and rigid fence, and plenty of power. Assembly was easy thanks to a well written and illustrated owner's manual.



Jet JJ-6CSX; \$530.

After The Test:

Grizzly G1182ZX; \$445.

This jointer would have done well in our test. It has a high switch, mounted above the machine, and an "On" light lets you know it's running. The bed is 47-in. long, the fence is 4 in. x 29 in. and the 1 hp-motor provides plenty of power. The knife-setting system is a unique combination of jackscrews and springs, making setting easy.

Grizzly G1182ZX; \$445.

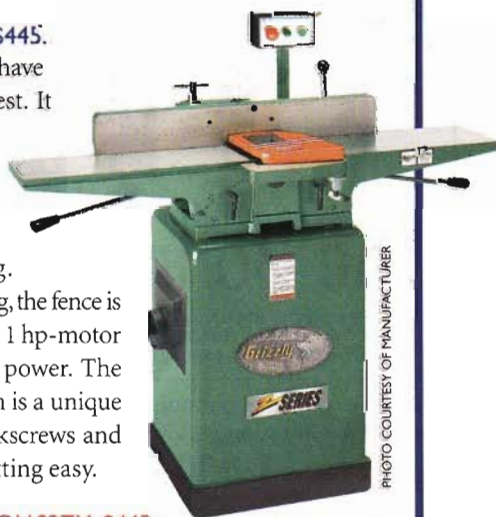


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What's the secret to building perfect panel doors?



Freud panel bits...now available with backcutters

STEPS TO BUILDING A PERFECT PANEL DOOR:



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2 ROUT STILES & RAILS. SHOWN: STILE BIT FROM FREUD SET #99-260.



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4 ASSEMBLE STILES, RAILS AND DOOR PANEL.

In the past, the only way to make architecturally correct panel doors required the use of two bits. Or, with other raised panel backcutter bits, you had to settle for a smaller profile.

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U.S. Patent No. 5,899,252
Other patents pending

Our Recommendations

Powermatic 54A; \$750.

Another jointer too new for the test, this machine is in a class by itself. It has a 6-in. head and, with an amazing 66-in.-long bed, would have been a contender.

A new style of lever adjustment on the infeed table makes fine adjustments easier. At \$750, this machine is higher priced than other 6-in. jointers, but less expensive than 8-in. jointers, and it has the longest bed in the 6-in. group.



Powermatic 54A; \$750.

PHOTO COURTESY OF MANUFACTURER

JOINTERS

Manufacturer/ Model #	Price	Table Adjustment	Fence Height and Length	Positive Stops	Bed Length	Knife Adjustment	HP	Open or Closed stand
Bridgewood BW6R <i>Best Buy</i>	\$399	2 handwheels, under tables	4" x 29"	45,90,135	46"	Screws	1	Closed
Delta-closed 37-195 <i>Editors' Choice</i>	\$550	1 lever, 1 handwheel	5" x 35"	45,90,135	46-1/2"	Screws	1	Closed
Delta-open 37-190	\$450	1 lever, 1 handwheel	4-1/2" x 27-1/2"	45,90,135	46"	Screws	3/4	Open
General 80-100LM <i>Editors' Choice</i>	\$560	2 handwheels, in front	4" x 29"	45,90,135	55-1/4"	Screws	3/4	Closed
Grizzly G1182Z	\$375	2 levers	4" x 29-1/2"	45,90,135	47-1/2"	Springs	1	Closed
Jet JJ6CSX <i>Editors' Choice</i>	\$530	2 handwheels, in front	4" x 29"	45,90,135	46"	Screws	3/4	Closed
Lobo JT2206	\$380	2 handwheels, under tables	4 x 27-3/4"	90,135	46"	Springs	1	Closed
Ridgid JP0600	\$450	2 handwheels, under tables	4" x 28"	90,135	46"	Springs	3/4	Closed
Sunhill 924028 (CT-60L) <i>Best Buy</i>	\$360	2 handwheels, under tables	4" x 28"	45,90,135	52-3/4"	Springs	1	Closed
Woodtek 924028	\$400	1 handwheel, 1 lever	4-1/2" x 29-1/2"	45,90,135	46"	Screws	3/4	Closed

AW

See pages 125 and 126 for a listing of manufacturer phone numbers and Web sites.

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How to Buy a SLIDING COMPOUND MITER SAW

If a radial arm saw is too big, and a miter saw doesn't have enough oomph, a sliding compound miter saw may be just the ticket. With versatility and portability in mind, woodworkers are stepping up to sliding compound miter saws to build everything from picture frames to decks.

What is it?

Put a compound miter saw on a slide to increase its capacity, and you have a sliding compound miter saw. This saw is great both in the shop and for other work around the house like cutting trim or building a deck. Like a radial arm saw, the head can be tilted for bevel cuts and angled for miters. Sliding saws are safer to use than radial arms because you push the saw through the cut instead of pulling it. This eliminates climb cutting (cutting in the same direction as the spinning blade). You can't rip or dado on a sliding compound saw, but that's what your table-saw is for.

The Family

Sliding compound miter saws come in four blade sizes; 7-1/4 in., 8-1/2 in., 10 in. and 12 in. Larger blades accom-



Makita's BLS712SFK cordless saw; \$650.

Hitachi C10FS; \$550.

modate thicker stock. The best choice is a saw with a 10-in. blade, because it has plenty of capacity and takes the same size blade as your table-saw.

Buying a saw with a 7-1/4 in. or 8-1/2-in. blade will limit your cutting capacity, and you'll have to buy a special blade just for your miter saw.

There's also a new baby in this family: the *cordless* sliding saw. These tools are handy for a trim carpenter up on a scaffold, but they haven't earned their way into the average woodworking shop, where sliders are stationary.

Is this saw for you?

At two to three times the price of a miter saw, why pop the extra dough? There are three good reasons:

Visit www.americanwoodworker.com for a complete list of manufacturers, models and costs.

Capacity. Most of these saws will cross-cut 11-1/2 in. or wider stock. Miter saws crosscut to around 7 in. Combine the tilting head with the slide and you can bevel wide stuff like big base moldings. **Compound angle cutting.** This means cutting a bevel and angle at the same time. Some of these saws have heads

that tilt both left and right, making them even easier to use.

Portability. Sliding compound miter saws can be cumbersome to haul around, but they're much more portable than tablesaws or radial-arm saws.

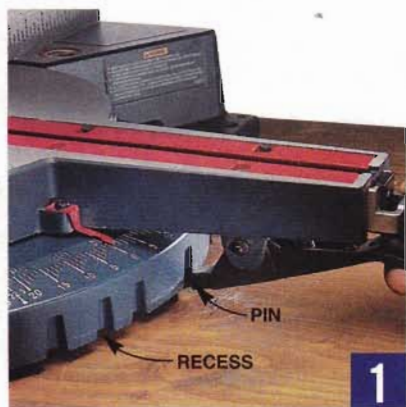
There are three major disadvantages to this type of saw, however:

Expense. You'll part with a lot of cash (\$370 to \$700).

Space. You'll need a 30- to 36-in.-deep bench, and as much as 24 in. behind the fence to allow clearance for the slide mechanism.

Bulk. These are considered portable tools, but their size and weight (see chart, page 64) makes them cumbersome to lug around.

Features



Distinct positive angle stops are user-friendly.



Angle and bevel indicators should be easy to read.



A tall fence makes it easier to cut crown molding.



Miter saws come with horizontal or vertical handles. The choice is personal.



Quick-action hold-downs make it easier to clamp material to the saw.

Blade Size

Pay attention to the blade that comes with the saw (see chart, page 64). A 40-tooth, 10-in. blade is great when you're framing walls, but not so good for framing photos. Plan on spending another \$50 if you need to buy a high tooth count blade for your saw.

Positive Angle Stops

Distinct positive stops (like on the Bosch in Photo 1) are best. As you're swinging the saw to the angle setting, the spring-loaded pin firmly drops into the recess. There's no question about whether or not you're in the right spot.

Angle Indicator

An easy-to-read angle indicator makes setting the saw quick and accurate. The DeWalt hairline cursor has a vernier scale allowing you to set to 1/4 and 1/2-degree increments (Photo 2).

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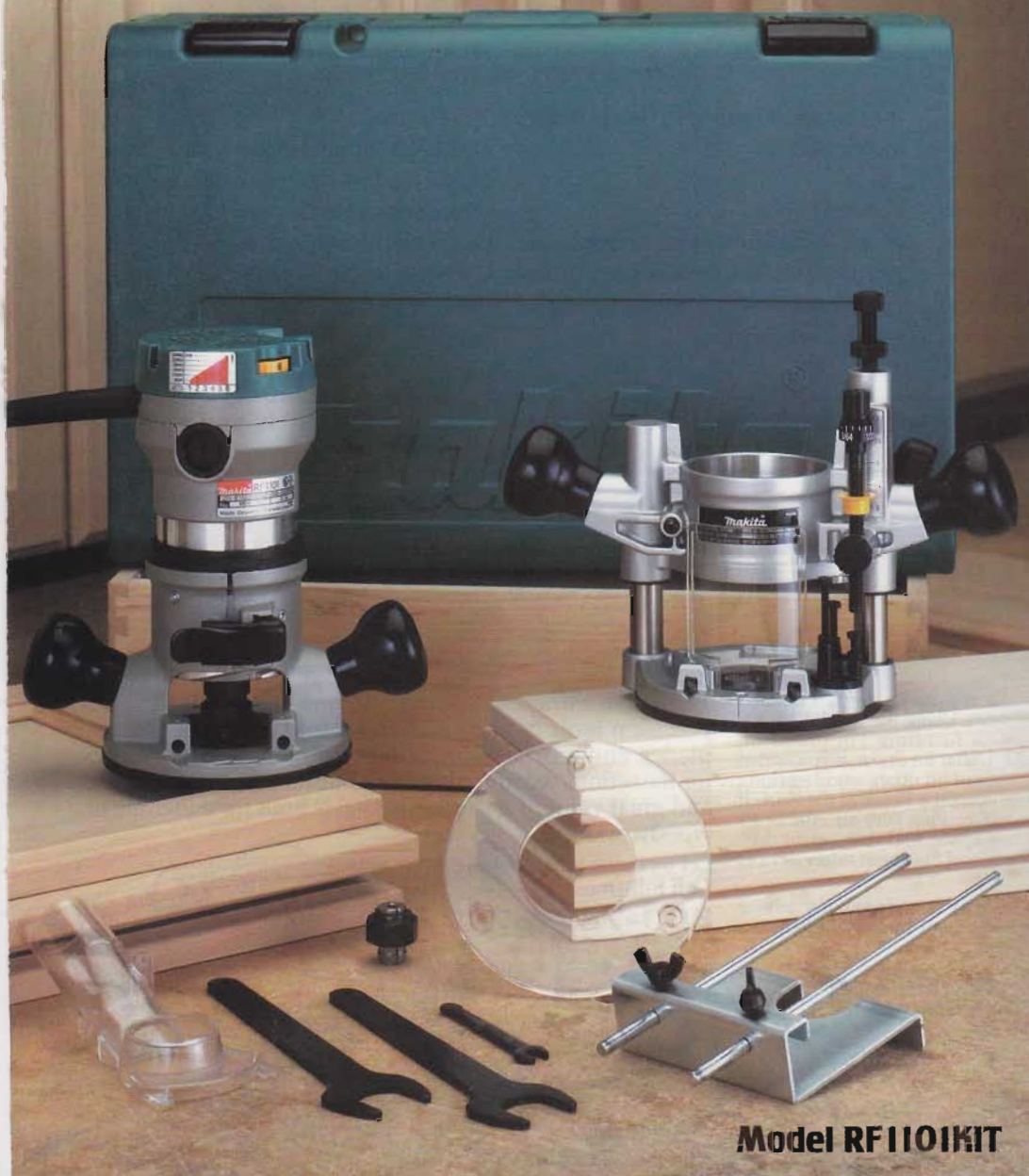
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EVERYTHING YOU NEED



Saws that tilt both left and right make compound cutting easier.

Beveling

As always, look for a saw with an easy-to-read scale to make adjustments simpler. Also, look for a saw that bevels both left and right. This makes it easier to do compound cutting. Motors mounted at an angle to the blade and belt-driven saws keep the motor out of

the way when leaning the blade to the motor side.

Fence Height

A tall fence allows you to cut large crown molding. If the saw you choose doesn't come with a tall fence, add a wooden sub-fence.

Handle Style

Handles are either horizontal or vertical. See what's comfortable for you.

Hold-Downs

Quick-acting hold-downs work like toggle clamps, and make it easy to secure material to the saw. Hold-downs that work on a screw thread, like a C-clamp, work okay but are much slower. This feature isn't a deal breaker, but rather a convenience issue.

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Our Recommendations

Sliding Compound Miter Saws

Reviewed in December 2000, #84, page 98.

We didn't pick a separate Best Buy.

Editors' Choice

Makita LS 1013; \$530.

A nearly perfect saw with great features at a great price.

Pros

It bevels left and right, has a very good blade and firm positive stops. The fence works well and this saw has the smallest footprint of the top five.

Cons

There's no preset override like the Bosch and Milwaukee saws and it has a short table.



Makita LS 1013; \$530.

Four Top Saws

These are some great tools, narrowly edged out by the Makita, which simply offered more features.

Bosch B3915; \$480.

A good all-around value. This saw has very distinct preset angles and can angle up to 60 degrees. The large table simplifies supporting your material.

Pros

It angles up to 60 degrees, has a good blade, a tall fence and a long table. You'll like the quick-acting hold-down.

Cons

It only bevels one way and the preset angle release is a possible pinch point.



Bosch B3915; \$480.

DeWalt DW708; \$600.

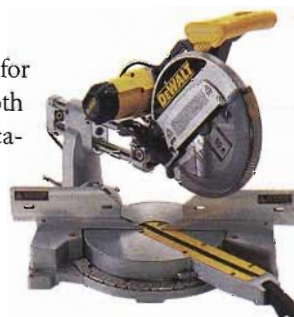
Lots of capacity (12 in.) for even the largest stock. Both the bevel and angle indicators are very easy to read. The high fence simplifies supporting crown molding.

Pros

It angles up to 60 degrees, has a tall fence, good angle and bevel indicators and it bevels left and right.

Cons

It's the heaviest saw tested and the dust bag and hold-downs cost extra.



DeWalt DW708; \$600.

Hitachi C10FS; \$520.

One of only two 10-in. saws that bevels left and right. The adjustable guard behind the blade offers excellent support, provides a line-of-cut indicator, and prevents small offcuts from being flung by the spinning blade.

Pros

It bevels left and right, has a great soft start and brake. It features a rear blade guard for supporting work and providing a line-of-cut indicator.

Cons

It has spongy positive stops and a hard-to-read angle scale.



Hitachi C10FS; \$520.

Makita LS1212; \$700.

This saw is the 12-in. big brother of our Editors' Choice saw. It angles up to 60 degrees and has one of the highest-amp motors in the group.

Pros

It has a great blade, positive stops that engage firmly and a nice fence. You'll like the high-amp motor and that it bevels left and right.

Cons

There are no angle presets for compound cuts.



Makita LS1212; \$700.

SLIDING COMPOUND MITER SAWS

* Fence height is adequate for cutting 3-1/4-in. crown
† V=Vertical, H=Horizontal ** volt battery E=Excellent; G=Good; F=Fair
‡ Depth needed to accommodate rail travel

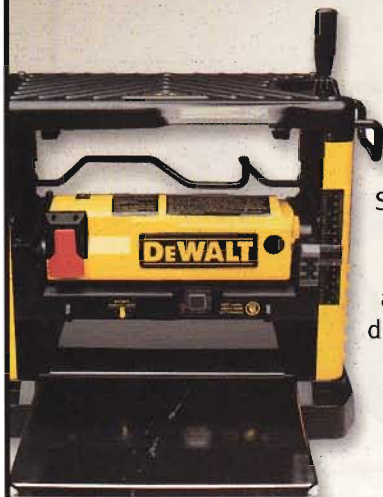
Manufacturer/ Model #	Price	Blade Size/ Tooth Count	L&R Tilt	Distinct Positive Stops	Angle Pointer	Bevel Pointer	Fence Height*	Handle Style†	Quick Release Hold- Downs	Footprint= Depth x Width (in.)	Max Width of Cut (in.)	Max Thickness (in.)	Width at 45 Degrees (in.)	Amps	Weight (in lbs.)
Bosch B3915	\$480	10"/60	N	Y	G	G	Y	V	Y	41-1/4 x 26-1/2	12	3-1/2	8-5/8	13	56
Craftsman 21292	\$590	12"/40	N	N	G	G	Y	H	N	45-1/2 x 23	12-5/8	4	8-3/4	15	53
Delta 36-240	\$430	10"/40	N	N	E	G	Y	H	N	34-1/2 x 27-1/4	11-1/2	3-5/8	8	15	55
DeWalt DW708	\$600	12"/60 h	Y	Y	E	E	Y	H	N	44-1/2 x 23-1/2	12	4-3/4	8-1/2	13	61
Hitachi C8FB-2	\$460	8 1/2"/24	N	N	F	F	N	V	N	39 x 21-1/4	12	2-9/16	8-5/8	9.5	45
Hitachi C10FS	\$520	10"/40	Y	N	F	F	N	V	N	43 x 21-1/2	12-1/4	3-3/8	8-11/16	12	50
Makita LS711DWBEK	\$442	7-1/2"/40	N	Y	G	F	N	V	N	30-1/2 x 17	7-1/8	2	5	18**	26
Makita LS0711	\$420	7-1/2"/40	N	Y	G	F	N	V	N	30-1/2 x 17	7-1/8	2	5	10	35
Makita LS1011	\$450	10"/64	N	N	F	F	N	V	N	31 x 20-1/2	12	2-15/16	8-7/16	12	41
Makita LS1013 Editors' Choice	\$530	10"/64	Y	Y	G	G	Y	V	N	39 x 21	12	3-5/8	8-1/2	13	55
Makita LS1212	\$700	12"/96	Y	Y	G	G	Y	V	N	39 x 23-1/2	12-1/4	3-7/8	8-1/2	15	55
Milwaukee 6496-6K	\$500	10"/40	N	Y	F	G	Y	V	N	37 x 25	12-3/8	3-5/8	8-3/4	15	55
Milwaukee 6497-6K	\$600	10"/80	N	Y	F	G	Y	V	N	37 x 25	12-3/8	3-5/8	8-3/4	15	55
Porter-Cable 3807	\$480	10"/40	N	Y	G	G	N	H	Y	36 x 22	11-1/2	3-5/8	8	15	54
Tradesman 8336	\$370	8-1/2"/40	N	Y	G	G	Y	V	N	49 x 21-1/2	12	2-9/16	8-1/2	10	50

AN

See pages 125 and 126 for a listing of manufacturer phone numbers and Web sites.

Visit www.americanwoodworker.com for a complete list of manufacturers, models and costs.

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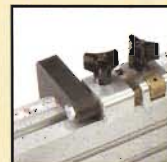
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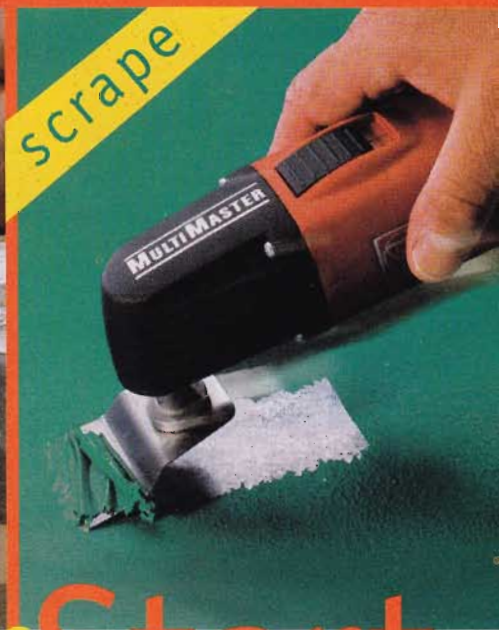
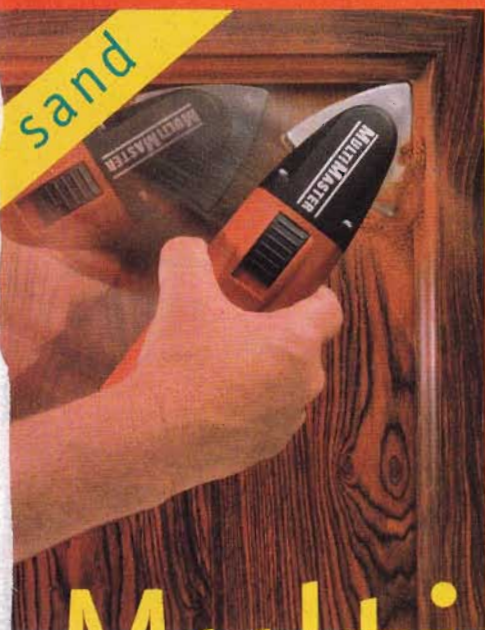
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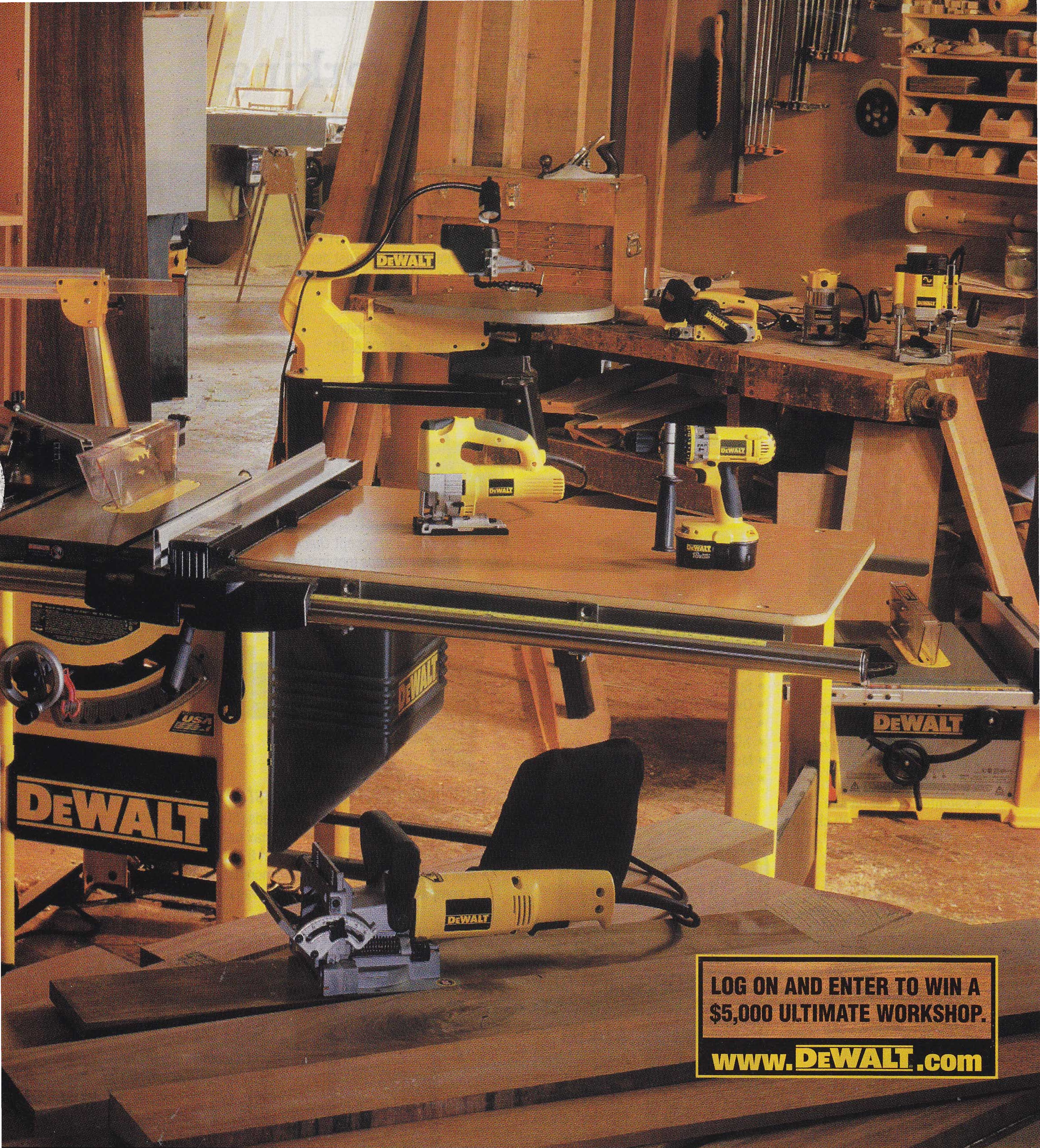


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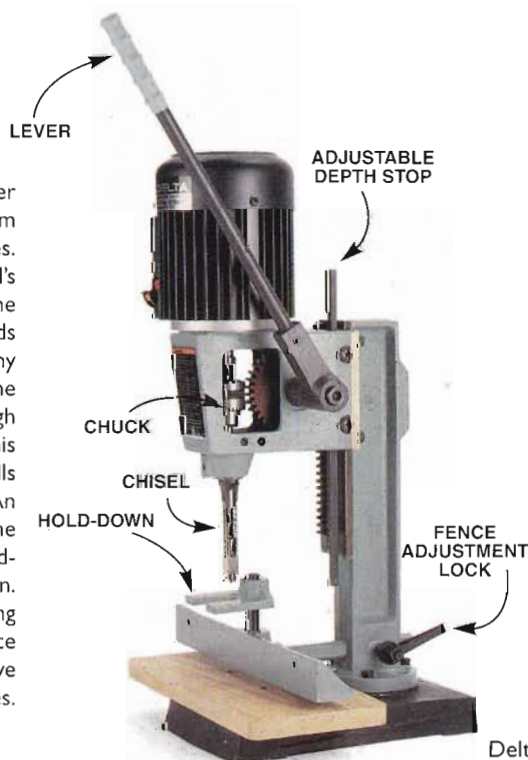
How to Buy a MORTISER

From chisels to router tables, there are plenty of ways to cut mortises. But if you build lots of furniture, and cut lots of mortises, you may be ready to step up to a dedicated mortiser. These machines make your mortising easier, and their square mortises are the perfect match for tablesawn tenons.

Woodtek 876-775; \$240.

Mortising machines are lever operated, and require some arm strength to chop the mortises.

The lever controls the head's movement up and down the column. A gas-filled shock holds the head stationary in any position. The motor powers the auger bit, which extends through the hollow chisel. This auger/chisel combination drills and shears the mortise. An adjustable fence positions the workpiece and a U-shaped hold-down keeps it in position. Mortises are made by advancing the workpiece along the fence while cutting successive squared holes.



Delta 14-650; \$242.

The Family

The mortiser family can be divided by price; less than \$600 and more than \$600. In addition to the dedicated machines, you can buy a mortising attachment for a drill press.

Less Than \$600

These machines are a bargain (\$150 to \$550), they don't take up much space, and with some tweaking (see page 73), will perform for the woodworker who's willing to babysit the machine a little. They'll cut 1/4-in. to 1/2-in. mortises.

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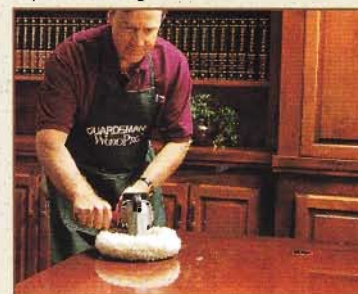
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Bridgwood HM-11; \$219.

More Than \$600

These industrial-quality machines have large capacities and adjustable tables. Material is held in place by a massive plate that works like a vise, and is much more effective than the hold-downs on the less expensive models. The tables move front to back and side to side on an X/Y-axis. This means you use the hand wheels on the front of the machine to position your material, instead of sliding it by hand.

Woodworkers lust after these heavy-duty machines, but they're an expensive commitment to mortising, and require a large, dedicated place in your shop.



Powermatic 719A; \$800.



Delta mortise kit, 17-924; \$75.

Drill Press Attachments

Consider these if you need to mortise only occasionally. Mortising attachments are inexpensive, but drill presses aren't designed to provide the leverage you need for heavy mortising. They're okay for chopping 3/8-in. or smaller mortises, but the head and table will flex considerably in hard use.

Features

Fence

It doesn't matter if the fence is cast iron or angle steel; what matters is that the fence is flat and square to the table.

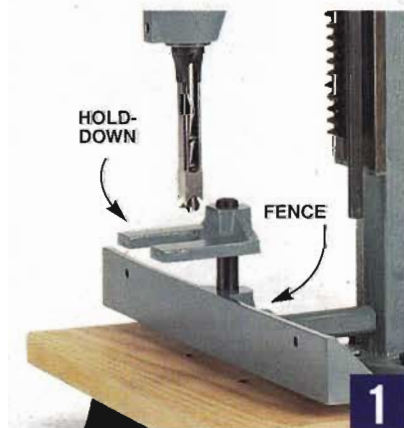
Hold-Downs

Hold-downs (found on the less-than \$600 mortisers) are fastened to a post on the fence or mounted directly to the column. We found these hold-downs barely adequate, but easily repairable.

The vise-like clamps on the more expensive machines work great for securing material.

Motor Speed

Mortisers come with a 1,725-rpm or 3,450-rpm motor. Manufacturers say that slower speeds extend chisel life. Slower rpm machines are less stressful to use because the chisels are also less likely to overheat. Higher rpm machines, however, cut mortises with less effort. You'll have to take more care with your feed rate to avoid burning the edge of the chisel.



The fence and hold-down must be rock solid for the mortiser to work correctly.

Visit www.americanwoodworker.com for a complete list of manufacturers, models and costs.

Our Recommendations

Mortisers

Reviewed in AW #81, August 2000, page 73.

We tested mortisers that cost less than \$600. All the mortisers tested were capable of cutting mortises, but the hold-downs were so poor it was a struggle with larger mortises (Photos 2 and 3). As a result, we didn't pick an Editors' Choice, but we did select five Best Buy machines and made some recommendations for tweaking the machines for better performance.

This hold-down doesn't sit flat, so the workpiece it's supposed to hold is free to twist, or "rack," underneath it. Poor-fitting hold-downs are common, and the weak link in many of these machines.



2

A poor-fitting hold-down caused the chisel to bind in the mortise because it allowed the workpiece to rack. Once a chisel is stuck, it's a real pain to get loose.



3

Best Buys

With improvements to their hold-down systems, six of the machines we tested consistently cut mortises effectively. Five of these mortisers are competitively priced and received our Best Buy award. The sixth, the Multico PM 12, cost \$300 more. The Delta and Jet machines run at 1,725 rpm. Mortisers from Bridgewood, Grizzly and Woodtek, which have similar castings and appear to be virtually identical, have fast-speed motors. These machines are a definite improvement over mortising on the drill press. At less than \$250, all five of these mortisers are bargains.



Bridgewood HM-11; \$219.



Delta 14-650; \$240.



Grizzly G3183; \$225.



Jet JBM-5; \$239.



Woodtek 876-775; \$240.

After the Test

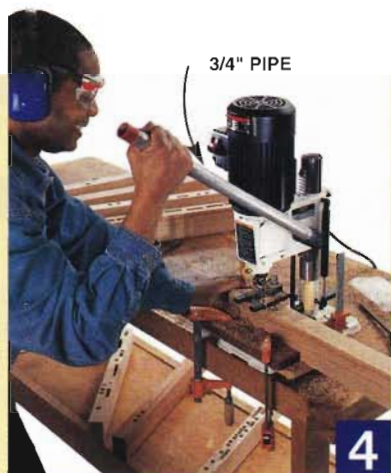
General International produced their 75-050M1 (\$350) after our tool test. Although it doesn't quite hit a bull's-eye, it comes close. This machine would have been a top choice in our test.

The General has a better (though not perfect) hold-down and a marginally better fence than other comparable machines. It operates at a slow speed (1,720 rpm.) and has a long (23 in.) lever.



General International 75-050M1; \$350

Visit www.americanwoodworker.com for a complete list of manufacturers, models and costs.



Lengthen the handle for extra leverage.

Performance Enhancing

All of the less-expensive machines could use some improvements. The fixes we found are so simple, it's surprising manufacturers aren't making these modifications themselves. Here's what you can do to spruce up a mortiser.

Lengthen the Handles

The extra leverage gained by slipping a 20-in. length of pipe over the hand lever helps most when cutting 1/2-in. mortises with slow-speed machines. Slow-speed machines require more physical effort and are more likely to stall while cutting, so high motor amperage (minimum 5 amps) is important.

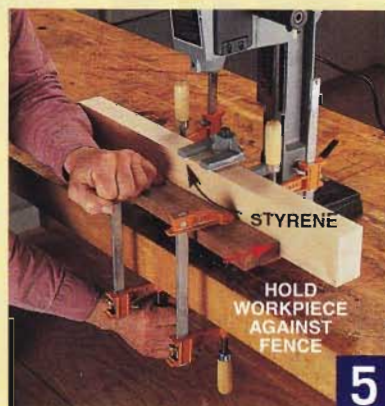
Improve Holding Capability

Clamp the fence to the mortiser's table, using spacers if necessary, so it stays put when the chisel is withdrawn.

Clamp a board in front of the workpiece so it can't rack. Sand or file the bottom of the hold-down so it sits flat. Then use cyanoacrylate (CA) glue to attach a piece of styrene to the hold-down's bottom. (Both CA glue and sheets of styrene are available at hobby stores.) Styrene helps the workpiece slide back and forth more easily under the hold-down.

Properly Install Bits

Use two scraps of wood when you install the chisel and bit. One acts as a spacer between the chisel and its bushing to ensure proper clearance between the auger and the hollow chisel. Its thickness depends on the size of the chisel. Check the owner's manual. The other scrap protects your finger while you hold the auger in position for tightening. Tighten the chuck in all three holes so the auger won't come loose during a cut. Then remove the spacer and snug up the chisel against the bush-



Clamp a board in front of the workpiece so it can't move.



Clamp the fence to the table so it stays put.

ing. Square it to the fence and tighten the setscrew.

MORTISERS

Manufacturer/ Model #	Price	Chisel Sets Included	1/2-HP Motor Amperage	Motor Speed (rpm)	Fence Square to Table	Chuck Access
Bridgewood HM-11 <i>Best Buy</i>	\$219	None	6A @ 110V	3,400	Yes	Right hand only
Central Machinery 35570	\$160	1/4-in., 3/8-in. and 1/2-in.	2.3A @ 110V	3,580	No	Both hands
Craftsman 219060	\$200	None	4A @ 120V	1,725	No	Both hands
Delta 14-650 Type 2 <i>Best Buy</i>	\$240	1/4-in., 5/16-in. 3/8-in., 1/2-in.	5A @ 120V	1,725	Yes	Both hands
Grizzly G3183 <i>Best Buy</i>	\$225	None	6A @ 110V	3,400	Yes	Right hand only
Jet JBM-5 <i>Best Buy</i>	\$239	1/4-in., 3/8-in. 1/2-in.	6A @ 115V	1,720	Yes	Both hands
Multico PM 12	\$549	1/2-in.	5.1A @ 110V	3,470	Yes	Both hands
Woodtek 876-775 <i>Best Buy</i>	\$240	None	6A @ 110V	3,450	Yes	Right hand only

AW

See pages 125 and 126 for a listing of manufacturer phone numbers and Web sites.

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How to Buy a **PLANER**

Even if you're a master with a hand plane, there's nothing like a thickness planer for making wood smooth and uniform. Here's what you should know when choosing the planer that's best for you.

DeWalt DW733; \$400.

The Family

There are two types of planers: portable and stationary. Stationary planers are categorized as large or medium-size. There are also planer/molders and hybrid jointer/planers.

Portable Planers

- Portable planers are relatively inexpensive, small enough to store in a cubbyhole and can produce as smooth a cut as larger planers.
- They're genuine plug-and-play tools that run on 110 volts and require a minimum of set up.
- They're great for dressing presurfaced lumber. (For example, 3/4-in. material



Makita 2012NB portable planer; \$500.

that you need to take down to 1/2 in. for drawer sides.)

- Portable planers have universal motors that perform best when taking off about 1/32 in. per pass. You can use a portable planer to surface roughsawn material, but at 1/32 in. per pass it'll be slow going if you have a lot of boards.
- The nylon or rubber feed rollers on portables may have difficulty grabbing roughsawn material.
- Even with fine-tuning, portable planers are infamous for producing snipe—the deeper bite at each end of a board. Some recent models, however, have all but eliminated it.
- Portable planers are priced starting at less than \$300.

PHOTO COURTESY OF MANUFACTURER

Visit www.americanwoodworker.com for a complete list of manufacturers, models and costs.



PHOTO COURTESY OF MANUFACTURER

Woodtek 875001 stationary planer; \$1,000.



PHOTO COURTESY OF MANUFACTURER

RBI 812 planer/molder; \$2,124.

Stationary Planers

Compare these stationary planer features to the portables:

- These planers have bigger induction motors that allow them to take off more material per pass; as much as 1/8 in.
- Their three-knife cutterheads (compared to two on portables) mean more knives do the work, so less frequent sharpening and knife replacement is necessary.
- The metal feed rollers grab rough-sawn stock better than the rollers on the portables.
- Some stationary planers have variable feed speed so you can slow down the feed rate and get a smoother surface. This is especially important on extremely hard or figured wood.
- With fine-tuning, you should be able to produce a snipe-free cut.
- Some operate on 110-volt circuits; most require 220 volts.
- Some assembly is required. You'll need to bolt parts together and spend time fine-tuning these machines.

PHOTO COURTESY OF MANUFACTURER



Hitachi P12RA combination jointer/planer; \$1,410.

Planer/Molders

Some stationary planers accept molding cutters. Adding the cutters is typically straightforward and doesn't compromise the planing capability. This feature is especially handy if you'd like to do all your own mill-work from scratch, or if you work with materials that aren't commercially made into moldings (see Q&A, page 14).

Jointer/Planer Hybrids

Jointer/planers use one motor to power both jointing and planing cuts. They typically take up less space than two separate machines, but may require some adjustments to switch from one operation to another.

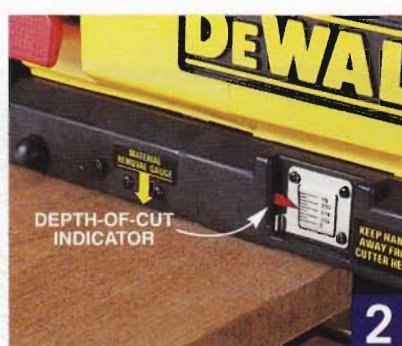
You'll pay more for a hybrid than for a dedicated planer, but you're getting a two-for-one machine.

Visit www.americanwoodworker.com for a complete list of manufacturers, models and costs.

Features



Knife changing is made easier with indexed knives.



A depth-of-cut indicator tells you how much wood you'll be removing.



A cutterhead lock minimizes snipe, but doesn't completely eliminate it.



A depth stop allows you to preset the final thickness.

Here are the most important features to look for when planer shopping:

Capacity

There are two numbers to consider; maximum thickness and maximum width.

Many planers have a maximum thickness of 6 in. While you're not likely to find much wood to plane that's 6-in. thick, you'll find this large capacity handy for edge planing boards. You can stand 3/4 in. or thicker boards on their edges and plane them to exactly the same width.

Maximum width is the widest board measurement the planer will handle. This number is generally around 12 in. for portable planers and higher on stationary machines. Extra width is great when you want to flatten a glue up.

Dust Chute

Planers produce lots of shavings, so if

there isn't a dust chute on the planer you choose, be certain one is available as an accessory. Plan on using at least a 650 cfm dust collector with a 4-in. hose. See *How to Buy a Dust Collector*, page 39.

Easy Knife Change

Eventually, you'll have to change the knives. Most planers come with jigs that help position knives properly. Portable planers are the easiest to change. We prefer indexed knives (see chart, page 79) because they click precisely in place.

Depth-of-Cut Indicator

Here's a cool feature that makes some portable planers handier than others. Before you run a board through the planer for the first pass, stick an end under this indicator and you'll know exactly how much wood you'll be removing. This prevents an overly aggressive cut.

Depth Stops

Available on some portable planers, these stops allow you to pre-set the



Snipe (exaggerated here) is the bite taken out of the ends of a board. It can be a problem on planers without a cutterhead lock.

final thickness of your board.

Snipe Control

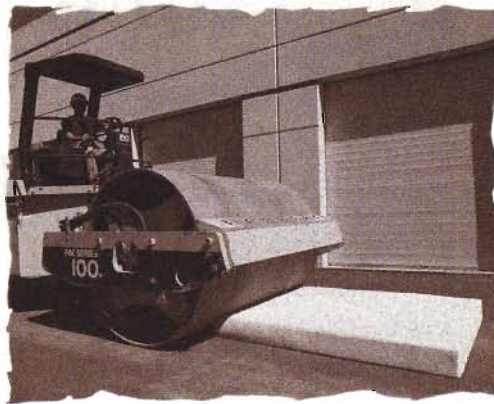
Most portable planers have cutterheads that adjust up and down to control the depth-of-cut. As a result, these planers often produce snipe. Some machines have locks that hold the cutterhead in place. This significantly reduces, but doesn't completely eliminate, snipe.

Stationary planers, with cutterheads that are fixed and tables that adjust up and down, snipe less than portables. Adjusting the tension on the infeed and outfeed rollers also helps control snipe.

Feed Speed Control

Not available on most portable planers, this feature is included with some stationary planers. It allows you to slow down the rate at which the material passes under the cutter. This can improve the surface finish on especially hard or figured woods.

Visit www.americanwoodworker.com for a complete list of manufacturers, models and costs.



Absolutely nothing.

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the U.S. Space Foundation...and *certified* by the Space Awareness Alliance. TV, cable, radio, newspapers, and magazines have reported on Tempur-Pedic and given us rave reviews.

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Our Recommendations

Portable Planers

Reviewed in April 2000, #79, page 82. Here are our top choices:

Editors' Choices

Delta 22-560; \$300.

This planer combines a cutterhead lock, small size for compact storage and indexed knives that are easy to change.

DeWalt DW733; \$380.

A machine with easy-to-read scales, thick knives that can be resharpened and a lever-action cutterhead lock.

DeWalt DW733; \$380.

Ridgid TPI 300; \$400.

A large machine that's loaded with well-designed features like a convenient-to-reach cutterhead lock and easy-to-change knives.

Ridgid TPI 300; \$400.

Best Buy

Delta 22-540; \$260.

A no frills planer that can often be found at a discounted price.

Too New to Test

Makita 2012NB; \$490.

With its head lock and depth stop this planer would have compared well with our Editors' Choice models if we were testing now. For safety, it also includes an indicator light to alert you that the planer is plugged in.

Delta 22-540; \$260.

Makita 2012NB; \$490.

PLANERS

† Includes stand

Manufacturer/ Model #	Price	Weight (lbs.)	Size (HxWxD with chip deflector)	Head lock	Chip-Depth Indicator	Pre-Set Stop	Type of Knives	Minor Features
Delta 22-560 <i>Editors' Choice</i>	\$300	65	16x22x13	Yes	No	No	Indexed	A, J, K, L, M
DeWalt DW733 <i>Editors' Choice</i>	\$380	81	18x21x15	Yes	Yes	Yes	SER	A, C, D, E, G, J, K, L, M
Ridgid TPI 300 <i>Editors' Choice</i>	\$400	84	20x26x18	Yes	Yes	Yes	DED	A, B, C, D, E, G, J, K, N
Delta 22-540 Type 2 <i>Best Buy</i>	\$260	64	16x21x15	No	No	No	DED	A, J, K
Grizzly G1017	\$370 [†]	78	18x22x13	No	No	No	SER	Bx2, F, H
Jet JWP-12-4P	\$335	70	19x22x15	No	No	No	DER	A, F, H, M
Lobo WP0012	\$360	65	18x20x14	No	No	No	SER	A, F, H, P
Makita 2012NB	\$490	62	16x19x13	No	Yes	Yes	DED	A, C, D, E, J, K, L
Powermatic 412	\$360	70	19x22x14	Yes	No	No	Indexed DED	A, E, F, H, L, M
Hitachi P12R	\$1410	75	21x20x20	No	Yes	No	SER	A, J, K, L AW

See pages 125 and 126 for a listing of manufacturer phone numbers and Web sites.

Type of knives:

DED Double-edged, disposable
SER Single-edged, resharpenable
DER Double-edged, resharpenable

Guide to Minor Features

A 4-in. dust port
B 2-in. dust port
C Scale on crank
D Paddle-style switch
E Tables longer than average

F Rollers on tables
G Cord and tool storage
H Adjustment for setting cutterhead parallel to bed is explained in manual
J Legibility of scale above average

K Manual above average
L Easy-to-tighten knives
M 12-1/2-in. wide capacity
N 13-in. wide capacity
P Cutterhead assembly rides on the case, not 4 posts

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1/2"R, 3/8"R, 1/4"R
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1/2"R, 3/8"R, 1/4"R
• Roman Ogee=1/4"R
• Straight Bits=
3/4"R, 1/2"R, 1/4"R
• 1/2" Dovetail
• 1/2" Roundover
• 1"CL Flush Trim
• Rabbet Bit

WL-2022 OUR PRICE ONLY \$59.set

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WL-2021 OUR PRICE ONLY \$59.set

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WL-2012 \$80.VALUE
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WL-2017 \$30.VALUE
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• 2 3/4" D Panel Raiser (Ogee) • Door Lip • Glue Joint
WL-2020 \$175.VALUE
OUR PRICE ONLY \$119.set

5-pc CABINET DOOR SET



3/4" bore Shaper Cutter
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(Roman Ogee)
• 4 5/8" Panel
Raiser (Ogee)
• Door Lip
• Glue Joint
• Drawer Lock

WL-1505 \$279.VALUE
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13-pc DOVETAILSET



WL-2013 \$115.VALUE

OUR PRICE ONLY \$59.set

6-PIECE BULLNOSE SET



WL-2013 \$115.VALUE

OUR PRICE ONLY \$89.set

5-pc MOULDING SET



WL-2011 \$175.VALUE
OUR PRICE ONLY \$99.set

8-pc CLASSICAL SET



• 2 Classical=5/32" R, & 1/4" R
• 1 Wavy • 1 Filet
• 2 Ogee=5/32" R, & 1/4" R
• 2 Roman Ogee=5/32" R, & 1/4" R
WL-2016 \$150.VALUE

OUR PRICE ONLY \$99.set

3-pc CABINET DOOR SET



• 2-pc. Roman Ogee Rail & Stile
• 2 3/4" Ogee Panel Raiser

WL-2019 \$100.VALUE
OUR PRICE ONLY \$65.set

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WL-2015 \$89.VALUE
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How to Buy a PLATE JOINER

Dowels are fussy. Screws are ugly. Dadoes take lots of setup. When you're ready for a simpler way to join wood, you're ready for a plate joiner. Plate joinery (also called biscuit joinery) is an amazingly quick and simple way to make strong joints.

What is Plate Joinery?

Plate joinery is pretty simple. The joiner cuts a semi-circular slot in each of the mating workpieces. A thin, football-shaped piece of wood (called a biscuit) fits into this slot. The biscuit is compressed when it's made and when you glue it into the slot, the moisture in the glue makes the biscuit swell and expand to a perfect fit inside the slot.

Plate joinery is fast. Slash a couple pencil lines on the mating parts, fire up your plate joiner, and you'll be assembling parts in no time. It's also very for-



Makita 3901 standard plate joiner; \$160.

giving. Parts can be tweaked and aligned repeatedly during assembly to get edges aligned perfectly.

Porter Cable 557 plate joiner; \$200.

The Family

Plate joiners fall into two categories: standard and mini.

Standard

Standard plate joiners make slots for three biscuit sizes; #0, #10, and #20. These machines work great for cases, frames and other joinery that involves pieces larger than 2-in. wide. There are lots of joiners to choose from in this category.

Mini

For joining narrower work, like picture frames, a mini plate joiner works

Visit www.americanwoodworker.com for a complete list of manufacturers, models and costs.

best. The biggest slot these little guys make is only 1-in. wide, and the smallest is 5/8 in. Only Ryobi and Craftsman make mini biscuit joiners.

Two plate joiners, one from Lamello and one from Porter-Cable, make slots for all biscuit sizes. They're standard

plate joiners that can accommodate a smaller diameter blade for smaller biscuit slots. See Our Recommendations and the chart (page 83) for more details on these joiners.



Ryobi DBJ50 mini-biscuit joiner; \$70.

Features



135-DEGREE PLUNGE CUT



Fences that angle to 135 degrees make joining miters easier and allow the fence to register on the outside corners. This is preferable because it makes the outside corners flush when they're joined.

Fence

The fence is the heart of a plate joiner, and needs certain features to work well.

All joiners cut slots at 0 and 90 degrees. Most also allow cuts between 0 and 90, and some will cut at angles up to 135 degrees (Photo 1). You use the joiner at 135 degrees to register miters (Photo 2). The more angles the fence is capable of, the more versatile the joiner. Adjustments to the fence should be easy to make.

It's critical that the fence remains parallel to the biscuit slot cuts. The fence should travel smoothly as you change the fence position for different thicknesses of wood.

Dust Collection

The bags on these machines are prone to clogging. If you empty them often enough, they'll work okay, at least for the chips. Dust collection is better if you connect the joiner to your shop vacuum.

Main Handle

To use the barrel-grip handle found on plate joiners you must wrap your hand around the motor housing. Big barrels make this difficult for folks with small hands. You need a firm grip on the tool to get accurate, consistent slots.

Noise

All of these machines scream at a noise level requiring hearing protection. Spiral-bevel gears run quieter, but the straight-bevel gears, which produce a more pronounced grinding sound, are stronger.

Visit www.americanwoodworker.com for a complete list of manufacturers, models and costs.

Our Recommendations

Plate Joiners

Reviewed in AW #73, June 1999, page 70.

We tested standard-size joiners, considering them the most generally useful for most woodworkers.

Editors' Choices

DeWalt 682; \$160.

The fence is versatile and easy to use and dust collection works well with the bag or a vacuum attachment. The trigger is very easy to operate, and the handle is one of the most comfortable.



DeWalt 682; \$160.

Porter-Cable 557; \$210.

The engineers at Porter-Cable did lots of homework before this tool left the drawing board.



Porter-Cable 557; \$210.

The fence is completely adjustable from 0 to 135 degrees, has an excellent micro-adjust height setting and always remains parallel to the cutter. Our testers found the trigger and handle the most comfortable to operate. This joiner has great versatility when it comes to plunge depths and it comes with a second cutter for use with mini biscuits.

Best Buy

Freud JS100; \$100 and JS102; \$125.

These well-built machines use the same motor, gearbox, base and blade. The only difference is in the fence system. The JS100 uses a fixed-angle fence, and cuts only at 0, 45, and 90 degrees. The JS102 has an adjustable-angle fence.

The large, squared-off handle is difficult to grab with small hands and the power switch may feel awkward for right handed people, but works well for lefties.



Freud JS100 (shown); \$100 and JS102; \$125.

STANDARD-SIZE PLATE JOINERS

*S, D = Simplex, Duplex

**Ratings are on a scale from 1 to 10, with 10 being best.

***The gear type relates to motor noise: spiral gears tend to have less clutter. (see NOISE, page 82)
na = not applicable

Manufacturer/ Model #	Price	Plunge Size*	Handle Circumference	Dust Collection**	Gear Type	Main Handle**	Trigger**	Fit and Finish**	Fence**	Rigidity**
Craftsman 17501	\$100	0,10,20	na	7	straight	8	9	5	4	4
Craftsman 27730	\$170	0,10,20	8.5 in.	7	na	10	10	9	9	9
DeWalt 682 <i>Editors' Choice</i>	\$160	0,10,20	6.5 in.	7	straight	10	10	9	9	9
Freud JS100A <i>Best Buy</i>	\$100	0,10,20,S, D	8.5 in.	7	straight	6	6	8	7	8
Freud JS102 <i>Best Buy</i>	\$125	0,10,20,S, D	8.5 in.	7	straight	6	6	8	7	8
Jepson 7204	\$140	0,10,20	8.0 in.	8	spiral	8	8	7	6	8
Lamello C2	\$330	0,10,20,S, D	8.0 in.	optional	spiral	7	8	10	7	10
Lamello Top 20	\$630	0,10,20,S, D	8.75 in.	optional	straight	6	4	10	7	10
Makita 3901	\$160	0,10,20,S, D	8.0 in.	7	spiral	5	8	7	8	8
Porter-Cable 556	\$135	0,10,20	na	none	na	8	10	7	5	7
Porter-Cable 557 <i>Editors' Choice</i>	\$210	0,10,20,S, D	6.0 in.	9	spiral	10	10	9	10	10
Ryobi JM80K	\$110	0,10,20	na	7	na	10	10	7	6	6
Skil 1605	\$120	0,10,20	8.125 in.	8	straight	8	7	6	6	5 AW

See pages 125 and 126 for a listing of manufacturer phone numbers and Web sites.

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ELECTRONIC SPEED CONTROL CIRCUITRY MAINTAINS CONSTANT RPM UNDER LOAD

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Includes Carbide Tipped Blade, Dust Bag, Vertical Vise, and 2 Extension Holders



Compound cuts left up to 1-3/4" x 5-1/2"



Adjustable pivoting flip fence for supporting taller stock



Large miter scale with precision machined positive stops in 9 positions

NOISE LEVEL in dB

Makita LS1220	84 dB
DeWalt DW7055	89 dB

RPM DROP UNDER LOAD

Makita LS1220	.5%
DeWalt DW7055	13%



For more info, call 1-800-4MAKITA
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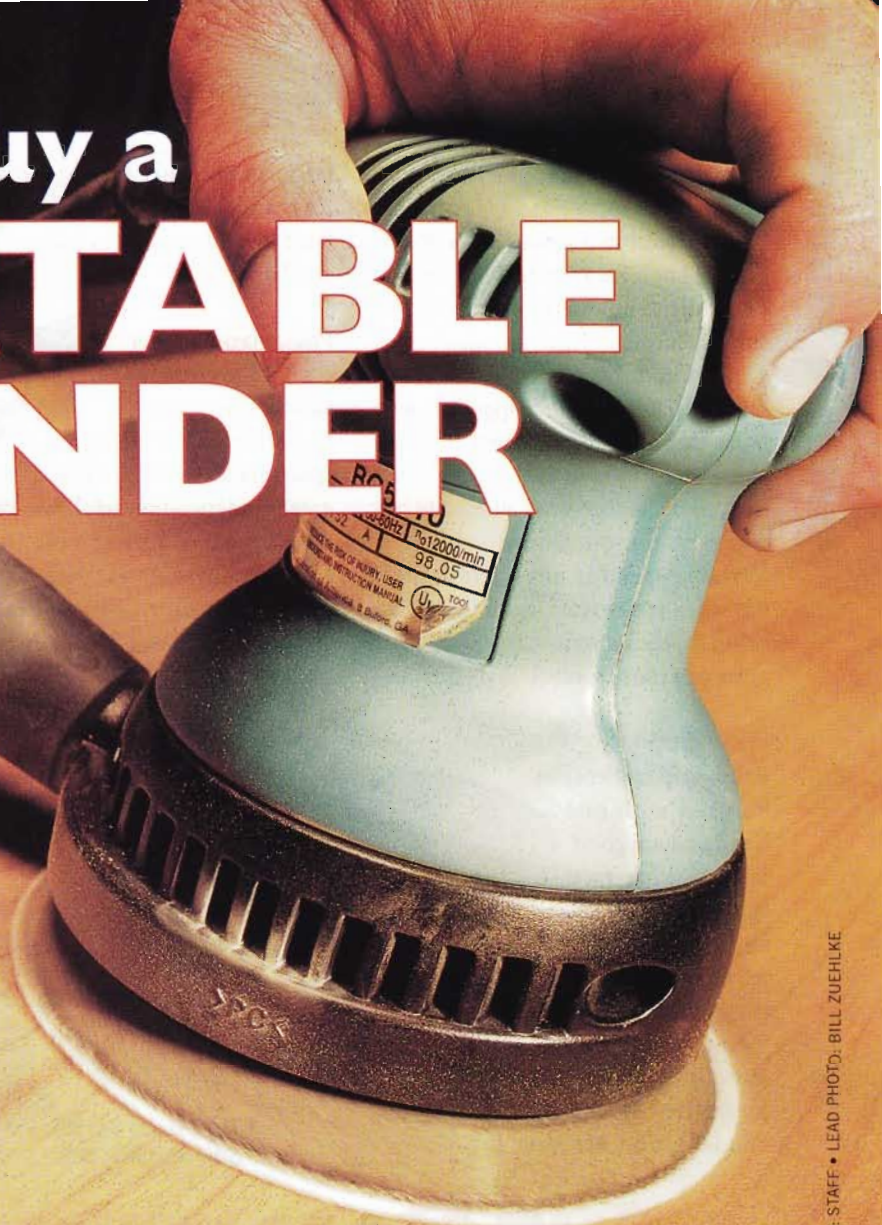


Model LS1220

FINISH LIKE NO OTHER

How to Buy a **PORTABLE SANDER**

Nobody, but nobody, likes sanding. The right sander, however, can sure make an unpleasant task go faster and easier.



Makita B05010; \$75.

The Family

There are three types of portable sanders to choose from: random orbit, belt and orbital.

Random-Orbit Sanders

Random-orbit sanders are good universal tools, and the best choice if you're only going to own one sander. They remove material with a dual action: the disc spins, and also moves in a circular orbit. Fitted with coarse paper, they remove material aggressively, and with fine paper they prep your project for finishing. Random-orbit sanders are



Black and Decker RO100 random-orbit sander; \$40.

not as aggressive or as good at flattening surfaces as belt sanders, but they're easier to control. And although random-orbit sanders are more expensive than orbital sanders, they do work considerably faster.

Sandpaper discs are either pressure-sensitive adhesive (PSA) or hook and loop (H&L). PSA discs are less expensive, but are for one-time use only. If you peel them off, you probably won't be able to stick them back on. H&L discs can be peeled off, set aside, and reused. They're a very convenient way to change sandpaper at the drop of a

Visit www.americanwoodworker.com for a complete list of manufacturers, models and costs.

Random-Orbit Sanders

hat, and the best choice for most non-production shops.

Dust collection is a must-have on any sander. Look for a sander with built-in dust collection, or a port that accepts a shop vacuum.

Random-orbit sanders with built-in dust collection use sandpaper discs with holes that the dust is drawn through. Not all sanders have the same hole pattern, so make sure you can readily buy paper that fits your sander.

Variable speed is not often needed, but when you're working in tight areas or on a delicate veneer, variable speed gives you more control.

Handle Style

Palm-grip sanders can be used with one hand and are good for getting into tight spaces. They're generally less expensive than pistol-grip sanders. This is a good style of handle for most woodworkers.

Pistol-grip sanders are larger than palm-grip sanders, and are best for

Features

larger projects like table-tops and case work. You have to hold onto them with two hands.

Pneumatic Power

Random-orbit sanders are also available in air-powered (pneumatic) versions. These are great sanders—powerful, fast-cutting, and capable of very smooth finishes. However, these air guzzling machines are relatively expensive (\$150 and up), and require at least a 50-gallon, 5-hp air compressor.



Metabo SXE450 pistol-grip sander; \$210.



Dynabrade 57135 pneumatic sander; \$183.



Craftsman 11621 palm-grip sander; \$40.



The Hitachi SV12SF orbital sander; \$80.

Orbital Sanders

Orbital sanders, also called finishing sanders, remove wood the slowest. They can be useful for sanding rounded edges, an operation that random-orbit and belt sanders will leave facets on.

Our Recommendations

Random-Orbit Sanders

Reviewed in AW #75, October 1999, page 66. Our choice for Best Overall sander was the compact, powerful Dynabrade 57135 (see photo above, right). All of these sanders are reasonably priced, so no Best Buy was chosen.



Makita BO5010; \$65.

Editors' Choices, Palm-Grip

Makita BO5010; \$65.

A palm-grip sander that uses hook-and-loop sanding discs. The dust port can be rotated to any position and it has an easy-to-use power switch.



Makita BO5021; \$110.

Bosch 1295D; \$73.

Palm grip, dual speeds, large dust collection canister, and a rubber-coated grip make this sander user friendly. It uses hook-and-loop sanding discs.



Bosch 1295DH; \$73.



Editors' Choice, Pistol-Grip

Makita BO5021; \$110.

A pistol-grip sander with a compact design. It's easy to handle and gives one of the smoothest finishes.

Visit www.americanwoodworker.com for a complete list of manufacturers, models and costs.

Natural de-icer means you'll have to shovel less this winter

All-natural grain juices dissolve away snow, prevent snow from adhering for 10-14 days! Perfect for clearing driveways, walkways and protecting plants.

by William Hazelgrove

Snowy nights will never keep me awake again! Now I sleep through the storm like a baby. Next morning all the other guys on the block are up wrestling with shovels, ice choppers, bags of salt—but my driveway and sidewalk are easier to clear! I'm dreaming? No sir, this stuff is real. Put it on the ground before a storm and it reduces the amount of snow that accumulates. Yeah, I didn't believe it either at first, but Bare Ground works!

State highway departments stay up all night breaking through drifts, plowing, fighting hazardous road ice. Bare Ground Anti Snow/De-Icer can help these dedicated crews. It is a liquid you spray or stream on a road or sidewalk. It not only eats up snow and ice but prevents future deposits from sticking for 10 to 14 days! It's not expensive either, because a little goes a long, long way.

One gallon equals 50 pounds of salt.

Already got snow or ice on your sidewalk or driveway? No problem. Just spray on some Bare Ground liquid. Instead of staying on top it sinks down to the bare pavement and dissolves the bond of snow or ice that holds it to the surface. No long waiting either—it starts working in about 20 minutes. Another reason the dollar-conscious pros use it: one gallon of Bare Ground is the equivalent of 50 lbs. of salts or pellets!

Safe for pets, kids, shrubs and carpets.

Bare Ground is environmentally safe, bio-degradable and non-toxic. Harmless to plants and grass, Bare Ground won't eat up the hall carpet like salt. Unlike other snow melters, you can use Bare Ground on any surface including rubber, roof shingles, slates, wood, brick or new concrete. In fact, Bare Ground is so safe, you may even wish to mix it with water and apply to trees and shrubs to prevent

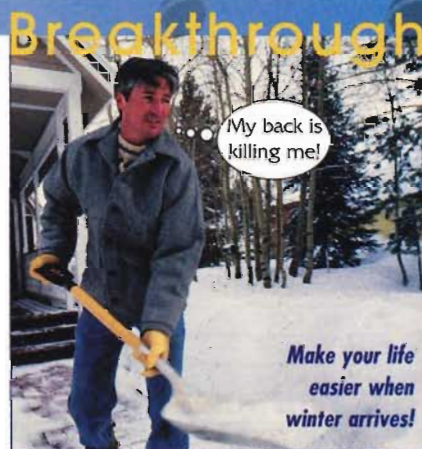
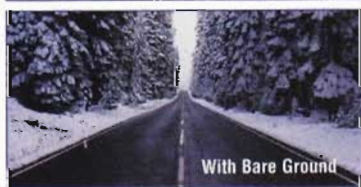
On March 6, 2001, Victoria from New Jersey wrote:

“It really works. Applied on Monday, it made it easier to shovel the snow. However, on Tuesday, it snowed again and my driveway (pavers), walkway, steps and sidewalks were clear!! My neighbors were out shoveling snow again, but I didn't have to because this stuff did its magic!”

Results not typical

Bare Ground Solution...

- About as corrosive as distilled water
- Results in less equipment corrosion
- Doesn't eat up cement



Apply Bare Ground before a snow or ice storm. Bare Ground will begin to work about 20 minutes after its application to existing snow or ice.

excessive ice buildup. It was discovered by two Hungarian distillery workers when they noticed that plant runoff water going into a local pond kept everything from freezing—even in the dead of frigid Hungarian winters. They isolated the key ingredients—all natural byproducts and patented the formula. And now you can throw away your shovel and fire your hernia doctor forever!

One gallon protects a 20' x 50' driveway.

Think of it also as protection against a strained back, even heart strain. If a storm is due, pre-coat your driveway and sidewalk and let it snow. It not only reduces the amount of snow which accumulates but applies a non-stick coating that keeps ice and falling snow from sticking. You can also forget about tickets for un-shoveled sidewalks.

Beat the snow. Stock up now on our no-risk guarantee. Bare Ground comes in neat, easy-to-stow plastic jugs. Mist or apply with any garden-type sprayer—or order a Bare Ground System that includes a built-in sprayer. You've got one month to try it out. If you are not completely satisfied, simply return it within 30 days for a full “No Questions Asked” refund. Hey—this winter while others are shoveling, why not relax and watch the ball game!

Bare Ground Solution System with Sprayer

..... \$39.95 + S&H

Gallon Refill \$14.95 + S&H

Please mention product code 14188-21544.

For fastest service, call toll-free 24 hours a day

800-992-2966

To order by mail with check or money order, or by credit card, ask for the total amount including S&H. To charge it to your credit card, enclose your account number and expiration date. Virginia residents only—please include 4.5% sales tax.

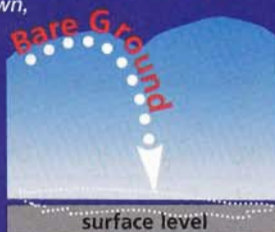
LATEST...GREATEST...NEATEST...COOLEST
You can see hundreds of high-tech products at
www.technoscout.com.



How does Bare Ground Work?



Unlike rock salt or pellets that lie on the surface and melt from the top down, Bare Ground sinks to the surface level, melting as it goes down, and spreads out breaking the bond of the snow or ice to the surface for a quick, easy and complete cleanup.



RANDOM-ORBIT SANDERS

* Scale of 1 to 10. 10 is best.

Manufacturer/ Model #	Price	Disc Type	Orbit Size	Dust Collection	Ergonomics*	Construction Quality*	Type
Black & Decker RO100	\$40	5" 8 hole, H&L	3/32	cloth bag	9	5	Palm Grip
Bosch 1295	\$73	5" 8 hole, H&L	1/8	canister	9	7	Palm Grip
<i>Editors' Choice</i>							
Craftsman 11621	\$40	5" 8 hole, PSA	3/32	cloth bag	8	6	Palm Grip
DeWalt 420	\$80	5" no hole, H&L	3/16	none	8	6	Palm Grip
DeWalt 421	\$70	5" 8 hole, H&L	3/16	cloth bag	8	6	Palm Grip
DeWalt 423	\$85	5" 8 hole, H&L	3/16	cloth bag	8	6	Palm Grip
Jepson 5173 (6250)	\$75	5" 8 hole, H&L	3/32	cloth bag	8	6	Palm Grip
Makita BO5010	\$65	5" 8 hole, H&L	3/32	cloth bag	9	8	Palm Grip
<i>Editors' Choice</i>							
Makita BO5011	\$80	5" 8 hole, PSA	3/32	cloth bag	9	8	Palm Grip
Milwaukee 6018	\$80	5" 8 hole, PSA	3/32	cloth bag	8	6	Palm Grip
Milwaukee 6019	\$80	5" 8 hole, H&L	3/32	cloth bag	8	6	Palm Grip
Porter-Cable 332	\$65	5" no hole, PSA	3/32	none	9	8	Palm Grip
Porter-Cable 333	\$70	5" 5 hole, H&L	3/32	canister	9	8	Palm Grip
Porter-Cable 333 VS	\$85	5" 5 hole, H&L	3/32	canister	9	8	Palm Grip
Porter-Cable 334	\$70	5" 5 hole, H&L	3/32	canister	9	8	Palm Grip
Porter-Cable 335	\$83	6" 6 hole, PSA/H&L	3/32	canister	9	8	Palm Grip
Ryobi RS240	\$40	5" 8 hole PSA/H&L	3/32	cloth bag	9	5	Palm Grip
Bosch 3725 DVS	\$145	5" 8 hole, H&L	3/16	cloth bag	9	8	Pistol grip
Craftsman 27717	\$60	5" 8 hole, PSA	5/32	box	7	4	Pistol grip
Festo ET2E Plus	\$270	6" 8 hole, H&L	1/8	paper bag	9	10	Pistol grip
Makita BO5021	\$110	5" 8 hole, H&L	3/32	cloth bag	9	8	Pistol grip
<i>Editors' Choice</i>							
Metabo SXE 425	\$145	5" 8 hole, H&L	3/16	paper bag	8	9	Pistol grip
Metabo SXE 425 XL	\$165	6" 6 hole, H&L	3/16	paper bag	8	9	Pistol grip
Metabo SXE 450 Duo	\$210	6" 6 hole, H&L	3/16-3/32	paper bag	8	9	Pistol grip
Milwaukee 6020-20	\$175	6" 8 hole, H&L	3/16	cloth bag	7	7	Pistol grip
ARO RS25A-VLV	\$310	5" no hole	3/32	optional	9	9	Pneumatic
Dynabrade 57135	\$183	5" no hole, PSA	3/32	optional	10	10	Pneumatic
<i>Editors' Choice</i>							
Master Power 4400-5	\$165	5" no hole, PSA	3/16	optional	10	9	Pneumatic
Master Power 4403-5	\$165	5" no hole, PSA	3/32	optional	10	9	Pneumatic
Sioux 690	\$160	5" no hole, PSA	3/32	optional	8	9	Pneumatic
Sioux 790	\$160	5" no hole, PSA	3/32	optional	8	9	Pneumatic
Sioux 890	\$150	5" no hole, PSA	3/32	optional	9	9	Pneumatic

See pages 125 and 126 for a listing of manufacturer phone numbers and Web sites.

Belt Sanders

Belt sanders, available in a variety of sizes, use an abrasive belt to remove wood. They're great for flattening large surfaces, but can be tricky to handle. One false move and you've taken off too much wood or gouged your project.

Pick the Size that Fits

A smaller belt means a lighter machine that's easy to use on non-horizontal surfaces. Bigger belts require bigger motors, which result in heavier machines. They're



Milwaukee 5936; \$299.

the best choice for sanding horizontal surfaces. Here are your choices:

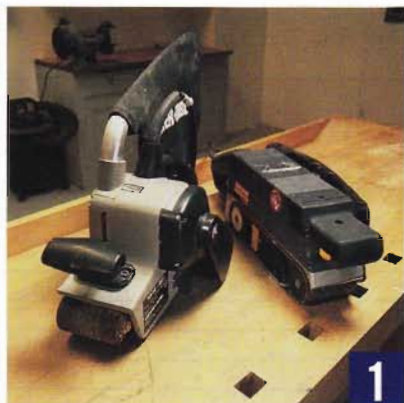
3 in. x 18 in. These are lightweight and easy-to-handle sanders. They're handy for scribing cabinets and countertops, but not well suited for general horizontal work in a shop.

3 in. x 21 in. These are good general-purpose sanders. They're fairly stable without being heavy and bulky.

3 in. x 24 in. On these sanders, the platen (the table that supports the belt),

Visit www.americanwoodworker.com for a complete list of manufacturers, models and costs.

Belt Sanders



1 Sander motors come in two styles: transverse and inline.

Features



2 Some belt sanders, like the DeWalt DW621; \$210, have a stand available.

to handle for other than horizontal sanding, try an inline.

Amps

Amperage is the best measure of how aggressively a sander will remove wood. More amps equals faster sanding.

Variable Speed

A useful feature if you sand veneered or other delicate projects. You'll have greater control of a sander that you can slow down.

Weight

There's a huge range on these tools. Weight is advantageous on a belt sander, because it's designed for the weight of the sander to do the work. However, if you plan on using the sander for positions other than horizontal, like scribing cabinets, weight is a hindrance.

Sanding Stand

This accessory is available for some belt sanders. It makes it easier to hold the machine upside down for sanding small parts.

the motor and the weight are all heftier. For lots of horizontal work, this size is a good choice.

4 in. x 24 in. These are the best of the bunch for big horizontal surfaces, but they're significantly harder to handle.

Most woodworkers will be happy with a 3 in. x 21 in. or 3 in. x 24 in. The 3 in. x 21 in. is the best all-around choice.

Dust Collection

Belt sanders make lots of dust! Be sure your sander has a dust bag, or better yet, set aside the dust bag and hook the sander directly to your shop vacuum.

Motor Style

A **transverse motor**, which is on top of the sander, is the most common. These sanders tend to be top heavy, but can accommodate a bigger motor and remove material faster.

Many woodworkers like transverse-motor belt sanders for their greater power.

An **inline motor** is parallel to the belt. This shoe-box-shaped design is easier to handle, but won't accommodate a large motor. Because they have flat tops, it's easy to set inline sanders upside down on your bench to work on small parts. If you want a sander that's easier

Our Recommendations

Belt Sanders

Reviewed in AW #79, April 2000, page 66. Twenty-six belt sanders were tested. All performed very well, however none stood out as an Editors' Choice.

Best Buy

Hitachi SB75; \$200.

This is an excellent 3 in. x 21 in. machine. It has the highest-amp motor in the group, the dust bag works well, and it has two speeds. Add the bench stand (\$35), and you've got a highly versatile sander.



Hitachi SB75; \$200.

Visit www.americanwoodworker.com for a complete list of manufacturers, models and costs.

BELT SANDERS

Manufacturer/ Model #	Price	Belt Size	Amps	FPM (ft. per min.)/ Belt Speed	Dust Bag	Weight (lbs.)
Bosch 1274DVS	\$170	3 x 21	6.6	550-1,100	Y	7
Craftsman 27725	\$150	3 x 21	6	775-1,150	Y	7
DeWalt DW431	\$150	3 x 21	5.2	475-1,100	Y	7
Hitachi SB 75	\$200	3 x 21	8.7	1,180/1,475	Y	10
<i>Best Buy</i>						
Makita 9901	\$170	3 x 21	6.7	1,246	Y	6
Porter-Cable 352VS	\$185	3 x 21	8	850-1,300	Y	10
Ryobi BE321	\$129	3 x 21	6	755-1,148	Y	7
Bosch 1275 DVS	\$215	3 x 24	10.5	1,150-1,550	Y	12
Makita 9924 DB	\$165	3 x 24	7.8	1,300	Y	12
Makita 9921	\$210	3 x 24	11	500/1,640	Y	12
Porter-Cable 360VS	\$240	3 x 24	12	1,000-1,500	Y	15
Bosch 1276 DVS	\$225	4 x 24	10.5	1,150-1,550	Y	14
Craftsman 11792	\$120	4 x 21	7.5	1,300	Y	9
Hitachi SB 10 T	\$240	4 x 24	8.7	1,150/1,380	Y	11
Makita 9403	\$220	4 x 24	11	500/1,640	Y	13
Milwaukee 5936	\$310	4 x 24	10	1,400	Y	12
Porter-Cable 362VS	\$250	4 x 24	12	1,000-1,500	Y	14

AW

See pages 125 and 126 for a listing of manufacturer phone numbers and Web sites.

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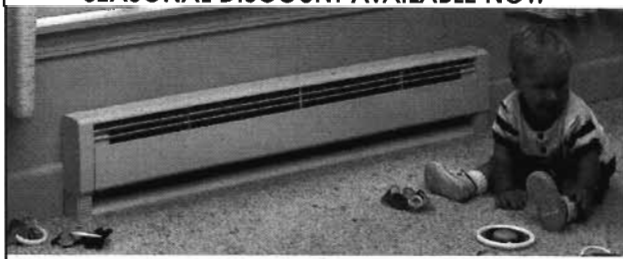
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• **William C. (General Contractor):** "I replaced electric heat with Hydro-Sil. I am pleased to report that your units have provided comfort, safety, and considerable savings on electricity."

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How to Buy a ROUTER

A router is the unofficial membership card of the fraternity of woodworkers. When you get your first router, the world of woodworking is your oyster. A router can profile edges, cut dadoes, even make doors. Here's what you need to know to make sure you get the router that's best for you.

The Family

The router family tree has three branches; mid-size, large and trim routers.

Mid-Size Routers

Ranging from 1-1/2 to 2-1/4 hp, these routers are manageable when hand-held and also a good choice for router-table use. Look for one that has both 1/4-in. and 1/2-in. collets so you can use either size bit. These machines are available with either a plunge or fixed base.



Porter-Cable 690; \$160.

Big Boys

At about 3 hp, these wood-devouring machines have power to spare and are a great choice for a second router. Along with more power comes more weight, however. These tools do a great job in a router table. When equipped with variable speed, they're capable of handling

Fixed-base routers work great in a router table. With a removable base, you can leave one base in the table and use another for hand-held cuts.

Bosch 1617EVS; \$209.

Visit www.americanwoodworker.com for a complete list of manufacturers, models and costs.

PHOTO COURTESY OF MANUFACTURER



Milwaukee 5660 mid-size, fixed-base router; \$240.

PHOTO COURTESY OF MANUFACTURER



Craftsman 27500 mid-size, fixed-base router; \$130.

the largest router bits. However, they can be beastly when used for hand-held routing. Soft start helps. This feature allows the router to ramp up to speed slowly, instead of instantly jerking to full power. These machines are available with a fixed or plunge base.

Trim Routers

Trim routers are best used with small diameter round-over, ogee, and straight bits, and are limited to 1/4-in. shank bits. The smallest in the family, these routers are generally less than 1 hp. The small motors make them lightweight and easy to handle, but also limit how heavy a cut they can make. These routers have a fixed base.

Router Table Routers

Most router table work, with the exception of raising door panels with large-diameter bits, can be done with a router with 1-1/2 hp or so. In our tests, most woodworkers preferred making bit height adjustments on fixed-base



Bosch 1619EVS 3-hp router; \$330.

PHOTO COURTESY OF MANUFACTURER

routers rather than plunge routers, when they're in a table.

Base Styles

Fixed Base

On a fixed-base router, depth-of-cut is set by releasing a lock, locating the motor and bit at the correct position, and locking the base in place. Many of

these routers are designed to allow the motor to be removed from the base, making bit changing much easier.

Fixed-base routers are handy for edge routing, template-guided routing (like in a dovetail jig), and router table use. Some are equipped with a D-handle. The advantage to a D-handle is that the power switch is on the handle, instead of on the motor. You can hang onto the router with both hands when you turn it on and off.

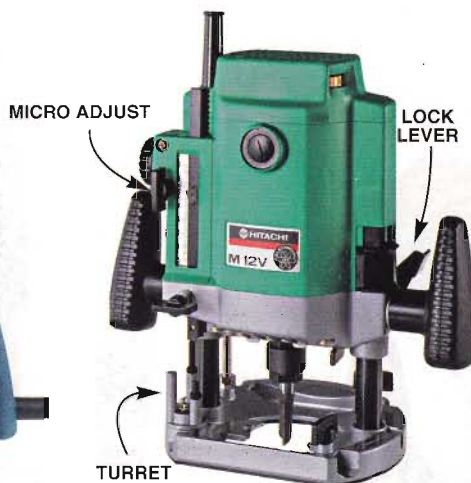
Plunge Base

On a plunge-base router the motor slides up and down on columns. A lever locks the motor in the up or down position, and a turret controls the depth-of-cut. This allows you to start with the router on your work, plunge into a cut, then retract the cutter when you're done. This feature makes plunge-base routers best for operations where you need a distinct starting and stopping point, like dados and mortises. The motors in most of these routers are not

PHOTOS COURTESY OF MANUFACTURERS



Bosch 1618EVS D-handle, fixed-base router; \$200.



Hitachi M12V plunge-base router; \$210.

A One Router Shop

If you want one do-just-about-everything router, look closely at the mid-size, fixed-base machines. These are excellent machines for general use and the first-time buyer. They're easy to manage hand held, and can do lots of work in a router table. A fixed-base router with a removable base makes bit changing easy. As your woodworking progresses, a 3-hp router for your router table is a good second router.

removable, which can make bit changing more cumbersome. If you're going to use a plunge-base router in a router

table, look for one that has a micro-adjust knob available. This makes it much easier to change the bit height.

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Features



A removable motor makes bit changes easy.



Some routers, like the DeWalt DW621; \$220, have built-in dust collection.



One-half-in. collets allow you to use a greater variety of router bits.



Variable speed allows you to use large bits (over 1-3/8-in. diameter) safely.



A large base opening allows you to use large bits.



Easy-to-read depth-of-cut indicators simplify setting bit depth.

Here are the most important features to look for in a router:

Removable Base

It's much easier to change bits on a router if you can separate the motor from the base, especially in a router table. Very few plunge routers offer this. Removable bases also allow you to purchase a second base, and leave it hanging in your router table, making switching from hand held to router table setups a breeze.

Variable Speed

This is a huge asset, especially on the bigger machines. When using large-diameter router bits (over 1-3/8-in. diameter), such as horizontal panel raisers, lock miters, and even big round-overs, you need to slow down the router's speed to safely run the bit. Variable speed on your router will give you much more versatility.

Dust Control

Running a router is a messy business. Being able to connect a vacuum hose directly to the router helps.

If your router doesn't have a built-in dust connection, try the RVA1 Router Vacuum attachment from Leigh Jigs, (800) 663-8932. It fits most routers, and can help clear the air for you.

1/2-in. Collet

On mid-size and larger routers, be sure to get a router that accepts both 1/4-in. and 1/2-in.-shanked bits. Then, buy 1/2-in.-shanked cutters whenever you can. The larger shank diameter helps prevent the bit from chattering under cutting pressure, giving you a smoother finish.

Self-releasing collets make removing bits easier, and are a great convenience.

Large Hole in Base

The diameter of bit that can run in a router may be limited by the size of the

hole in the router's base plate. A base opening smaller than 1-3/8 in. will require making or buying a plate with a bigger opening, even for common bits, such as a 3/8-in. rabbet bit.

For routers hung in a router table, the base plate is removed, so bit diameters aren't limited by it.

Easy-to-Read Depth-of-Cut

When changing the height of the cutter, it's great to know how much you've changed it. Look for depth-of-cut indicators that are easy to read.

Soft Start

Soft start allows a motor to ramp up to speed slowly instead of jumping to full speed as soon as you power up. For hand-held operations of mid-size and larger routers, this makes the tool lots more pleasant to use.

Visit www.americanwoodworker.com for a complete list of manufacturers, models and costs.

Our Recommendations

Mid-Size, Fixed-Base Routers

Reviewed in February 2001, #85, page 70.

Here are our picks for the best routers in the bunch.

Editors' Choices

Bosch 1617EVS; \$180.

This router epitomizes the new breed of mid-size routers. It has electronic variable speed, lots of power, soft start, a large hole in the base plate, comfortable handles, and an easy-to-use lock for the motor height. The magnesium housing makes this router one of the lightest and easiest to handle in the bunch. The well-engineered micro-adjust device for depth-of-cut makes this router extremely good for router table use. All in all, a great router.



Bosch 1617EVS; \$180.

Makita RF1101; \$210.

Another mid-size router with electronic variable speed, it also has lots of power and the convenience of a lever lock on the motor. On the downside, it has a small hole in the base (1-3/16 in.), so you'll need a subbase when using larger bits. It's the low noise level that we really love about this machine. You'll still need hearing protection, but this tool is more pleasant to listen to than other routers.



Makita RF1101; \$210.

Best Buy

Porter-Cable 690; \$150.

This machine is a traditional design that has proven itself in use. It lacks variable speed, and has a small opening in the base (1-3/16 in.), but the price is good, and there's an optional plunge base available (\$89). We've used the dust collection accessory, \$45, with great success in our own shop.



The Porter-Cable 690; \$150.

3-hp Routers

Reviewed in February 2000, #78, page 75.

Editors' Choice

Router Table Use

Porter-Cable 7518 fixed-base router; \$300.

In a router table, it's easier to adjust the bit height on this router than any other router tested. The large opening in the base allows you to run even the largest router bits. The motor can be removed from the base so bit changes are easy. The speed control gives actual rpm, instead of numbers or letters like other routers.



Porter-Cable 7518 fixed-base router; \$300.

General Use

DeWalt DW625 plunge router; \$260.

A tool with good balance and a great feel. This router felt less top-heavy when hand held. The depth-of-cut gauge is easy to read and use, and includes a magnifier to make reading the scale even easier. The router's base limits you to bits 2-1/2-in.-diameter and smaller.



DeWalt DW625 plunge router; \$260.

Porter-Cable 7539 plunge router; \$330.

This machine is similar to the 7518 but in a plunge base. It has a trigger switch on the handle, which we prefer to motor-mounted switches. Like its fixed-base cousin, the 7518, this router can handle even the biggest of router bits. The height lock lever is large and easy to use.



Porter-Cable 7539 plunge router; \$330.

Unfortunately, adding a micro-adjust knob to this router means replacing the turret system, which is critical to plunging applications.

continued on page 98

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Our Recommendations

Best Buy 3-hp Routers



Freud FT200E plunge router; \$180.

General Use

Freud FT200E plunge router; \$180.

Lots of features at a great price.

The Freud router comes with a micro-adjust knob, which is extra on other routers. The height lock is a well-made, easy-to-reach lever.

The depth-of-cut gauge is easy to read and has a quick release. The turret works great.

Not Available at Testing

Bosch 1619EVS; \$330.

Since we ran our test, Bosch introduced a new router into this field; the 1619EVS. It's a 3-hp plunge router with all the benefits you need for hand held routing. When hung in a router table you can disable the plunge springs but still use the micro adjust, making adjustment easy. If it had been around when we did the test, this machine would have done well.



Bosch 1619EVS; \$330.

3-HP ROUTERS

Manufacturer/ Model #	Price	Standard Equipment	Max. Bit Dia. (in.)	Micro-Adjust Knob	Weight (lbs.)	Switch	Height Lock
Craftsman 27511	\$250	Straight and curved edge guides, collet wrench, 1 guide bushing	2-1/2	Yes	13	Trigger	Push to unlock
DeWalt DW625 <i>Editors' Choice</i>	\$260	1 collet wrench, 1 turret wrench, dust col. shield	2-1/2	No	14	On motor	Push to lock
Freud FT2000EP <i>Best Buy</i>	\$180	1 collet wrench, 1 turret wrench, dust col. shield	2-3/8	Yes	12	On motor	Push to lock
Hitachi M12V	\$210	Dust vac. pick up, collet wrench, 1/2-in. straight bit, guide bushing adapter, 1 guide bushing straight guide	2-3/8	Yes	13	On motor	Push to lock
Makita 3612C	\$250	Spindle lock, collet and turret wrenches	2-3/8	Yes	14	On motor	Push to lock
Porter-Cable 7518 <i>Editors' Choice</i>	\$300	2 collet wrenches	4	N/A	14	On motor	N/A
Porter-Cable 7539 <i>Editors' Choice</i>	\$330	2 collet wrenches	3-3/8	No	19	Trigger	Push to unlock

See pages 125 and 126 for a listing of manufacturer phone number and Web sites.

Visit www.americanwoodworker.com for a complete list of manufacturers, models and costs.

MID-SIZE FIXED-BASE ROUTERS

Manufacturer/ Model #	Price	Amps	Manuf. Stated HP	RPM	Removable Base?	Will Motor Fall From Base When Loose?	Collets (in.)	Self- Releasing Collet?	Quality of Micro Adjust	Opening in Subbase (in.)	Weight (lbs.)
Bosch 1617 B	\$160	11	1-3/4	25,000	Y	N	1/4, 1/2, 3/8 and 8 mm available	Y	Excellent	2, 1-3/4 with bushing retainer	8.5
Bosch 1617EVS Editors' Choice	\$180	12	2	8,000 to 25,000	Y	N	1/4, 1/2, 3/8 and 8 mm available	Y	Excellent	2, 1-3/4 with bushing retainer	8
Bosch 1618EVS	\$200	12	2	8,000 to 25,000	Y	N	1/4, 1/2, 3/8 and 8 mm available	Y	Excellent	2, 1-3/4 with bushing retainer	9.5
Craftsman 1750	\$70	8	1-1/2	25,000	N	N	1/4 integral to shaft	N	Good	1-1/2	8
Craftsman 1750S	\$80	8.5	2	15,000 to 25,000	Y	N	1/4 integral to shaft	N	Good	1-1/2	8.5
Craftsman 17506	\$100	9	2	15,000 to 25,000	Y	N	1/4 integral to shaft	N	Good	1-1/2	9
Craftsman 27500	\$130	9	2	25,000	N	N	1/4, 1/2	N	Good	3	10
DeWalt DW610	\$150	9	1-1/2	25,000	Y	Y	1/4, 1/2	N	Fair	1-3/16	8
Makita RD 1100	\$200	11	2-1/4	24,000	Y	N	1/4, 1/2	Y	Good	1-3/16	9
Makita RF 1100	\$190	11	2-1/4	24,000	Y	N	1/4, 1/2	Y	Good	1-3/16	8.5
Makita RD 1101	\$220	11	2-1/4	8,000 to 24,000	Y can be unplugged from handle	N	1/4, 1/2	Y	Good	1-3/16	9
Makita RF 1101 Editors' Choice	\$210	11	2-1/4	8,000 to 24,000	Y	N	1/4, 1/2	Y	Good	1-3/16	8.5
Makita 3601B	\$220	8.5	1-3/8	23,000	Y, but tethered by cord to handle	Y	1/4, 1/2 1/4 is a 1/2 to 1/4 reducer	N	Good	1-1/2	9
Milwaukee 5660	\$240	10	1-1/2	24,500	Y if stop screw is removed	N if stop screw is in place	1/4, 1/2 same nut with different collet	Y	Good	1-1/4	9
Milwaukee 5680	\$250	12	2	26,600	Y if stop screw is removed	N if stop screw is in place	1/4, 1/2 same nut with different collet	Y	Good	1-1/4	9.5
Porter-Cable 690 Best Buy	\$150	10	1-1/2	23,000	Y	N 3/8 available	1/4, 1/2	Y	Good	1-3/16	9
Porter-Cable 691	\$170	10	1-1/2	23,000	Y	N	1/4, 1/2 3/8 available	Y	Good	1-3/16	9.5

AW

* All routers require hearing protection.

See pages 125 and 126 for a listing of manufacturer phone numbers and Web sites.

Visit www.americanwoodworker.com for a complete list of manufacturers, models and costs.

How to Buy a SCROLLSAW

Sometimes you need to work with wood, and sometimes you just want to have fun with it. Buying a scrollsaw is a great way to break into woodworking. These quiet-running tools will cut intricate curves in wood, metal and plastic. They can be used to cut dovetails and cope moldings. And, on top of all that, they don't produce clouds of dust.

Delta 40-570; \$210.

The Family

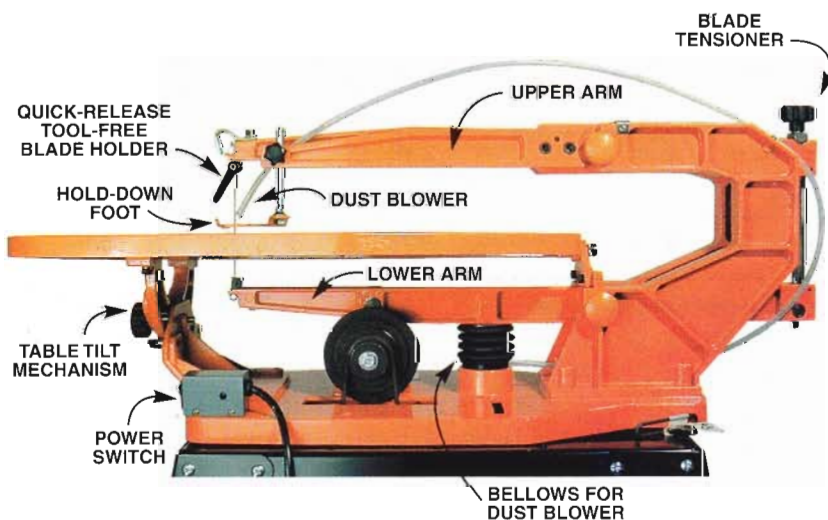
There are two types of scrollsaws; C-arm and parallel-arm.

C-Arm

C-arm scrollsaws pivot on a single point, causing the blade to rock back and forth as it moves up and down. This oscillating action makes the saw cut faster, but results in slightly rougher cuts. The oscillating action also makes it difficult to produce a perfect inside corner, especially in thicker stock.

Parallel-Arm

These machines move the blade straight up and down, resulting in smoother cuts and near-perfect inside corners. Most scrollers prefer this type of saw.



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1 Tool-free blade changes make scrollsawing easy.

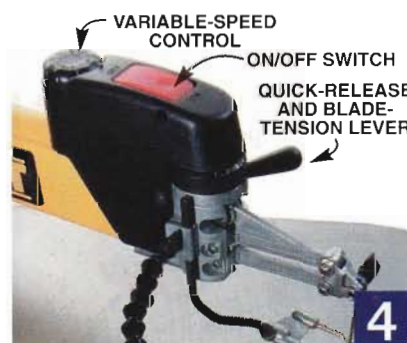
Features



2 Quick-release blade tensioners simplify blade changes even further.



3 Low vibration makes the saw much more pleasant to use.



4 On/Off and speed controls should be easy to reach.



5 Adjustable dust blowers help keep your work area clear.



6 Tables should tilt 45 degrees in one direction and at least 15 degrees in the other.

Easy Blade Changes

When you use a scrollsaw you change lots of blades. They break occasionally, and internal cuts require threading one end of the blade through a hole, and putting the blade back in the saw. Fumbling around with a blade, a blade holder, and the manufacturer-supplied blade wrench is more than meaty hands can handle. Instead, always look for tool-free blade clamps.

Internal cuts on complicated fretwork require threading the blade through the wood while it is still clamped underneath the table. Look for a slot in the table so the blade can be tipped forward, threaded through the work, and clamped back into the upper holder.

Quick-Release Blade Tensioner

A quick-release blade tensioner allows you to set and release blade tension

with little or no manipulation of the tension knob. This is a godsend when you're doing frequent blade changes. Saws without this feature require cranking a knob to loosen and tighten the blade with each blade change—a huge hassle.

Low Vibration

Vibration in any tool is annoying, but especially when you're trying to follow a precise line. A short arm that pivots close to the front of the saw significantly reduces vibration. Heavy, cast-iron tables further suppress it.

Easy-to-Reach Controls

A scrollsaw is most commonly used sitting down. Having to reach to the back of the saw to tension the blade is especially difficult from a seated position. Look for all of the controls, including power and speed, to be on the front of the saw.

Electronic Variable Speed

Speed can be changed one of two ways; by changing a pulley on a belt, or by dialing in the correct speed electronically. Electronic control is the hands-down winner.

You'll like the higher speed when cutting materials like 3/4-in. hardwood. Slower is better when cutting thin or non-wood materials.

Dust Collection

It's not easy to collect dust from a scroll saw. Some saws have little trays to collect dust, but dust ports below the table work best. Even with dust collection and blowers, plenty of dust collects on the workpiece, so don't put away your dust mask.

Adjustable Dust Blowers

Scrollsaws come with dust blowers to make it easier to follow a line. They are either in a fixed position or adjustable.

Visit www.americanwoodworker.com for a complete list of manufacturers, models and costs.

Look for an adjustable blower because it can be set in the best position to maximize dust removal.

Tilting Tables

Look for tables with a positive stop at 90 degrees, so you don't have to manually square the table each time you move it. A table that tilts 45 degrees in one direc-

tion and at least 15 degrees in the other allows you to cut dovetails.

Table Size

Bigger is better, providing more support for your work.

Weight

A heavy machine vibrates less, but is

obviously harder to move around.

Throat Depth

Throat depth is the distance from the blade to the rear of the saw. It dictates the size of the biggest piece you could swing through a full 360-degree circle on the saw. A deeper throat accommodates larger workpieces.

Our Recommendations

Scrollsaws

Reviewed in AW #87, June 2001, page 66.

There are some great scrollsaws in the \$1,000 range, but if you're looking for an entry-level tool, you'll want to check out our test of saws that cost less than \$500.

Editors' Choice

DeWalt DW788; \$400.

This tool was our hands-down favorite. It has features that make it user-friendly for the amateur but sophisticated enough to satisfy the demands of an advanced scroller. It

offers the lowest vibration of all the saws we tested and an upper arm that lifts up to clear the way when threading blades for pierced work. The controls are up front and on top. It features a simple quick-release, tool-free blade change system, plus a large table that tilts left and right with a 90-



DeWalt DW788; \$400.

degree stop. Add electronic variable speed and an adjustable blower to round out the package.

Its only drawbacks are the lack of dust collection, and its weight. At 61 lbs., it's a bit heavy for portability.

Best Buy over \$200

Delta 40-570; \$230.

A well-designed, user-friendly machine that offers unique, tool-free, quick-release blade holders and up front and on top controls (with the exception of on/off and speed controls).



Delta 40-570; \$230.

It features a slotted table insert that simplifies blade changes and threading, a dust collection shroud, adjustable blower and electronic variable speed.

On the downside, the table only tilts one way and it would be better if the on/off and speed controls were on top. The "sweet spot" on the blade holders can be a little hard to find with small blades, and the machine is a little heavy for portability.

SCROLLSAWS

Manufacturer/ Model #	Price	Blade Type	Tool-Free Plain-End Blade Clamps	Quick- Release Blade Tensioner	All Controls up Front and on Top	Electronic Variable Speed	Blower Type A=Adjust. F=Fixed	Dust Col- lection	Slotted Table Insert	Table Tilts	Pos.Stop for 90° Table Setting	Approx. Table Area in Sq. in.	Weight (lbs.)	Thickness Capacity (in.)	Throat Capacity (in.)
Central Machinery	\$80	Plain & Pin-End	N	N	N	Y	F	N	Y	L45	N	101	27	2	16
Craftsman 21636	\$170	Plain & Pin-End	Y	Y	N	Y	F	Y	Y	L12/R50	Y	178	31	2	16
Delta 40-530	\$120	Plain-End	N	Y	N	N	F	N	Y	L45	N	111	40	2	16
Delta 40-540	\$130	Plain-End	N	Y	N	Y	F	N	Y	L45	Y	111	50	1-3/4	16
Delta 40-570 <i>Best Buy</i>	\$230	Plain-End	Y	Y	N	Y	A	Y	Y	L45	Y	148	65	2	16

Visit www.americanwoodworker.com for a complete list of manufacturers, models and costs.

Manufacturer/ Model #	Price	Blade Type	Tool-Free Plain-End Blade Clamps	Quick- Release Blade Tensioner	All Controls up Front and on Top	Electronic Variable Speed	Blower Type A=Adjust. F=Fixed	Dust Col- lection	Slotted Table Insert	Table Tilts	Pos.Stop for 90° Table Setting	Approx. Table Area in Sq. in.	Weight (lbs.)	Thickness Capacity (in.)	Throat Capacity (in.)
Delta 40-650	\$370	Plain-End	Y	Y	Y	Y	A	N	Y	L15/R45	Y	207	73	2-3/8	18
DeWalt <i>Editors' Choice</i>	\$400	Plain-End	Y	Y	Y	Y	A	N	N	L47/R47	Y	247	61	2	20
Dremel 1680	\$210	Plain & Pin-End	Y	Y	N	Y	A	Y	N	L45/R45	Y	141	39	2	16
Grizzly G1257	\$170	Pin-End	N	N	N	Y	F	N	N	L45/R5	N	103	37	1-1/2	16
Makita SJ401	\$180	Plain & Pin-End	N	Y	N	Y	F	Y	N	L45/R15	N	131	32	2-1/4	16
Pro-Tech 3303	\$119	Plain & Pin-End	N	Y	N	Y	F	Y	N	L50/R15	N	131	31	2-1/4	16
PS Wood 14"	\$460	Plain-End	N	Y	N	N(1)	F	N	N	L45/R35	N	114	28	2-1/4	13-3/4
Ryobi SCI62VS	\$100	Plain & Pin-end	N	Y	N	Y	F	Y	N	L45/R15	Y	97	26	1-3/4	16-1/4
Tradesman 8354SL	\$120	Plain & Pin-end	N	Y	N	N	A	N	N	L47	Y	105	50	1-3/4	16
Tradesman 8366SL	\$120	Plain & Pin-End	N	Y	N	Y	A	Y	N	L47	Y	105	45	2	16

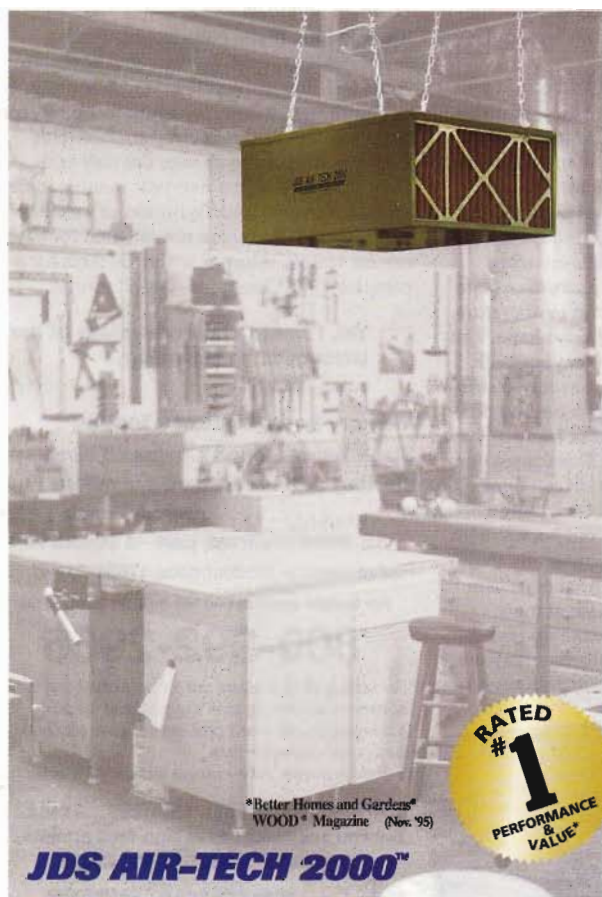
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See pages 125 and 126 for a listing of manufacturer phone numbers and Web sites.

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American Woodworker 2002 TOOL BUYER'S GUIDE

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Let's Clear the Air...

JDS AIR-TECH 2000™

Model 750, Still the Best!

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The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) recommends limiting wood dust exposures. The JDS Air-Tech 2000 will dramatically improve the quality of the air you breathe. Our new model 750 variable speed allows you to dial in your desired air flow, from a whisper quiet 200 cfm to an ultra performance 750 cfm. This will clean the air in a 30'x30'x8' shop every ten minutes. For larger areas our models 8-12, 10-16 and 2400 are available. The JDS systems will remove 99% of particles as small as five microns and 80% of particles as small as one micron. For the removal of odors, fumes and smoke, our optional charcoal filter is available. To place an order or for the dealer nearest you call us toll-free.

\$259.00
Model 750

Another quality product from

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Manufactured in the U.S.A.

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JDS AIR-TECH 2000™

Space program research creates "smart bed" sleep surface

Revolutionary heat-sensitive material originally developed for the space program turns any mattress into a comfortable customized sleep surface.

Turn your mattress into an ideal sleep surface

- Thermo-sensitive visco-elastic foam
- Contours to user's body
- Hypoallergenic
- Space age foam memorizes your body's shape for a better night's sleep
- Promotes proper spine alignment
- Helps relieve back pain, insomnia...even arthritis



"I saw this product in a magazine ad and decided to give it a shot. It is terrific and has made a huge difference in the quality of my 'sleep time.' I compared it to other visco-elastic products costing more than 10 times as much and found your product to be a superior value. My wife has also benefited from this product."

—Chris M., California

Results not typical

Just because you are asleep, you shouldn't assume that you are getting the proper amount of rest. Tossing and turning in bed can diminish the value of your sleep. What's more, most mattresses fail to support your spine properly, which can result in increased pressure on certain parts of your body. Now, one of the world's leading manufacturers of foam products has developed a revolutionary new material that can actually change the way you sleep. The material is visco-elastic foam, and it is the key to the Memory Foam Mattress Topper.

Space age sleep technology. Originally developed by the Space program researchers to increase the comfort of astronauts during flight, visco-elastic foam represents a quantum leap in bedding technology. The open-celled

construction of Memory Foam creates a mattress with a memory. It automatically senses your body weight and temperature, and then it responds by molding to your body's exact shape and position. This distributes your weight and reduces stress on your body's pressure points: the shoulders,

hips and legs. This can revitalize your old mattress and make sleeping comfortable again. Now, thanks to improved manufacturing techniques, this revolutionary material is more affordable than ever.

Affordable and comfortable. You can spend thousands of dollars on a new mattress, but why do it? The Memory Foam Mattress Topper can turn your existing mattress into an ideal sleep surface. The visco-elastic foam is 2 inches thick, which is the ideal thickness for providing comfort and retaining shape over time. When you lie down on this amazing material, the heat and pressure sensitive foam reacts to your body's weight and temperature, so that it molds to your exact body shape. This means that whether you sleep on your back, stomach or side, your weight is evenly distributed and your spine remains in a neutral position. Other surfaces support your body at the shoulders, hips and legs only. This causes your spine to sag in other areas, which can often result in discomfort, and even back pain. This product not only helps you avoid back pain, it can help reduce tossing and turning. By molding to your body's shape, the Memory Foam Mattress Topper can help you sleep more soundly and restfully. You'll wake up rested, relaxed and ready to take on the day. Anyone who suffers from insomnia, back pain...even arthritis...can benefit from this new technology.

Special offer from TechnoScout.

Thanks to our special relationship with the manufacturer of this product, we can offer it to you at a special price...with a bonus. Order now and you'll receive a fitted mattress pad for free! It's heavyweight and quilted, and

made of 200-count 100% cotton with a 15-inch deep fitted spandex skirt to fit a mattress up to 21" thick...a \$69.95 value!

It's risk-free. If you have trouble getting comfortable at night, just imagine how astronauts feel. The same padded surface designed to absorb tremendous forces has been incorporated into this amazing sleep surface. This Mattress Topper can change the way you sleep. It comes with a five-year manufacturer's limited warranty and TechnoScout's exclusive risk-free trial. If you are not satisfied for any reason, simply return it within 30 days for a complete "No Questions Asked" refund.

☐ Yes, I want to take advantage of the latest bedding technology!

Memory Foam Mattress Topper:
Sizes Twin through California King
starting at 3 credit card payments

.....\$49.95 each + S&H
FREE fitted mattress pad—a \$69.95 value

Please mention product code 17631-21545.

For fastest service, call toll-free 24 hours a day

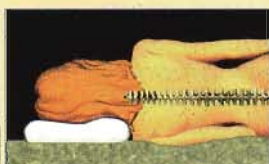
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*For mail-in orders, please call for individual cost of the various sizes along with shipping and handling. To charge it to your credit card, enclose your account number and expiration date.
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Does your mattress have "body memory?"



The open-celled, visco-elastic construction of Structure™ foam enables it to automatically sense your weight and temperature, and responds by molding to your body's exact shape and position. This means that whether you sleep on your back, stomach or side, your weight is evenly distributed and your spine remains in a neutral position.



How to Buy a TABLESAW

So you want to work wood? There's no better first power tool than a tablesaw. You'll find one at the heart of just about every serious woodshop. These indispensable tools are stout workhorses for ripping, crosscutting and making precision joints.

The Family

Most tablesaws fall into one of three categories: contractor's saws, cabinet saws and benchtops.

Contractor's Saws

Contractors have used these portable machines on job sites for years; hence the name. You can identify these saws by their open base (see photo at right).

A contractor's saw will serve most woodworkers very well. With 1-1/2- to 2-hp motors, they've got plenty of power. They're available with fences with up to 52 in. of rip capacity, so they can easily handle plywood. Most of these saws run on 110 or 220 volts.

If you put a mobile base under these



PHOTO COURTESY OF MANUFACTURER

Ridgid TS2424 contractor's saw; \$650.

Jet JWTS-10CW2-JF; \$699.

saws, you can easily push them off to the side when not in use—a great benefit in any small shop.

On the negative side, the open bases on these saws make dust collection difficult. The motor also projects out the back, so you can't roll the saws tight against a wall.

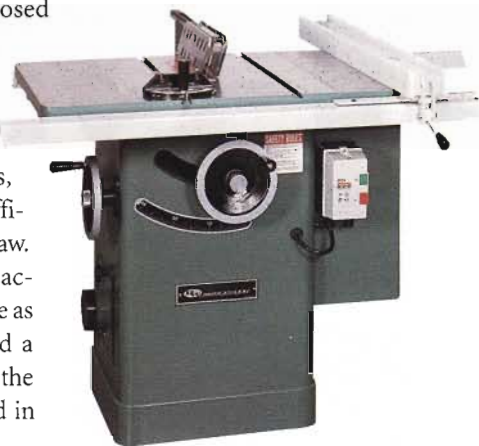
Visit www.americanwoodworker.com for a complete list of manufacturers, models and costs.

Cabinet Saws

These machines rest on an enclosed base, or cabinet; hence the name. Dust collection is much better on these machines because all the workings are confined in a cabinet. They're heavy machines, 400 to 500 lbs., so they're more difficult to move than a contractor's saw.

The table size and rip fence capacity of cabinet saws is about the same as for contractor's saws. You'll need a dedicated 220-volt circuit to drive the 3- or 5-hp motor that is standard in these tools.

You'll also need two to three times more cash than you would for a contractor's saw. Pros who use their tablesaw every day often choose these rugged machines.



Bridgewood BW-10CS; \$995.

Both the DeWalt and Jet machines have contractor's saw features, like 120-volt motors and mobility, with cabinet saw features, like enclosed cabinets and improved dust collection.

Containing the 1-3/4-hp motor inside the saw cabinet makes for a compact tool that's easy to roll against a wall when your work is done. Dust collection on the DeWalt saw is especially good due to a shroud that surrounds the blade. On close inspection, you'll also find the tables and inner workings more like a contractor's saw than a cabinet saw.

This is a cool new category of table-saws for those who want more than a contractor's saw, but aren't ready to pop the cash for a cabinet saw.

Benchtop Saws

These small and portable saws generally have a fence capacity limited to 24 in. The tables are smaller than those on contractor's or cabinet saws, so

Contractor/Cabinet Hybrids

Two newer saws, DeWalt's DW746 (\$900) and Jet's JWCS-10A (\$1,000) blur the line between cabinet and contractor saws.



DeWalt DW746 contractor/cabinet hybrid; \$900.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF MANUFACTURERS



Skil 3400 benchtop saw; \$360.

handling large material, like plywood, is difficult. These saws are best suited to jobsite work or small projects in small shops.



Jet JWCS-10A cabinet saw; \$1,000.

Visit www.americanwoodworker.com for a complete list of manufacturers, models and costs.

Features



1
T-square fences lock rigidly at the front of the saw.



2
Direct-read cursors almost eliminate measuring on the tablesaw.



3
Magnetic switches are the best choice for tablesaws.



4
Solid, cast-iron tables are preferable to webbed or stamped tables. They're flat, with no holes to catch your fingers in.

PHOTO COURTESY OF MANUFACTURER

Fence

A good fence can do wonders for a tablesaw. Look for a T-square style fence, like the Biesemeyer (Photo 1). It rigidly locks at the front of the saw, eliminating the wiggle-lock-wiggle-lock two-step other fences require. Once you calibrate the direct-read cursors, setting the fence position is a breeze—just like reading a tape measure (Photo 2).

Table

Look for as much cast iron as you can find. It's best if, in addition to the main table, the wings are also cast iron. This gives you a flatter, heavier, easier-to-use, table than a stamped-metal or webbed table (Photo 4). Webbed tables are notorious for giving you a pinched finger when you slide the rip fence back and forth.

Switch

Tablesaw switches, especially the off button, should be immediately accessible so it's easy to turn off in an emergency. The best is a magnetic switch that shuts down the machine if your power goes off from a storm or tripped circuit breaker. You'll have to manually turn the saw back on for it to run, which is much safer than having it start back up on its own.

Motor

Buy a saw with at least a 1-1/2-hp motor and you'll have enough power for just about any woodworking projects.

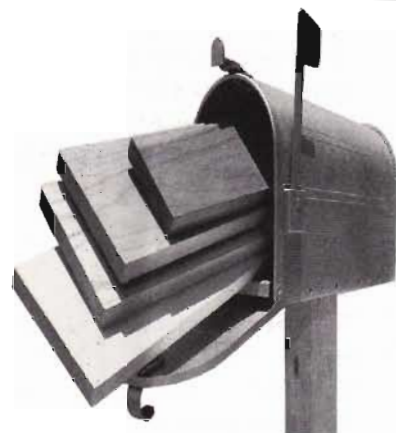
Our Recommendations

The features listed above will help you shop for a saw. Look for a complete test of tablesaws in a future issue of AW.

continued on page 108

Visit www.americanwoodworker.com for a complete list of manufacturers, models and costs.

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continued from page 107

Aftermarket Miter Gauges

Reviewed in AW #81, August 2000, page 81.

If you hope to use your tablesaw for precise crosscutting, check out an aftermarket miter gauge. These accessories are pricey, but only about half the cost of a compound miter saw. Aftermarket miter gauges are best for crosscutting material up to 4-ft. long.

Editors' Choices

Incra

The Miter Gauge; \$185.

With its very easy-to-adjust bar, you'll get a great fit in the miter gauge slot of any saw. With positive stops every 1/2 degree, there's virtually no angle to which you can't readily set the miter gauge. It has a great direct-read ruler, but the stop block, used

for repeated same-length cuts, must be completely removed when you're not using it, instead of just flipped up out of the way.

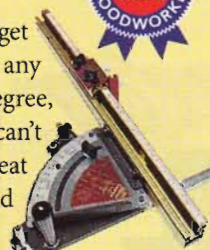
After our test, Incra came out with the Incra Miter 1000. Although it's smaller, it shares many features with its big brother, and at \$100, is an excellent value.

Woodhaven

Deluxe Miter Gauge; \$178.

The bar can be adjusted to any miter gauge slot, but it's a little more tricky than the Incra.

We loved the flip stop, and the large number of positive stops makes it easy to set the miter gauge to almost any angle.



The Miter Gauge; \$185.

The prices of the miter gauges in our test were all so close we didn't pick any Best Buys.

Precision Miter Gauge; \$178.

MITER GAUGES

Manufacturer/ Model #	Price	Fence	Bar	Comments
Accu-Miter	\$180	18" long (extends to 34").	20" with T-slot washer. File or peen to fit your slot.	Built-in stop system for cutting up to 34". Hold-down clamp available for \$38. More difficult to mount wooden sub fence. Ruler only works to left of saw blade. Harder to adjust fit of bar.
Incra The Miter Gauge <i>Editors' Choice</i>	\$185	27" long. Uses an Incra rack to allow 1/32" adjustments. Micro adjust to dial in between. Attach wooden sub fence with T-slots.	21" with T-slot washer. Expand 6 nylon washers to fit slot.	Very easy to adjust bar. 1/2-degree positive stops. Great direct-read ruler. Stop block instead of flip block necessitates removing stop when not needed.
Osborne Miter Gauge EB2	\$160	26" long. Abrasive strip on one side to prevent wood creep during cutting.	21" with T-slot washer. Two expansion slots adjust to fit slot.	Light weight and easy to handle. Difficult to calibrate ruler to blade. Easy to adjust fit of bar.
Vega PMG 24	\$147	24" long (extends to 42"). No direct-read ruler past 24". Includes hold-down clamp.	17" with T-slot washer for both ends. Adjust bar using set screws and 4 plugs.	Longest fence. Hard to adjust fit of bar. No T-slot washer.
Woodhaven Deluxe Miter Gauge <i>Editors' Choice</i>	\$178	24" long. Attach wooden sub fence using T-slots. Flip stop locks so it won't climb miters.	17" with T-slot washer for both ends. Adjust bar using set screws and 4 plugs.	Lots of positive stops. Good flip stop. Bar must be out of table to adjust fit. Shortest bar.

AW

See pages 125 and 126 for a listing of manufacturer phone numbers and Web sites.

Visit www.americanwoodworker.com for a complete list of manufacturers, models and costs.

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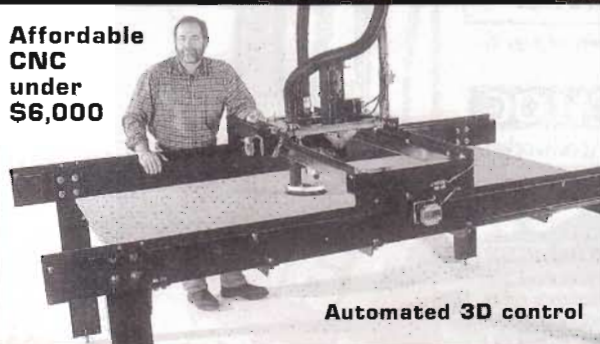
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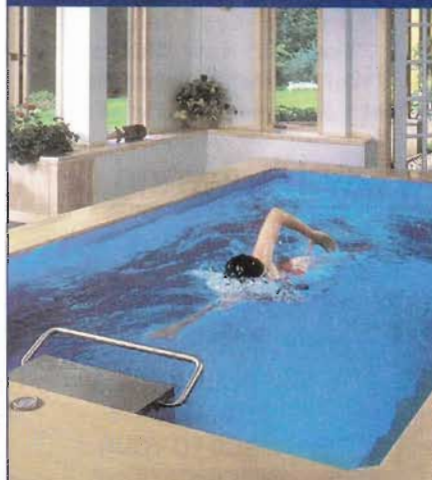
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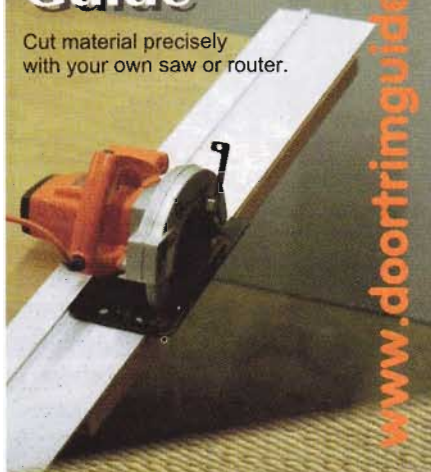


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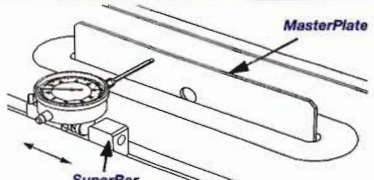
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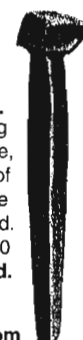


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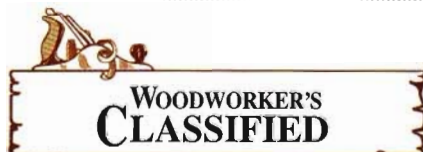
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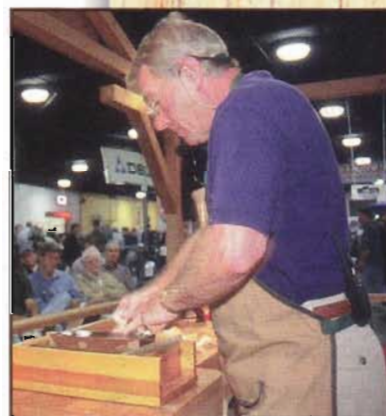
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Recommended Tools

American Woodworker tool tests are the most thorough and accurate tool tests in the business. All of our editors are former professional woodworkers with a wealth of advice backed by years of experience. For each tool test, the editors assemble a panel of non-professional woodworkers with a variety of skill levels. The tools are tested in a real shop and the results are meticulously recorded. When warranted, Editors' Choice and Best Buy designations are awarded. But, the exhaustive research doesn't end there. Another distinctive feature of American Woodworker tool tests is our fact-checking department. We verify all of the specifications, including the price, of every tool tested before it appears in the magazine. What you get in an American Woodworker tool test is a gold mine of unbiased, accurate, clear information that takes the guesswork out of tool buying.

Arm yourself with this quick-reference list of all of our Editors' Choices and Best Buys and you're ready to outfit your shop.



BANDSAWS

Reviewed in AW #88, August 2001, page 84. We tested 17 bandsaws for their ability to resaw wide hard and soft wood. The saws we tested had a resaw capacity of 9 in. to 12 in. and were priced between \$350 and \$1,350. Other machines considered for Best Buy were the Lobo 18 in. and the Grizzly 18 in.



EDITORS' CHOICES

Jet JWBS 18 in.
Laguna LT 16 in.

BEST BUYS

Delta 28-280 14 in.
Jet JW14CS 14 in.

BELT SANDERS

Reviewed in AW #79, April 2000, page 66. We tested 26 tools and found that size and motor style are the two most important features. The Makita 9921 and 9403 were the most quiet, but no tool stood out as an Editors' Choice.

BEST BUY

Hitachi SB 75



SLIDING COMPOUND MITER SAWS

Reviewed in AW #84, December 2000, page 98. We tested 15 saws and in addition to the Editors' Choice, we also liked the Bosch B3915, the DeWalt DW708, the Hitachi C10FS and the Makita LS121. The Makita LS103 is so competitively priced, we didn't pick a separate Best Buy.

EDITORS' CHOICE

Makita LS1013

DOVETAIL JIGS

Reviewed in AW #84, December 2000, page 66. We tested 14 half-blind, through and combination jigs. We also provided information on router-table based jigs, template-making jigs and the mini Katie Jig, Jr.

EDITORS' CHOICE

Woodhaven 775

BEST BUY

Porter-Cable 4112 and Hart Design

DRILL PRESSES

Reviewed in AW #86, April 2001, page 69. We tested 28 13-in. to 17-in. machines that cost less than \$450. It's a buyer's market in the field of drill presses. You don't have to pay more than \$350 to get a good machine.

EDITORS' CHOICE

Delta 17-965

BEST BUYS

**Central Machinery
38144
Grizzly G7944
Ridgid DP 1500**



DUST COLLECTORS

Reviewed in AW #80, June 2000, page 80. We tested 28 dust collectors and in addition to our Editors' Choice and Best Buy we liked the Penn State DC2-5 (\$300), the Delta 50-850 (\$299) and the Jet DC-1100 (\$300).

Recommended Tools EDITORS' CHOICE

Oneida Air Systems' 1.5 hp cyclonic collector

BEST BUY

Penn State Industries' 1-hp single-stage collector

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Recommended Tools

6-IN. JOINTERS

Reviewed in AW #77, December 1999, page 72. We tested 12 6-in. jointers that sell for less than \$600. We recommend floor model jointers, if space permits. They are quieter and can handle longer boards.



EDITORS' CHOICES

Delta 37-195
General 80-100LM
Jet JJ-6CSX

BEST BUYS

Bridgewood BW6R
Sunhill 924028

MINI-LATHES

Reviewed in AW #78, February 2000, page 68. All 10 lathes tested weighed less than 100 lbs., including the motor and base. Our testers considered power and stability, tool rests and tailstock, and ease of speed changes when evaluating these tools.

EDITORS' CHOICES

Jet
Klein
Vicmarc

BEST BUY

Taig

MITER GAUGES

Reviewed in AW #81, August 2000, page 81. We tested five similarly-priced aftermarket miter gauges. The most important features are the positive stops in the head, the bar, and a rigid fence and stop.



EDITORS' CHOICES

Incra
Woodhaven

MORTISERS

Reviewed in AW #81, August 2000, page 73. We tested eight benchtop mortisers designed to cut mortises up to 1/2-in. wide. The hold-downs on all eight machines were disappointing and none of them was able to consistently cut 1/2-in. mortises without additional clamps and fences. Consequently, we

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Recommended Tools

didn't award an Editors' Choice. These tools are a bargain, however, and we selected five Best Buys. After our test was performed, a mortiser was developed by General International that impressed us very favorably, and very likely would have been an Editors' Choice.

BEST BUYS

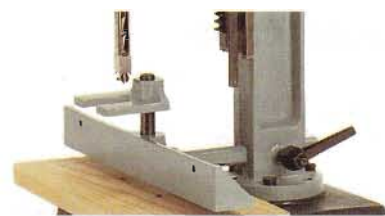
Bridgewood HM-11

Delta 14-650

Grizzly G3183

Jet JBM-5

Woodtek 876-775



OSCILLATING SPINDLE SANDERS

Reviewed in AW #82, October 2000, page 82. We tested seven benchtops, focusing on the ease of drum changes, dust collection, aggressiveness of cut and ease of storage. In addition to our Editors' Choice and Best Buy, consider the new hand-held sander from Porter-Cable and the floor model from Grizzly.

EDITORS' CHOICE

Clayton 140

BEST BUY

Delta

PLATE JOINERS

Reviewed in AW #73, June 1999, page 70. We tested 13 tools, comparing fence height and angle adjustment, plunging depths, dust collection, noise, the main handle and the power switch of each machine.

EDITORS' CHOICES

DeWalt 682

Porter-Cable 557

BEST BUYS

Freud JS 100

JS 102

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Recommended Tools

PORTABLE PLANERS

Reviewed in AW #79, April 2000, page 82. We tested 11 tools, all of which produced a very smooth surface. They all snipe, but some less than others. Those with traveling heads and head locks snipe the least. After this test, Makita introduced their 2012NB; (\$500). We've seen it and it would also have done well in this test.

EDITORS' CHOICES

Delta 22-560

DeWalt DW733

Ridgid TP 1300

BEST BUY

Delta 22-540

RANDOM-ORBIT SANDERS

Reviewed in AW #75, October 1999, page 66. We tested 33 tools, paying particular attention to their abrasive discs, dust collection, orbit size and pad brakes.

EDITORS' CHOICES

Best of the Best

Dynabrade 57135

Best Palm-Grip

Bosch 1295DH

Makita BO5010

Best Pistol-Grip

Makita BO5021



MID-SIZED ROUTERS

Reviewed in AW #85, February 2001, page 71. We tested 17 fixed-base routers in the 1-1/2- to 2-1/2-hp range. Some of our old favorites were outshone by a new batch of high-tech machines.

EDITORS' CHOICES

Bosch 1617 EVS

Makita RF 1101

BEST BUY

Porter-Cable 690

Recommended Tools

3-HP ROUTERS

Reviewed in AW #78, February 2000, page 75. We tested nine variable-speed plunge and fixed-base tools. After we did our tool test, Bosch came out with their 1619EVS (\$350). This 3-hp plunge router would have done well in this test.

EDITORS' CHOICES

General Use

Bosch 1615 EV5

DeWalt DW625

Porter-Cable 7539

Router Table

Porter-Cable 7518



BEST BUY

General Use

Freud FT200E

ROUTER TABLE PLATES

Reviewed in AW #85, February 2001, page 86. We tested plates with insert rings that can accept guide bushings and starting pins. The Woodhaven Angle Ease, JessEm's Router Lift, Jet's XACTA lift and Rockler's Router Lift have features previously found only on expensive, full-size shapers.

EDITORS' CHOICE

Veritas tabletop

BEST BUY

Woodworker's Choice

SCROLLSAWS

Reviewed in AW #87, June 2001, page 66. We tested 17 entry-level saws priced at less than \$500. Runner-up for Editors' Choice was the Delta 40-650. Also, for just a little more than \$200, we liked the Delta 40-570 and the Dremel 1680. For the really budget-conscious, there's the Central Machinery saw for just \$85. For advice about selecting scrollsaw blades, see page 74 of this tool test.

EDITORS' CHOICE

DeWalt DW788

BEST BUYS

Delta 40-570

Ridgid SS1650



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Recommended Tools

SHARPENING MACHINES

Reviewed in AW #90, October 2001, page 76. We tested horizontal and vertical machines to see how well they performed lapping, coarse grinding, medium grinding and honing. We recommend adding an Accusharp tool rest and grinding jig to the vertical-wheel machines and a 2 in 1 honing jig to the horizontals.

EDITORS' CHOICE

**Veritas Power
Sharpening System**

BEST BUYS

**Delta 23-710
Makita 98202**

SHOP VACUUMS

Reviewed in AW #80, June 2000, page 69. We tested six shop vacuums, specifically on how well they collected dust from portable power tools. We tested four that were designed to collect dust right off the tools and two general-purpose vacuums outfitted with aftermarket accessories.

EDITORS' CHOICE

Fein Turbo 9-55-13

BEST BUY

Fein Mini-Turbo

STACKING DADO BLADES

Reviewed in AW #86, April 2001, page 53. We tested 6-in. and 8-in. stacking carbide-tipped dado sets that ranged in price from \$50 to \$500. Judged by the quality of cut, there was a large group of top performers.

EDITORS' CHOICE

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What's Coming Up

in our December 2001 issue

Shop Storage Cabinet

Do you have cans of finish, bottles of glue, and boxes of leftover hardware coming out your ears? (Eww... that's quite an image, isn't it?!) If you do, Tim Johnson's got the answer for you: a cabinet that'll help organize all the stuff in your shop, plus automotive, yard and all sorts of other household junk. We're building three of 'em just for the AW shop!

Craftsman-Style Bookcase

Here's Randy Johnson, working on the prototype for this handsome wall unit. Too big for your shop, you say? I don't think so. Randy's designed it with an unusual knockdown approach that allows you to build and finish all the parts separately, carry them to your living room, and assemble the whole piece there.



Tool Test: Cordless Drills

It's amazing that we can build anything in the shop with all the tools being tested. Tom Caspar's got 53 cordless drills here, plus all their chargers and batteries, and we've had two dozen woodworkers in for our Consumer Test Panel. Want to add your two cents worth? Send your comments about cordless drills to amwood@concentric.net.

Face-Frame Cabinets

If you liked George Vondriska's story on panel doors, you'll love this one. He takes you step-by-step through a proven and bullet-proof approach to basic cabinet construction.

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Oops!

Shoehorn Vanity

I built a 7 ft.-long vanity in my garage shop for installation in an upstairs bathroom. Preliminary measurements of the doors, hallways and stairway indicated we could fit it in place, no problem. We willed the up-ended cabinet up the first flight of stairs, discovered the second flight narrower than the first and had to remove the handrail. At the top of the second flight, we realized we had to remove a thermostat and ceiling light fixture to get the vanity through the opening. As we tried fitting it through the bathroom door we realized the bottom of the door (which we'd measured) was wider than the top, necessitating the removal of the door, door casing and jamb. In order to finally tilt it into place, we had to remove a fold-down attic stairway, springs and all. It took more time to reassemble the house than it did to install the vanity.

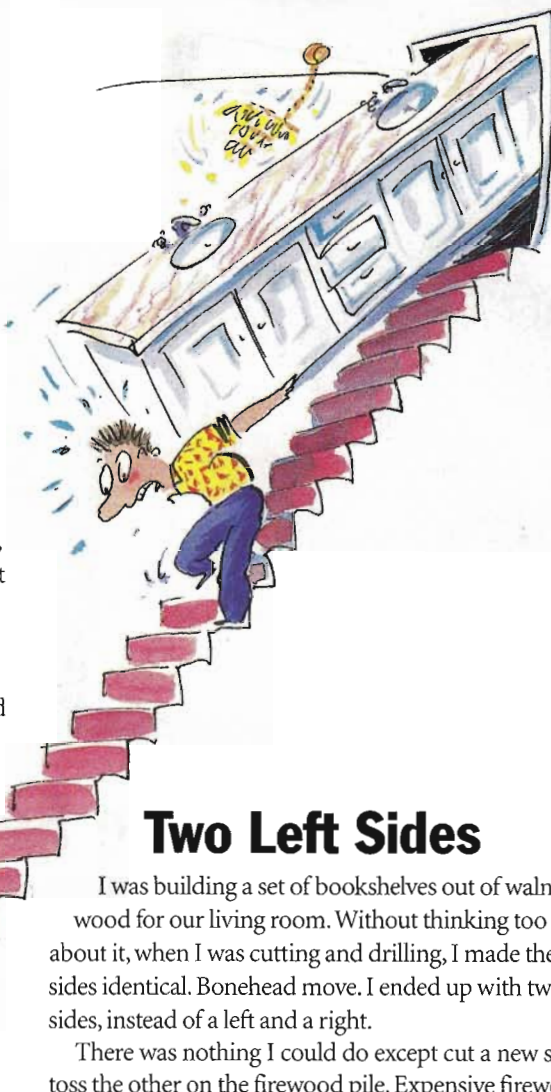
Jon Frost

When in doubt, find (or tape together) a cardboard box the same size as whatever you're building and try maneuvering that through the house to your project's final destination. It'll save you a lot of time, head scratching and back aching.

Bleeding Table

I made a small walnut table as a birthday present for my mother-in-law. As always, when I'm building projects with deadlines, I was running late, and I was still applying the Danish oil late on the night before her birthday. No problem, I thought, there'll be plenty of time for the finish to dry. I delivered the table, which felt dry to the touch, around noon the next day. An hour later, the finish was oozing out of the pores of the walnut, as sticky and glossy little specks. What a disaster! My problem was (I think) that my shop is not very well heated, and my mother-in-law likes her house plenty warm. The oil that was down inside the wood hadn't actually dried, and when I brought the table into a warm room the heat drove it to the surface. Next time, I'll let the finish dry in a warmer place!

Jean Bartholome



Two Left Sides

I was building a set of bookshelves out of walnut plywood for our living room. Without thinking too much about it, when I was cutting and drilling, I made the two sides identical. Bonehead move. I ended up with two left sides, instead of a left and a right.

There was nothing I could do except cut a new side and toss the other on the firewood pile. Expensive firewood!

Ron Swarza

We got a chuckle out of this one, because most of us here have made the same mistake, sometimes more than once! Unfortunately, there's no magic cure; it's just one of the things you learn to watch out for, and we try to warn you about in advance. AW



If you have a woodworking blunder you're willing to share, send it to us with a sketch or photo. We pay \$100 for each one we print. Send to: AW Oops!, American Woodworker, 2915 Commers Drive, Suite 700, Eagan, MN 55121. Submissions can't be returned and become our property upon acceptance and payment.

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