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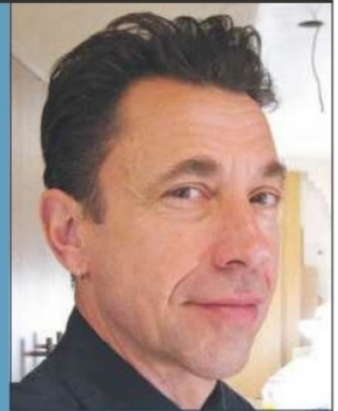


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welcome



Hello, and welcome to the latest edition of your favourite magazine. In this issue we continue where we left off, with plenty of opportunities for education and entertainment within the pages. From my side of the desk it's all going nicely, and I hope that's the case wherever you may find yourself reading at the moment – perhaps in a cosy workshop with a hot drink and a tasty snack.

This month we'll be looking at more techniques, some which are variations on the familiar, and others – like Colin Simpson's turned pewter-edge bowl – which will be new to many a reader, me included! I'm hoping that, even if you might not want to reproduce any of our innovative projects exactly as shown, you'll be sufficiently inspired or intrigued by aspects of one or two of them to have a go at something similar. A case in point could be the hinges on Kerry Donovan's ash screen. Although your home may be adequately provided with screens at the moment, you might care to emulate the knuckle supports found on a period Pembroke table.

It's always busy here at *The Woodworker*, but what we can barely keep up with at the moment is the volume of new kit and tools which continue to appear on the market. With improvements in manufacturing right across the board, there's no shortage of good gear out there, and we're doing all we can to put a modest sample under the microscope for you each month. We hope this will help you in making a choice next time a new catalogue comes through the door.

Keeping in touch

I've been making an Arts and Crafts front door in my workshop, in between doing some basic carpentry jobs, and I'll be bringing you details of the project in due course... that is, just as soon as I've hung it! If you've made something recently of which you're rightly proud, I'd love to see it. With today's technology you can easily email a photo into the nerve centre here, so why not give it a go? My email address is mark.cass@mytimemedia.com

It's great to get your input to the magazine, whether it be praise, enquiry or complaint: it's all good. And don't worry; I'll answer every one, so please let me know what you think. Happy woodworking, and go safely out there.

Mark



If you can't always find a copy of the magazine, help is at hand! Complete this form and hand it in at your local store, and they'll ensure that a copy of each issue is reserved for you. Some stores may even be able to arrange for it to be delivered to your home. Just ask!

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CONTENTS

What's in store for you this month

page
65



page
47



page
60

**NEXT
ISSUE**

THE MAY ISSUE IS
OUT ON APRIL 5TH

page

**12
ASH
TRIPTYCH**



page
27

page
19



REGULARS

- 3 Welcome
- 8 News & Diary
- 11 News
- 32 Subscriptions
- 88 Back issues
- 89 Marketplace
- 90 Archive

PROJECTS

12 Ash triptych

Kerry Donovan describes how he re-invented the traditional three-panel room screen by devising a cunning concealed hinge mechanism that would swing both ways

19 Theme and variations

Peter Parfitt presents a classic oak side table made with domino joints, and explains how to add drawers and shelves as variations of the basic design

27 Accentuate the positive

Robert Couldwell explains how he overcame the problems caused by a shortage of woodworking skill and workshop machinery to create a computer desk with some ingenious design touches

WORKSHOP

35 A woodworker's ABC

Andy Standing continues his light-hearted new series with a ramble through woodworking topics beginning with the letter D (and chucks in a couple of Es for good measure)

41 The spindle moulder

Andy King takes a look at the spindle moulder, with advice on choosing the right machine, setting it up, respecting it and using it safely

47 Emergency ward 10

Alan Holtham describes one of his most unusual workshop projects – converting an ex-hospital bed into an adjustable-height workbench

52 Shop notes

Keith Smith describes he's updated his website, bought himself an iPad to do client presentations, improved his CAD skills and still found time to do a bit of woodwork

TURNING

55 10 steps to better bowls

Bob Chapman presents the first part of his potted guide to help you get better and more satisfying results when you're turning bowls

60 A silver lining

Colin Simpson describes the techniques involved in moulding and turning simple bowl embellishments in pewter to enhance the beauty of your turned work

65 Candle power

Ian Wilkie shows you how to turn two different candlestick designs, and explains how making a pair can improve your copy-turning skills

page
78



ON TEST

70 Charnwood W730 bandsaw

72 Hitachi R18DSL cordless vacuum cleaner

73 Bosch GSB 10.8V-2-Li combi drill driver

74 Makita BTM50 & TM3000C multi-tools

76 Triton TWSS10 wetstone grinder

78 Senco FinishPro 18MG nailer kit

80 Metabo STA 18 LTX cordless jigsaw

81 Veritas miniature low-angle block plane

82 Worx DDI3.1 impact driver

83 Veritas planing stop

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April 2013

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On the desk

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Dremel has responded to specific consumer demands for a cordless DIY tool that doesn't stall easily, charges quickly and has a long run time. The Dremel 8100 is able to reach into really tight areas, and is perfect for making fast, precise cuts and for controlled sanding with a high-quality finish. It has variable speed (5000 to 30,000rpm), and the innovative EZ twist nose cap allows tool-free accessory changes. The removable 7.2V 1.3Ah Li-ion battery pack guarantees fast charging with a one-hour charger. Most importantly, the tool has been engineered to ensure no nuisance tripping: it doesn't shut down if you stall it.



A generous accessory kit makes the Dremel 8100 excellent value for money at £79.99. This includes a detailer's grip attachment for optimal control, 15 Dremel sanding, grinding, polishing, cutting and drilling accessories and a soft carry bag. The tool is available from DIY shops, and from www.dremel-direct.com, www.tool-shop.co.uk and www.amazon.co.uk

TORMEK GIVEAWAY

Tormek, the Swedish innovators of sharpening systems, will be giving away a free EKA 200mm chef's knife worth over £100 to anyone who purchases a Tormek T-7 between March 1st and April 30th 2013.

EKA knives are well known for their strength and acute sharpness, with blades manufactured from Sandvik 12C27 stainless steel, hardened to 57-59 HRC. The handles are sculpted from Scandinavian masur birch for comfort, elegance and durability. The knife comes with a 10-year warranty.

To claim a free knife, simply register your Tormek T-7 purchase at www.tormek.com. Claims must be received by Tormek no later than 20th May 2013.



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John Boddy's demonstrations

9 Wood carving: Brian Chapman
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DeWalt has just launched the successor to its popular Alligator saw. The new model is available with a range of five 295mm and five 430mm blades, and cuts through hollow clay block, aerated concrete, timber, boards and insulation materials with ease.

The Alligator is the ideal solution for cutting timber, with HSS rough and fine-cut blades available. Often used during first-phase construction, the Alligator easily cuts construction timbers used for roofing joists and stud walls. Where a neater finish is required, a fine-cut timber blade can be used for flooring materials such as OSB (oriented strand board) and plywood.

A new and improved blade change feature makes changing blades far easier and quicker. Using an on-board hex key, users can simply and quickly replace blades, reducing downtime between applications and improving productivity on site. Prices range around the £300 mark.

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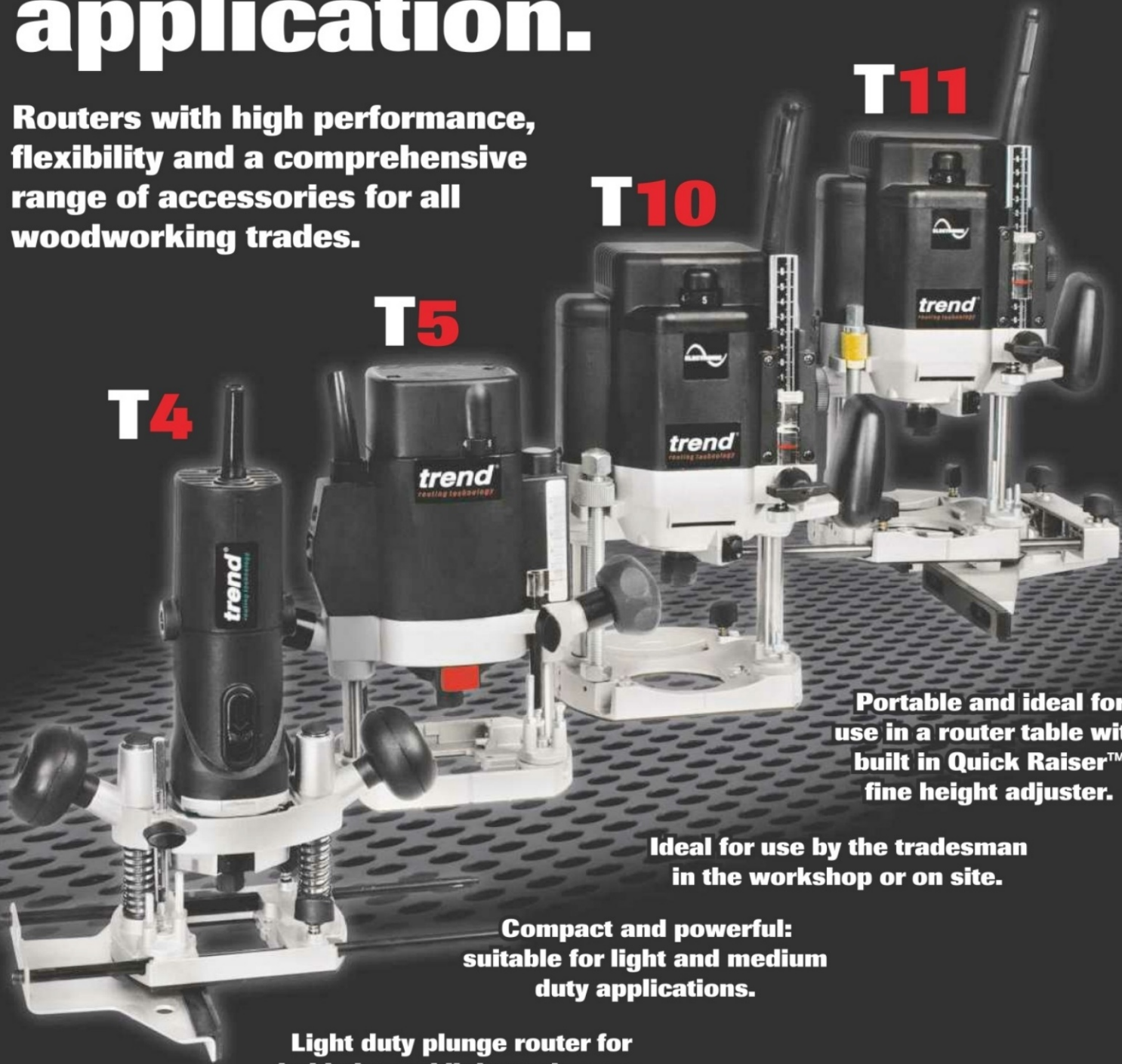
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This month we're focusing on dust extractors and vacuums. For anyone working with wood, a good dust extraction system is essential. Wood dust can cause serious damage to your health as well as reducing the effectiveness of (or even damaging) your machines and equipment. It is therefore essential to invest in a good dust extraction machine or system for your workshop. At D&M we stock a wide range of extractors and vacuums to suit all needs and budgets. Check our website for the full range.

AERO 35-21 INOX WET & DRY VACUUM

MANUFACTURER: Nilfisk ALTO
D&M PRICE: £149.95

With the Nilfisk Aero range you get high performance in a compact package, with a huge working capacity and low working sound level. The complete range is suitable for picking up wet and dry debris around your home, car or workshop.

The Aero 35-21 model is equipped with a socket where you can connect your power tools and with an automatic on/off feature so its operation is controlled by switching the tool on and off.

The fleece filter bag system allows you to pick up moist debris without ruining the filter bag. With a 35-litre container, a powerful 1300W motor and high airflow, this Aero model will deal with any debris you want to pick up.

Nilfisk ALTO

Why Compromise



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MANUFACTURER: DeWalt
D&M PRICE: £519

This new 2200W M-Class dust extractor from DeWalt has an innovative dual-filter cleaning system which maintains performance during tough construction applications and keeps constant suction power even with the finest concrete and wood dust. Each filter is automatically cleaned every 15 seconds, reducing filter clogging and delivering constant airflow. Its 35-litre tank can handle both wet and dry materials and has variable suction control that allows for the reduction of suction power if required. It has a maximum airflow of 4080 litres/min, and is compatible with DeWalt AirLock adaptors.



AERO 25-21 240V WET & DRY VACUUM

MANUFACTURER: Nilfisk ALTO
D&M PRICE: £129.95

The best-selling Aero 25-21 model gives you a high-performance 1400W motor with a 25-litre working capacity and low working sound level (67dBA). It is also equipped with a socket where you can connect your power tools, and with automatic on/off it is ideal for use with a variety of power tools. Its two big wheels and two castors ensure stability and mobility.

Nilfisk ALTO

Why Compromise



AC400 WORKSHOP AIR CLEANER

MANUFACTURER: Record Power
D&M PRICE: £159.99

This compact air filter is ideal for small to medium-sized workshops, and offers features and performance not previously available at this price point. It has a two-stage filtration with pocket filters. It also features a choice of three speeds and timed switch-off so it can be left to run for a set period, cleaning the air after the workshop has been vacated. Best of all, these features are all easily accessible from the supplied remote control.



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BY KERRY DONOVAN

Ash triptych



A friend of mine asked me to make him a three-panel screen to separate his little corner office from the rest of his living room. He's a former upholsterer and wanted to add the woven insert panels himself, so my hands were somewhat tied design-wise...

How can you improve on such a basic centuries-old design as a screen? My client didn't want anything too ornate; it needed to be sturdy and strong, simple yet elegant. It took me a while to figure out the best solution. The first decision I made was to use white ash, which is close-grained, smooth and a beautiful material to work with.

The hinge challenge

Traditional screens use metal hinges – simple butts, piano hinges or cranked butts – to produce the concertina shape that stabilises the screen when it's open. I wanted to avoid any visible metal fixings, and eventually came up with an extended comb design with an edge groove and an inlaid wooden fillet to hold hidden 6mm diameter steel rods that would act as the hinge pins, **photo 1**.

It took me a couple of aborted attempts, but I eventually managed to get the geometry of the hinges to work, **photos 2 and 3**. Now it was simply a matter of scaling the hinge knuckles up to allow for the length of the screen stiles.

Double trouble

Due to the thickness of the stiles (needed to maintain the strength of each component), each hinge would operate only through a 90° angle, so two hinges were needed for each 180° opening. Two 180° openings

meant that four hinges were required, with the knock-on result that the centre panel needed to be handed to allow for reverse operation. **Fig 1** on page 15 shows the layout and positioning of the hinges on the stiles. The outer stiles were 50mm thick and the inner ones 34mm.

Cutting hinge housings

From what I'd learnt when making the trial hinge, I decided to cut the grooves for the hinge pins before cutting the knuckles. It's easier to do this when the stiles are still in one piece.

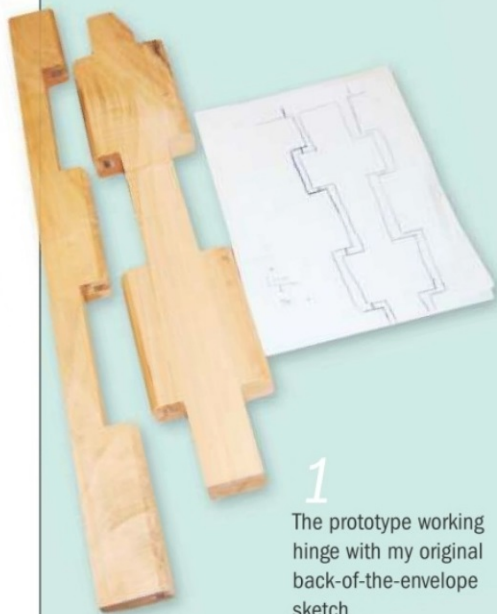
Rather than routing the hinge grooves with a 6mm router cutter and risking causing tear-out, I turned to my table saw. Although commercial regulations decree that a table saw should be used purely for sawing, I've found that it is possible to use it to cut grooves and rebates in an entirely safe manner.

Next, I carefully marked out the position of the hinge knuckles and cut notches on the waste side of the lines using my radial arm saw, set to just less than the depth of the hinge recess. With the metal rods acting as spacers, I glued the fillets in place and left them to dry overnight, **photo 4**.

The hinge jig

Looking to the future, I hope to make a number of these screens, so I decided to spend time making an accurate cutting jig

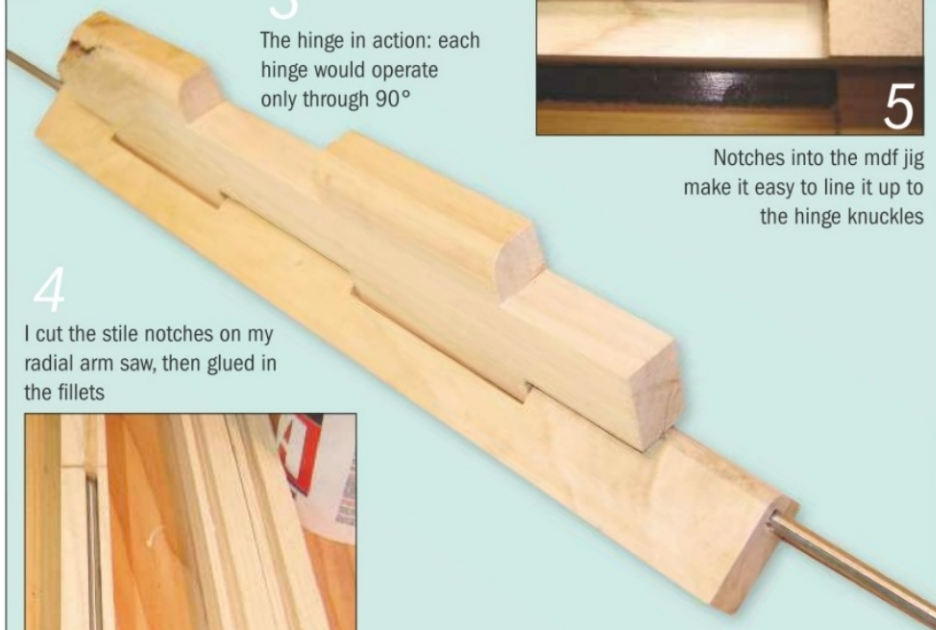




1
The prototype working hinge with my original back-of-the-envelope sketch



2
These components reveal how glued in wooden fillets enclose the channel for the rods

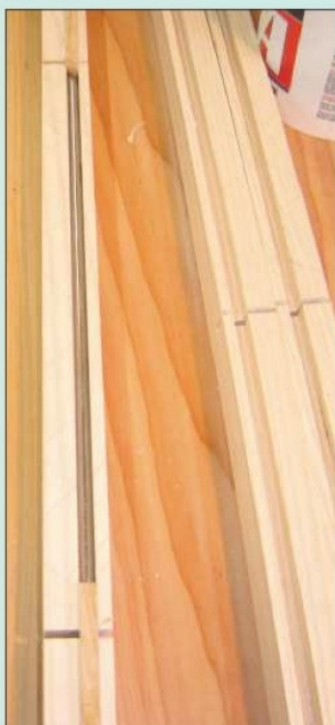


3
The hinge in action: each hinge would operate only through 90°



5
Notches into the mdf jig make it easy to line it up to the hinge knuckles

4
I cut the stile notches on my radial arm saw, then glued in the fillets



6
Remove the bulk of the waste on the bandsaw before starting routing

for the hinge recesses. I hand-cut a notch at each end of the recess to help me line it up with the hinge-knuckle lines that were marked on each stile, **photo 5**.

Before resorting to the jig and router, I removed the bulk of the waste on the bandsaw, **photo 6**, and then moved on to clean up the knuckles with the router and my new jig.

The jig I made results in the internal corners being rounded, **photo 7**. As a result I was now faced with a decision. Do I round over the external corners of the hinge knuckles, or square off the internal ones? I decided to square off the internal corners with a Trend corner chisel, **photo 8**. Why? It was a matter of aesthetics really. I felt that square knuckles would look more uniform, although on another day I might easily have plumped for rounded ones. Either shape would have operated equally well.

Placing the tenons

There are four rails in each panel, and I had to position the tenons to ensure that they were cut through the 'meat' of the stiles rather than the recesses.

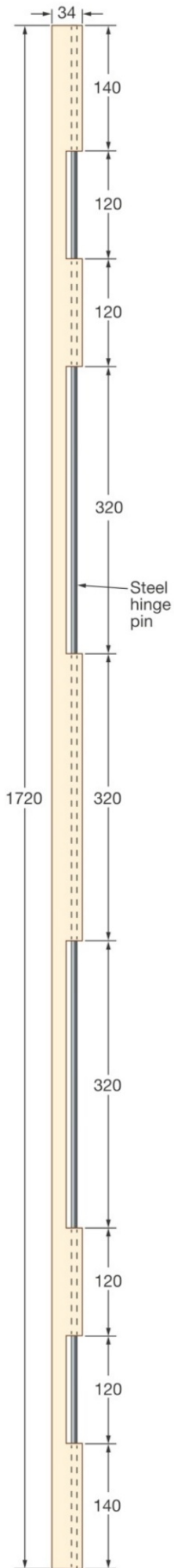
I marked the tenons on the centre panel stiles first, ensuring that the handing was correct, and then transposed the marked lines onto the stiles of the other two panels. I set the mortise depth to 20mm to avoid cutting into the channel that I'd made for the hinge rods.

I cut the 24 mortises using my mortiser fitted with a 12mm chisel and auger, **photo 9**, and cut the corresponding tenons using my radial arm saw. There is no need for haunches on the tenons as the stiles extend downwards to form legs, and upwards to form pillars that will host the turned finials at the top.

When all the mortise joints had been cut, **photo 10**, it was time to put the components together and check out the full-sized screen in a dry assembly, **photo 11**. I was quite happy with the raw result, but there was still a great deal of work to be done before the finished screen could be sent to the client for the upholstered panels to be inserted.

The end braces

As a result of viewing the dry assembly, I decided that end braces would be necessary. I ripped a pair of braces from stock and cut a housing groove using the table saw again. I then rounded over each edge with a 1/2in bearing-guided router cutter and sanded each brace to a finish. Their finished profile is shown in **photo 12**. After this, I cut them to length and glued them to the outer stiles with a simple



All measurements in millimetres



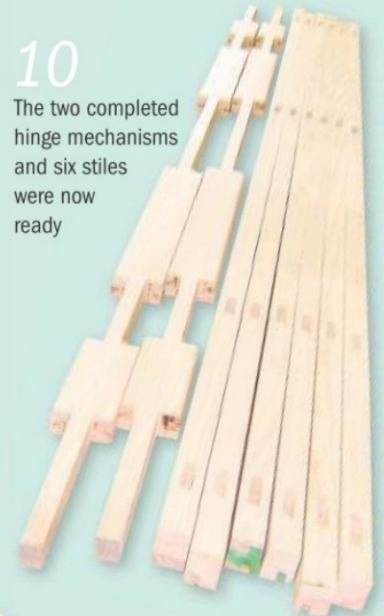
7
The three hinge components are now ready for their final clean-up



8
I decided to square the shoulders of all the knuckles with a corner chisel



9
I cut the 24 mortises in the stiles with a 12mm chisel and auger



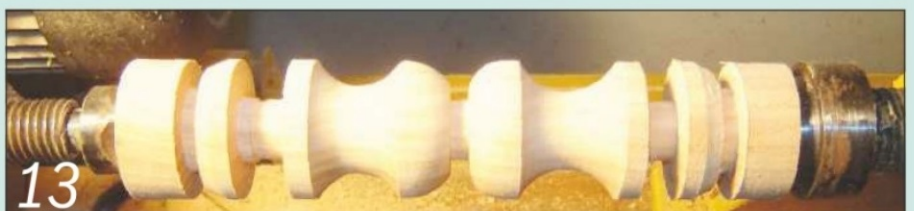
10
The two completed hinge mechanisms and six stiles were now ready



11
A dry assembly aided by several cramps showed that everything fitted



12
The two braces for each end stile contained a wide housing groove



13
I turned one pair of finials at a time, some in cherry and some in oak



14

Each finial terminated in a spigot that would fit into the top of the stile

15

The foot blocks were profiled on the router first and then hollowed out to accept the stiles



16

Shallow curved features were added to the bottom rails for effect



rubbing joint. They actually improved the overall appearance of the finished screen by adding an extra contour and bulk to the edges of the frame.

Finishing off

I then glued and screwed pieces of simple square-section moulding to the inside edges of each frame to create a rebate for the upholstery. This needed to be attached securely because the upholsterer requested something solid to work with when he was tensioning the fabric.

My final woodworking job was to form the finials and feet. I chose cherry, which is a great material for turning and contrasts well with the white of the ash. I also made up an alternative asewt of finials in oak.

I turned one pair of finials at a time, **photo 13**, and created an 8mm spigot on each one, **photo 14**, to insert into a corresponding hole drilled into the top of the relevant stile.

The feet were prepared as moulded blocks on the router table first, and were then hollowed out on the pillar drill to accept the ends of the stiles, **photo 15**. Note the rounded shape of the cut-outs on two of the feet; they'll accept the outer stiles with their planted-on braces

Added details

At the last minute I decided to add a decorative curved feature to the lower rails, **photo 16** (which shows the finished screen). These are slightly thinner than the stiles to recess them from the rest of the panel frame and to produce shadow and texture. I think that they add interest to the finished screen. Making the pieces was simplicity itself – just a case of preparing the components, marking a gentle curve on one of them using the bent steel rule method, using this as a template for the others and cutting them out.

Cleaning and finishing

I spent a few hours cleaning up the screen surfaces before applying two coats of varnish and two coats of wax polish, rubbing down between coats with 240 grit abrasive and steel wool respectively. Then I entrusted all those hours of work to the upholsterer and held my breath while awaiting the finished result.

After the fabric panels had been added, the final decision to be made was which set of finials to use. The client looked at each set and ultimately chose the oak ones, as they seemed to set off the tapestry slightly better. I was very happy with the final result and, more importantly, the client was too.

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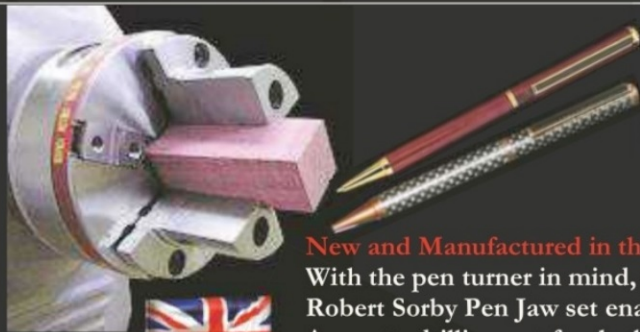
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BY PETER PARFITT

Theme and variations



The Festool Domino 500 jointer is a superb tool for saving time when cutting lots of joints

I've had a set of side tables on my to-do list for a long time. With a free weekend available recently, I was at last able to set about making them. I came up with a simple design that involved using my trusty Festool Domino jointer

In the old days I'd have used my mortiser and my radial arm saw to do all the jointing. However, with four tables to make, two of them with drawers, I wouldn't have looked forward to the large number of joints required.

The DF500 jointer makes child's play of mortising, **photo 1**. It's used to cut a mortise in both pieces of wood to be joined. A floating tenon, called a domino, is then fitted into the slots to complete the joint. This means that the side rails on

these tables are all cut to their finished lengths, instead of needing an extra allowance for tenons.

Four tables, one design

My basic table design is very simple, **photo 2**, and consists of four oak legs and rails with a pair of dominos at each joint and a top made from oak-faced mdf, edged with solid oak lipping.

Two of the tables have drawers made with domino joints rather than dovetails.



2
I used the same design for all three tables, with subtle variations



3
I've made a simple outfeed table for my bandsaw to support long workpieces



4
A home-made saw stop speeds up repeat cutting on the table saw



5
I machined stock for all the dominos I needed using a 4mm roundover bit



6
After cutting a mitre on both ends of each blank, I cut them in half



8
This simple jig uses 9mm and 42mm wide spacers to set the jointer position



7
For extra strength I decided to use a pair of dominos for each joint

I put a long narrow drawer in one table and a short wide one in another, using exactly the same design and techniques. I made the drawer sides and backs from softwood and their bases from 4mm plywood. The drawer runners are solid L-shaped sections made by rebating some square oak.

Preparing the stock

I had a lot of oak odds and ends left from other projects, and spent a morning creating the stock for the four tables from these leftovers. All the legs were cut to 30 x 30mm section, and the rails and drawer fronts to 80 x 20mm section. I also needed some oak lipping strips, which I'll describe in detail when I explain how to make the tops.

I have a 20-year-old Elektra Beckum bandsaw which is quite happy resawing 120mm thick oak. I used this to produce the stock for the sides, which I then cleaned up on my thicknesser. I've made a simple outfeed table for the saw, **photo 3**, as it's not safe to lean across the machine to control or support long workpieces.

Cutting to size

I haven't provided a cutting list, as I suspect everyone will want to build tables to their own dimensions. As a guide my two tables without drawers have a frame size of 400 x 280 x 480mm, and I made the tops 20mm bigger all round so they measure 440 x 320mm. The tables with drawers were in one case slightly higher and in the other slightly longer and wider.

I use a home-made saw stop, **photo 4**, when cutting multiples of the same length as it really does speed up a repetitive job like this. After cutting all the legs and rails, I marked the tops of the legs so I knew which faces would be on the outside and which would receive domino mortise slots.

Mitred dominos

If the rails were being made in the traditional way, the ends of the tenons would be mitred so that opposing tenons in the same leg would meet neatly. I wanted to create the same effect with the dominos, and decided to make some with one mitred end.

I prepared some oak to 21 x 8mm in cross-section and then ran it past a 4mm roundover bit in the router table, **photo 5**, to create the correct profile. I then set my mitre saw to 45°, with a saw stop set so I could produce domino blanks 83mm long with a mitre on each end. When I had enough, I re-set the mitre saw back to 90° and cut all the blanks in half, **photo 6**. This produced a set of dominos 40mm long, each with a mitre on one end.

A simple jig

As my design has no lower rails between the legs, I decided to use two dominos for each joint between the legs and their adjacent rails, **photo 7**. I set up a simple bench-top jig to do the repeated cuts, as I was working on four tables, **photo 8**. The jig is 'handed' and so the 9mm and 42mm spacers you can see in the photo are used on both sides of the centre stop to cut the slots in opposite ends of a rail or adjacent faces of a leg.

I wanted the face of the rails to be set in by 3mm from the face of the legs, **photo 9**. I therefore used a height setting of 10mm to cut the mortise slots at the centre of the 20mm rails, and a setting of 13mm for the corresponding cuts on the legs. The depth of cut was set to 20mm for each slot as my dominos were 40mm long. I used the standard narrow width setting for all the mortise slots.



I wanted the face of the rails to be inset by 3mm from the leg faces

A hint of detail

A simple design like this can be given a bit more interest by cutting a shallow chamfer along part or all of the exposed edges (see **photo 9** again). I decided to do this along the outer bottom edges of my rails to within 20mm of each end, using a bearing-guided chamfer bit on the router table. The legs were also chamfered from just under the line of the rail to within 40mm of the bottom.

Designing for drawers

If you decide to fit a drawer, as I've done with two of the tables, there are several things to think about before assembly. The most important is to remember not to cut mortise slots in the inner faces of the legs where the drawer will be fitted nor, of

course, in the ends of the rail that will become the drawer front.

With my design the distance from the inner edge of the side rails to the inner edge of the adjacent leg is 7mm. Therefore I made some drawer runners out of square-section oak rebated on my table saw, **photo 10**, to produce 7mm thick sides. These could then be screwed and glued to the bottom of the inner face of the side rails between which the drawer will run. A small cutout was required, **photo 11**, so that the runners fitted through to the inner face of the rear rail and up to where the rear of the drawer front would be.

Adding a cross-brace

With no fixed rail between the legs at the front of the drawer, I wanted to add a bit of strength there so I added a 7mm thick cross-brace between the front edges of the drawer runners, **photo 12**. I knew that the top, once fitted, would give some lateral support, but the cross-brace would provide added strength.

The brace was jointed using tiny 4mm dominos. As the stock was only 7mm thick, I had to use a spacer under the face of the Domino joiner, **photo 13**, to get the centre line of the cut in the right place. I used a piece of 4mm thick Perspex, which allowed me to see my marked centre line, and set the height to 7.5mm. This put the centre of the slot precisely at the 3.5mm mark in the centre of brace.

Making the drawers

A small drawer in a side table is hardly going to endure much abuse, so I reckoned that domino joints would be more than sufficient to keep the sides together. I used a pair of 8mm dominos between the drawer front and each of the sides, and a pair of 6mm dominos on each side at the back. The drawer bottom was made of 4mm ply, which was glued in place in a 6mm deep groove.

My drawer fronts, like the side rails, are 80mm high. I allowed a 6mm gap at the top of the drawer sides to accommodate the brackets that would be used later to secure the top, **photo 14**. I also had to allow for the 7mm deep runner supporting the drawer. This meant that my drawer sides were only 67mm high.

If you follow this design, you need to remember the 6 and 7mm offsets when marking up the domino joints between the front and sides of the drawer. You also need to ensure that the channel for the plywood bottom is 7mm higher on the inside of the drawer front.



The drawer runners were made by cutting a rebate in some square stock using my table saw



These were then glued and screwed to the side rails. Note the end cut-out (see text)



I positioned a thin cross-brace between the front edges of the drawer runners



I used a Perspex spacer to position the mortise cuts on the cross-brace



Allow a gap at the top of the drawer sides for fitting the top brackets



15

The tabletop blanks were quickly cut to size with a saw and a guide rail



16

This CMT reverse glue joint cutter is ideal for machining the tabletop edges



17

The tabletop is passed over the cutter with its veneered face down



18

The quickest way to make the lipping is to machine both board edges...



19

...and then to rip off the moulded strips one by one on the table saw



20

Trim the lipping carefully to size using a small block plane for the ends

Making the tabletops

I've been using veneered mdf for many years as, with the right finish, it's both durable and attractive. Cutting the tabletops to size was quick and easy using my TS55 saw with its guide rail, **photo 15**. As I mentioned earlier, I planned to lip the boards in solid oak to hide the mdf core.

Many years ago I bought a CMT reverse glue joint cutter, **photo 16**. This provides a large surface for a glued solid wood lipping strip, and is less expensive than buying a pair of edge-banding cutters. I used to profile the edges of the mdf tops and the solid oak lipping.

The cutter is used in the router table and, once set up, doesn't need to be adjusted when switching between the mdf and the lipping. It's best to make some practice cuts on scrap wood to get the setting right, as it will vary according to the thickness of your mdf and the margin you want on the lipping. It is best to have a margin (see below), as cutting the lipping to match the thickness of the mdf exactly leaves you no room for error.

Using the cutter

With the cutter set up as shown, the veneered surface of each tabletop is passed across the router table facing down, **photo 17**, while the corresponding good side of the lipping faces up. This is another key point to remember before every cut made in the mdf; you have been warned!

For 19mm thick mdf I prefer 22mm thick lipping. The simplest way to make the strips is to start with a board 22mm thick and about 100mm longer than the sum of one long side and one short side of the tabletop. I run both edges of the board past the cutter, **photo 18**, and then take it to the table saw to be cut off, **photo 19**, allowing about 5mm of material beyond the edge to be glued. The process is repeated until enough lipping stock is generated.

Fitting the lipping

It's important to cut the glue joint only in the end-grain edges of the top (usually the short sides) to begin with, as these joints will be made first. Once the lipping has been trimmed for length, the long 'with-grain' edges can be done.

I allow about 2mm overall extra when cutting the lipping before it's glued in place. Mdf absorbs glue readily, and care is needed to ensure that there are no gaps. When cramping up, start in the middle and work outwards to prevent hydraulic locking. Clean off any excess glue carefully with a damp sponge or cloth.

Trim the lipping to size using a small block plane for the ends, **photo 20**, and then use a flush cutter in the router table to trim the edges, **photo 21**. I use a tall rear fence on my router table, but it has to be raised a little to allow for the thickness of the initially oversized lipping. When everything is glued and trimmed, sand the lipping down to 240 grit.

Assembly time

My experience of gluing up domino-jointed furniture is that it almost always closes up square first time. I always apply glue to the mortise slots rather than the dominos, but either method works well. I used Bessey ribbon clamps (see **photo 12** again) when making the tables without drawers and Bessey K clamps, **photo 22**, for the others.

I clean off excess glue with a sponge moistened in warm water to which a few drops of washing-up liquid have been added. This should ensure that there's no local sealing of the wood surface which would show up during finishing.

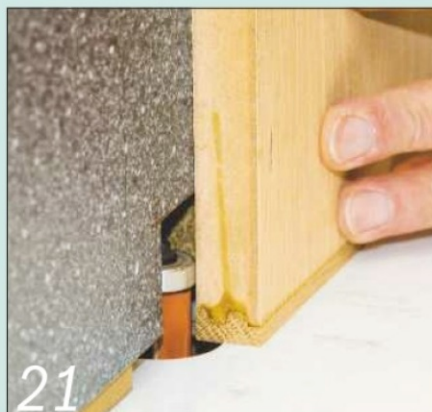
I sanded everything down to 240 grit and then applied two coats of Osmo PolyX oil (which I reviewed in the January 2013 issue of *The Woodworker*). There's no need to sand this down between coats but, if you want an extra smooth finish, you can buff up the first coat with a Scotch-Brite pad or with 400 grit paper.

Final details

I didn't want the drawers to fall open if the tables were moved. I saw a demonstration of some Elite knock-in magnetic catches from Bunting Magnetics (see the panel, below right, for details) at a recent woodworking show, and decided to use one on each of my drawers. I drilled a 10mm hole 10mm deep in the rear of the drawer back and pushed the magnet in place using a K clamp, **photo 23**. I then inserted an ordinary 4mm woodscrew into the inside face of the rear rail, **photo 24**, to match the magnet position. When closed the drawer is held gently in place.

To stop the drawers from being pulled right out, I fixed a 7mm thick strip to the underside of each one, **photo 25**. This stops the drawer when it reaches the cross-brace.

For the tables without drawers, I secured the tops to their frames using a pair of wooden battens, **photo 26**, screwed into the sides and the top. For the ones with drawers where space above the drawer was limited, I used some small right-angled metal brackets, screwed in place (see **photo 14** again).



21 Use a flush cutter in the router table for the sides. Note the tall fence used for support



22 Assemble the frame for each table and secure it with plenty of cramps



23 Glue and cramp a small magnetic catch into a hole in the drawer back...



24 ...and drive a woodscrew into the inner face of the rear rail to attract the magnet



25 I attached a stop to the underside of each drawer to prevent it from pulling out



26 On the tables without drawers, I attached the tops using a pair of slim battens



27 The tables with under-drawer shelves needed some elaborate cramping

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 (was £299.98 inc VAT)

PRICE CUTS! * was £299.98 inc VAT
 # was £514.80 inc VAT SAVE £72!

MODEL MOTOR NO. TURNING CAP EX VAT INC VAT
 (HP) SPEEDS OVER BED /OUT/BOUND

DML36SH	1/3	4	9"/12"	£239.00	£286.80
CL3-CAM#	3/4	5	12"/30"	£369.00	£442.80

Clarke ROTARY TOOL KIT
 CRT40
 Kit includes:
 • Height adjustable stand with clamp
 • Rotary tool
 • 1m flexible drive
 • 40x accessories/consumables

£26.99 EX VAT
 £32.99 INC VAT

Clarke CONTRACTOR CR2 ROUTER
 £109.98 EX VAT
 £131.98 INC VAT

INCLUDES 15 PIECE ROUTER BIT SET WORTH OVER £20 INC VAT

• Powerful heavy duty machine ideal for trade use
 • Variable speed control from 7,400-21,600 rpm
 • 2100w motor • 0-60mm plunge depth
 1800w CR3 Router with 15 Piece Bit Set also available only £89.98 £107.98

RYOBI ROUTER & TABLE KIT
 ERT1400G Router
 • 1400w power input
 • 14,000-31,500rpm
 • 1/2" & 3/8" collet capacity

INCLUDES ROUTER

£159.98 EX VAT
 £191.98 INC VAT

Clarke WORKBENCH
 CWB1250B
 • Robust steel workbench
 • Extra thick, reversible plywood faced worktop
 • Large lockable cabinet with storage shelves
 • Tough steel drawer

£79.98 EX VAT
 £95.98 INC VAT

Clarke 13" MINI WOOD LATHE
 CWL325V
 • Ideal for enthusiasts/hobbyists with small workshops
 • 325mm distance between centres
 • 200mm max. turning capacity (dia)
 • 0.2Hp motor

£119.98 EX VAT
 £143.98 INC VAT

Clarke MULTI FUNCTION TOOL WITH ACCESSORY KIT
 • Great for sawing, cutting, sanding, polishing, chiselling & much more
 • 230-240v, 250w motor
 • Variable speed 15,000 - 21,000 strokes/min

NEW
 £36.99 EX VAT
 £44.99 INC VAT

CMFT250

Clarke ROUTER TABLE
 Router not included
 CRT-1
 • Converts your router into a stationary router table
 • Suitable for most routers (up to 155mm dia. Base plate)

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 £65.99 INC VAT

Clarke HARDWOOD WORKBENCH
 CHB1500
 • Includes guide holes and bench dogs
 • 2 heavy duty vices
 • Large drawer for tool storage
 • Dims: LxWxH 1520x620x855mm

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 £155.98 INC VAT

Clarke STATIC PHASE CONVERTERS
 • For use with bigger woodworking machines inc. saws, planers etc.
 • Variable output power to match HP of motor to be run

ROTAHY PHASE CONVERTERS ALSO AVAILABLE

CONVERT 230V 1PH TO 400V 3PH

PC60
 FROM ONLY
 £229.00 EX VAT
 £274.80 INC VAT

MODEL MAX. MOTOR HP FUSE EX VAT INC VAT

PC20	2Hp	10amps	£229.00	£274.80
PC40	3.5Hp	20amps	£269.00	£322.80
PC60	5.5Hp	32amps	£319.00	£382.80

Clarke BISCUIT JOINTERS
 BJ600
 • 10,000rpm no load speed
 • 600w motor
 • 16mm max cutting depth
 • 100mm cutting dia.

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 500EL
 A range of professional Nailers from Tac-Wise

FROM ONLY
 £39.98 EX VAT
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MODEL TYPE NAIL SIZE EX VAT INC VAT

181EL	Nail	10-35mm	£39.98	£47.98
191EL	Nail/Staple	10-35mm	£44.99	£53.99
400EL	Nail	15-40mm	£69.98	£83.98
500EL	Nail	20-50mm	£79.98	£95.98

Clarke JIGSAWS
 Makita BOSCH
 Power tools
 CJS380
 FROM ONLY
 £14.99 EX VAT
 £17.99 INC VAT

DIY #Professional

MODEL POWER (W) DEPTH OF CUT (WOOD/STEEL) EX VAT INC VAT

Clarke CJS380*	420w	55/6mm	£14.99	£17.99
Clarke CON750#	750w	80/10mm	£29.98	£35.98
B & D KSG60*	450w	60/5mm	£33.99	£40.79
Bosch PS1700*	500w	70/4mm	£45.99	£55.19
Makita 4329#	450w	65/6mm	£64.99	£77.99

Clarke BOLTLESS SHELVING BENCHES
 • Simple fast assembly in minutes using only a hammer

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 £29.99 EX VAT
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CHOICE OF 5 COLOURS
 RED, BLUE, BLACK, SILVER & GALVANISED STEEL

ALSO EXTRA WIDE INDUSTRIAL UNITS AVAILABLE

150 (evenly distributed) Strong 9mm fibreboard shelves PER SHELF

350 (evenly distributed) Strong 12mm fibreboard shelves PER SHELF

MODEL SHELF DIMS WxDxH(mm) EX VAT INC VAT

150Kg	800x300x1500	£29.98	£35.98
350Kg	900x400x1800	£49.98	£59.98

Clarke LIGHTWEIGHT ALUMINIUM QUICK RELEASE ALUMINIUM SASH CRAMPS
 FROM ONLY
 £6.99 EX VAT
 £8.99 INC VAT

MODEL SIZE EX VAT INC VAT

CHT374	600mm	£6.99	£8.99
CHT375	900mm	£7.99	£9.99
CHT376	1200mm	£9.69	£11.63

Clarke PLANERS & THICKENERS
 CPT600
 • Ideal for DIY & Hobby use
 • Dual purpose, for both finishing & sizing of timber

FROM ONLY
 £129.98 EX VAT
 £155.98 INC VAT

*Max planing width 152mm

MODEL MOTOR MAX THICK CAPACITY EX VAT INC VAT

CP-6	1100w		£129.98	£155.98
CPT600	1250w	120mm	£179.98	£215.98
CPT800	1250w	120mm	£199.98	£239.98

Clarke WOODWORKING LATHES
 CWL1000
 3 PCE CHISEL SET INCLUDED WITH CWL1000

SEE CATALOGUE FOR ACCESSORIES

MODEL CENTRE TO TURNING CENTRE (mm) CAP. SPEEDS TURNING EX VAT INC VAT

CWL1000	1016	350mm	4	£106.99	£128.39
CWL12D	940	305mm	5	£199.98	£239.98

FROM ONLY
 £106.99 EX VAT
 £128.39 INC VAT

Clarke MORTISING MACHINE

• Accurately creates deep square recesses
• Table size 150 x 340mm
• Maximum chisel cap. 76mm

FROM ONLY £139.98 EX VAT
£167.98 INC. VAT

CHISELS AVAILABLE FROM £6.99 EX VAT £9.39 INC VAT

MODEL	DEPTH OF CUT	EX. VAT	INC. VAT
Clarke CBM1B	95mm	£139.98	£167.98
Record RPM75	76mm	£179.98	£215.98
Record BM16	120mm	£249.00	£298.80

PRICE CUTS! † was £263.98 inc. VAT
* was £311.98 inc. VAT

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• Depth gauge
• Chuck guards
• Bench mounted
• Floor standing

MODEL	WATTS/ SPEEDS	EX VAT	INC VAT
CDP50D	250/5	£64.99	£77.99
CDP101B	245/5	£74.99	£89.99
CDP151B	300/5	£106.99	£128.39
CDP-10B	370/12	£159.98	£191.98
CDP301B	510/12	£199.98	£239.98
CDP451F	510/16	£239.98	£287.98
CDP501F	880/12	£429.00	£514.80

Clarke SCROLL SAWS

CSS16V

FROM ONLY £62.99 EX VAT
£75.59 INC. VAT

- 120w, 230v motor
- 50mm max cut thickness
- 400-1,700rpm variable speed
- Air-blower removes dust from cutting area

MODEL	MOTOR	SPEED RPM	EX VAT	INC VAT
CSS400B	85w	1450	£62.99	£75.59
CSS16V	120w	400-1700	£84.99	£101.99

Clarke DUST EXTRACTOR/CHIP COLLECTORS

FROM ONLY £129.98 EX VAT
£155.98 INC. VAT

METABO ALSO AVAILABLE

- Powerful 750w motor
- 56 litre bag capacity
- Flow rate of 850M3/h

MODEL	MOTOR	FLOW RATE	BAG CAP	EX VAT	INC VAT
CDE35B	750w	850 M3/h	56Ltrs	£129.98	£155.98
CDE7B	750w	850 M3/h	114Ltrs	£139.98	£167.98

Clarke DUST EXTRACTOR

CDE1000

- 50 litre tank capacity
- 183 m³/h flow rate
- 1100w input wattage

OTHER MODELS AVAILABLE

FROM ONLY £99.98 EX VAT
£119.98 INC. VAT

Clarke BELT SANDERS

BS1

FROM ONLY £29.98 EX VAT
£35.98 INC. VAT

BOSCH Power tools

MODEL	WATT	M/MIN	EX VAT	INC VAT
Clarke BS1	900w	380	£29.98	£35.98
Bosch PBST7A	600w	250	£74.99	£89.99
Clarke CBS2	1200w	480	£69.98	£83.98
Makita 9911	650w	75-270	£92.99	£111.59

Clarke 12" CONTRACTORS SAW

INDUCTION MOTOR

CCS12

£239.90 EX VAT
£286.80 INC. VAT

- 1600w motor
- 315/30mm blade / bore diameter
- 90mm max cut depth at 90°

Clarke 16" VARIABLE SPEED SCROLL SAW

WITH FLEXI DRIVE AND WORKLAMP

CSS400C

£99.98 EX VAT
£119.98 INC. VAT

- Parallel action arm design produces quick, accurate cuts in wood and plastic
- 50mm cutting depth
- Flexible drive kit for additional grinding, polishing & sanding

Clarke BANDSAWS

FROM ONLY £109.98 EX VAT
£131.98 INC. VAT

HUGE RANGE IN CATALOGUE & ONLINE

INCLUDES STAND

MODEL	MOUNT	MOTOR	THROAT	EX VAT	INC VAT
Clarke Bench	350w	190mm	£109.98	£131.98	
CBS190	Floor	370w	245mm	£179.98	£215.98
CBS250					

Clarke CORDLESS DRILL/DRIVERS

BOSCH Power tools

PSR18

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£44.99 INC. VAT

MODEL	VOLTS	BATTS	EX VAT	INC VAT
CCD180	18v	1	£36.99	£44.99
CCD240	24v	1	£46.99	£56.39
Bosch PSR18	18v	1	£68.99	£82.79

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• Superb range ideal for DIY, hobby & semi-professional use

BIG 2HP 7.8CFM

CLARKE 8MM AIR HOSE FROM ONLY £5.99 EX VAT
£7.19 INC. VAT

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STAPLE & NAIL GUN KITS

HUGE RANGE IN CATALOGUE & ONLINE

MODEL	MOTOR	CFM	TANK	EX VAT	INC VAT
BT-AC200	1.5 Hp	6.2	24ltr	£79.98	£95.98
Tiger 8/44	2 Hp	7.8	24ltr	£114.99	£137.99
Tiger 8/64	2 Hp	7.8	50ltr	£164.99	£197.99
Tiger 9/24	2.5 Hp	8.7	24ltr	£149.98	£179.98
HUNTER 55	2.5 Hp	8.7	50ltr	£179.98	£215.98
Tiger 9/60	2.5 Hp	8.7	50ltr	£189.98	£227.98
AM17EC150	3Hp	14	150ltr	£419.00	£502.80

Clarke MITRE SAW STAND - CUTS 1

£76.99 EX VAT
£92.99 INC. VAT

- Suitable for most sizes/makes of saw
- Inc. outriggers & rollers

EVOLUTION MITRE SAWS

Makita

- Quality range, ideal for cross, bevel & mitre cutting
- 45° tilting blade & table
- Dust extraction system

MODEL	BLADE DIA.	BORE	MAX CUT DEPTH/CROSS	EX VAT	INC. VAT
Fury 3	210/25.4mm	60/200mm	£119.98	£143.98	
Evolution	255/25.4mm	75/300mm	£169.98	£203.98	
Rage 3					
Makita	260/30mm	95/130mm	£199.98	£239.98	
LS1040					

Clarke 10" SLIDING MITRE SAW

£129.98 EX VAT
£155.98 INC. VAT

- For fast, accurate cross, bevel & mitre cutting in most hard & soft woods
- 1800w motor
- 6000rpm

CMS10S2

Clarke SPREADER CLAMPS

• Dual action spreader or compression clamp by simple head reversal

• Quick release trigger for fast adjustment

CHT651

FROM ONLY £39.99 EX VAT
£47.99 INC. VAT

MODEL	CLAMP SIZE	EX. VAT	INC. VAT
CHT651	6"	£39.99	£47.99
CHT652	12"	£49.99	£59.99
CHT653	18"	£59.99	£71.99
CHT660	24"	£79.99	£95.99

Clarke BENCH GRINDERS & STANDS

STAND AVAILABLE FROM ONLY £41.99 EX VAT
£50.39 INC. VAT

- Stands come complete with bolt mountings and feet anchor holes

6" & 8" AVAILABLE WITH LIGHT

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CBG8W features 8" whetstone & 6" drystone.
With sanding belt

MODEL	DUTY	WHEEL DIA.	EX VAT	INC VAT
CBG6RP	DIY	150mm	£27.99	£33.59
CBG6RZ	PRO	150mm	£37.99	£45.59
CBG6SB#	PRO	150mm	£49.98	£59.98
CBG6RWC	HD	150mm	£54.99	£65.99
CBG6RSC	HD	200mm	£59.98	£71.98
CBG8W (wet)	HD	150/200mm	£55.99	£67.19

10" SLIDING MITRE SAW ON BASE

• For easy, precise and smooth cutting of wood parts

• Carbide tipped saw blade

• Rotating table for precise angle cuts ranging between -52° and +60°

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RT-SM430U

- Includes laser guide

MODEL	BLADE DIA./BORE	MAX. DEPTH OF CUT	EX VAT	INC. VAT
RT-XM305U	250/30mm	75mm	£249.98	£299.98
RT-SM305L	210/30mm	65mm	£159.98	£191.98
RT-SM430U	250/30mm	75mm	£249.98	£299.98

VAC KING WET & DRY VACUUM CLEANERS

Earlex

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- A range of compact, high performance wet & dry vacuum cleaners for use around the home, workshop, garage etc.
- SS = Stainless Steel

MODEL	MOTOR	CAPACITY WET/DRY	EX. VAT	INC. VAT
CVAC20P	1250W	16/12ltr	£46.99	£56.39
WD1000	1000W	13.5/12ltr	£49.98	£59.98
CVAC20SS*	1400W	16/12ltr	£57.99	£69.59
CVAC25SS*	1400W	19/17ltr	£64.99	£77.99
CVAC30SS*	1400W	24/21ltr	£84.99	£101.99

BLACK & DECKER POWERFILE

KA900E

£54.99 EX VAT
£65.99 INC. VAT

- Great for hard to reach areas
- 13mm wide belt, 120mm long arm
- 350w motor

Clarke WOODWORKING VICES

FROM ONLY £13.49 EX VAT
£16.99 INC. VAT

Record wv7

MODEL	MOUNTING	JAW (WIDTH/OPENING /DEPTH)mm	EX VAT	INC VAT
Clarke	Bolted	150/152/61	£13.49	£16.19
CHT152	Multi Angle			
Record V75B	Clamped	75/50/32	£18.99	£22.79
Clarke Wv7	Bolted	180/205/78	£24.99	£29.99
Clarke Wv70R	Bolted	180/205/80	£39.98	£47.98

Clarke 6" BENCH GRINDER WITH SANDING BELT

£49.98 EX VAT
£59.98 INC. VAT

- For sanding/shaping wood, plastic & metal
- Supplied with coarse grinding wheel & sanding belt
- Complete with tool rest, eye shield & wheel guard

CBG65B

Clarke CARVING CHISEL SET

£39.98 EX VAT
£47.98 INC. VAT

- Polished spring alloy steel chisel blades
- Supplied in wooden storage case with handle

QUALITY BEECH HANDLES

CHT400

12 PIECE SET

Clarke PORTABLE THICKNESSER

CPT250

- Max thickness capacity 130mm
- Planing depths adjustable from 0-2.5mm
- Powerful 1250w motor
- 8000rpm no-load speed

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Clarke WHETSTONE SHARPENER

CWS200

- Produces accurate razor sharp cutting edges on chisels, scissors, tools etc
- 120w motor
- Grinding disc diameter: 200mm dia x 40mm x 12mm bore
- Wet bath

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Woodwork Course 1 (Tools and Things)
A self-interest woodwork course where the aim is to give you the confidence and the knowledge to use basic hand tools and some of the more common power tools.
You will be able to pick from a list of projects before you arrive that I believe you can complete in 5 days or less so that you will go home with one of them and you can proudly say "I made that".
I cover the teaching of how to handle tools by getting you started on your project and, as you need to use a new piece of equipment, I show you how. This means that the instruction is fresh in your mind and you do the task there and then.
On all courses there will only be a maximum of 4 at a time, this will mean that I will be available when you need help and advice.

Woodwork Course 2 (Wood and Things)
This is a continuation of course 1 (tools and things) with the emphases on timber, what are acceptable defects in timber and what isn't, how do you write out a cutting list that means something to your supplier, what to look for when buying wood and what to avoid.
You will ideally have done course 1 (tools and things) or have a good working knowledge of how to use hand tools and have used hand held power tools.
The projects for you to pick from will be more complicated and will involve the use of the more sophisticated hand tools and hand held power tools and will include using some of the static power tools in the workshop. We will also be looking at buying timber, making cutting lists and drawing plans.

Woodwork Course 3 (Things)
The advanced course is rather different from the previous two.
To come on this course you will need to have done both the other courses and have used your skill at home on your own projects and be ready to take on something more difficult.

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BY ROBERT COULDWELL

Accentuate the positive

Now she's working from home, my daughter Christine needed a simple desk. The cheapest suitable one we could find cost about £600, so I rashly offered to make her one for her birthday. But I'm no cabinetmaker...

My original working plan had been reasonably unambitious. I showed Christine a piece of oak-veneered plywood which I said I could lip around the edge to make a top. I would then attach the legs using those angled metal corner pieces found on Ikea and similar flat-pack tables.

She seemed quite happy with that. I then realised that this was hardly likely to end up as a treasured family heirloom, so I decided to upgrade to using solid oak.

No hiding place

Thanks to *The Woodworker* and the vertical panel saw that I described in my last article for the magazine (June 2012, page 47), I've successfully made a vegetable rack and a box seat for the kitchen. In both cases I used softwood, and it's amazing the flaws that a little Polyfilla and Dulux's finest can cover!

However, with solid oak there would be no place to hide, and any mistakes would be glaring. As this fact sunk in, I began to have serious doubts about the wisdom of my over-enthusiastic offer.

A eureka moment

The challenge was to create a professional-looking result without the necessary skills or machinery. The first problem would be joining the boards for the desktop; I have neither manual 'shooting' skills with a bench plane, nor a planer/thicknesser to do it mechanically. However, I do have a simple router table, and it occurred to me that rather than trying to hide the joins, I should accentuate them.

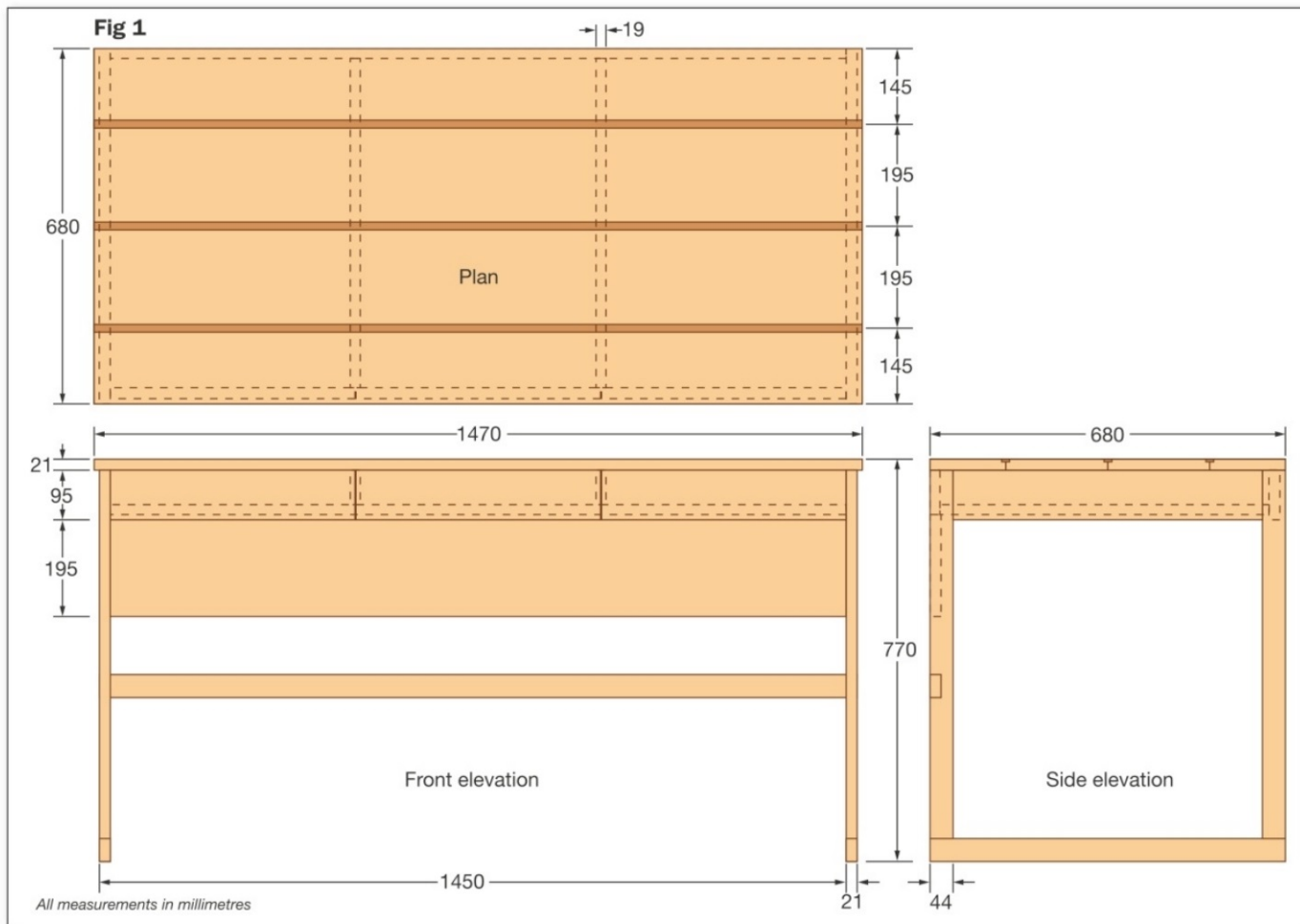
I experimented by routing a rebate on the edge of two scrap pieces of oak. I then butt-jointed the boards to leave a channel

where they met, and inserted a contrasting strip of wood. A few minutes with an orbital sander and a couple of coats of Danish oil left it looking at least half-reasonable.

I trimmed up the result, **photo 1**, and showed it to my daughter, unsure whether she would like the stripey effect. She actually thought it an improvement, so my first problem was solved.

The drawer dilemma

I had drawn what I proposed on the back of an envelope for madam's approval; I wanted a minimalist look, a sort of cross between Shaker and Liberty. Unfortunately she wanted drawers – originally on top, but I persuaded her that to open a drawer there you would invariably have to clear the desk in front of it, so we agreed on three drawers underneath the desktop instead.



COMPUTER DESK CUTTING LIST

All dimensions are in millimetres

Part	Qty	L	W	T
Top edge board	2	1470	145	21
Top centre board	3	1470	195	21
Top insert strip	4	1470	15	5
Drawer box base (mdf)	1	1408	630	19
Internal support (mdf)	2	630	66	19
Rear support (mdf)	1	1408	85	19
Leg	4	705	44	21
Top rail	2	680	95	21
Bottom rail	2	680	44	21
Rear rail	1	1450	44	21
Deep rear rail (optional)	1	1408	195	21
Drawer false front	3	468	95	21
Drawer front / back	6	455	66	15
Drawer side	6	600	66	15
Drawer base (plywood)	3	580	448	5?

I didn't want the drawers to show and spoil the contemporary lines of the desk, which was particularly ambitious as I'd never made a drawer before. I therefore took one out of an old Habitat trestle desk and copied that.

Fortunately, before I had proceeded too far it occurred to me that the fully built desk would not go up the narrow stairs of her

little Victorian cottage, so another challenge was added: the desk had to be a knock-down assembly, which would of course compromise its rigidity.

Raw materials

It so happens that our local timber merchant sells American white oak in various board sizes for house construction,

along with architraves, skirtings and thresholds. I was therefore able to make use of all the available 21mm thick board sizes; 44, 95, 145 and 195mm wide, **photo 2**. The contrasting strips – of 'far-east mahogany-style' hardwood measuring 17 x 5mm – were also available locally.

Something I learned when laying an oak floor was that timber has to acclimatise to its new environment. I therefore carefully stacked the boards with spacers on the workshop floor and left them there for three weeks.

Making a start

I was using two 145mm and two 195mm wide boards to create a depth of 680mm for the top, so I carefully inspected the boards to select their best top surfaces. I then cut them slightly over length and routed the rebate on both edges of two and one edge of the others. I planned to biscuit-joint the boards together, so I next slotted the





2 I found a source of American white oak in a range of standard finished widths



3 After gluing and cramping up the boards I added the contrast strips



4 I used my vertical panel saw to cut the assembled top panel square



5 The drawer box consisted of a base, two uprights and the oak top



6 I glued and screwed the bottom rails to the legs as they'd be hidden



7 I cut the notches in the leg frames for the back rail using my router



8 The back rail was just screwed in place, to allow for dismantling later



9 Threaded inserts, nuts and bolts offered a neat and unobtrusive knock-down solution



10 The bolt passed into a hole bored in the mdf bottom panel and into its nut

relevant edges of the boards.

I had no cramps big enough to hold the desktop assembly, but Rutlands had an offer of some 54in cramps at a bargain price that week, so I took the plunge and ordered half a dozen.

Coming together

Before cramping the boards, I taped scrap strips to the outside edges to protect them. I then laid the boards out on three cramps on top of a plywood-topped pair of trestles, and brushed PVA glue on the edges, the biscuits and in the slots. I used the cramps to pull the boards together and checked with a straightedge that they were flush.

I then attempted to glue the contrasting strips in their channels, only to find they wouldn't fit. So I used a router cutter to

shave a little off each one until they did. The final stage was to add more cramps from above, **photo 3**, check that the boards were level with the straightedge, and leave them overnight to cure.

Once the glue was cured I used my vertical panel saw to square up the ends of the top, **photo 4**. This could have been done equally well with a standard circular or plunge saw on a rail or running against a straightedge.

Drawer decisions

I now had to construct the box into which the drawers would slide. I had decided to use mdf for the underside of the box and to join it to the oak top using three pieces of mdf, one at the back and two between the drawers, leaving both the oak top and the mdf bottom unattached at the ends.

A biscuit jointer is easy to use when joining flush boards or corners, but not so when fixing an upright between two large boards. Careful measurements are essential, along with exact positioning of the jointer to ensure that the slots on the top and bottom of each upright fit those in the top and bottom boards while keeping the upright at 90°, **photo 5**. The uprights and back were glued to the top but screwed through the bottom and back, meaning I could take it apart if I needed to.

The leg assemblies

As I had no standard square-section oak available, I designed the desk to have slim legs joined with a narrow bottom rail and a wide top rail to which the drawer box would be fitted. It was while making the leg frames



11

The desk is now almost fully assembled. Note the drawer box fixings

12

I added this wide rear rail below the drawer box for extra rigidity



13

Simple rebates in the drawer fronts and backs accept the sides



14

Assemble and cramp up the drawer boxes. Note the rebates for the drawer base

15

The drawers have false fronts which project below the boxes to form drawer pulls



that I wished I'd bought a Domino jointer instead of a biscuit machine, as the smallest biscuit is too long to join the 44mm wide oak of the legs and rails. I used biscuits to join the wide top rails and the legs, but glued and screwed the narrow bottom rails to the legs as the screws would be hidden there, **photo 6**.

To stiffen the leg frames I installed a cross rail which I fitted into notches in the rear legs. I cut these with a small hand-held router, **photo 7**, moved back and forth between two strategically clamped pieces of timber. The rail couldn't be glued in because of the need to dismantle the desk to move it, so it was screwed to the leg frames instead, **photo 8**.

Attaching the legs

Now came the most difficult challenge: joining the legs to the drawer box without using exposed screws. Instead I decided to use threaded inserts and hexagon bolts, **photo 9**. The oak desktop was wider than the drawer box base, allowing the leg frames to be slightly recessed. I inserted biscuits on the top of the leg frames which fitted into slots in the underside of the top. There were also biscuits in the edge of the drawer box corresponding with slots on the inside of the wide upper leg frame rails.

I couldn't use any glue, so three threaded inserts were put on the inside of the leg

frame upper rails to correspond with holes drilled in the edge and face of the drawer box base. Nuts and bolts could then be inserted through the edge of drawer box base into the inserts and tightened up, **photo 10**, giving a reasonably stiff joint that could be easily dismantled. The desk was beginning to take shape, **photo 11**.

More reinforcements

Unfortunately, as one who always tends to over-engineer things, I felt that the nearly finished desk was still slightly wobbly. I therefore decided to strengthen it with a 195mm wide oak rear rail joined to the rear legs, **photo 12**, with the threaded inserts and hexagon headed bolts visible only to the rear. This stiffened the assembly considerably.

Making the drawers

As I wanted the drawers to be invisible when closed, I couldn't use handles or knobs so I fitted deeper false fronts to fully formed drawer boxes, creating finger pulls underneath.

I simply routed rebates on the front and rear of the drawer boxes to accept the sides, **photo 13**, and rebated all four components to accept the plywood bottom panel, **photo 14**. I would have preferred to groove the sides for the plywood panels, but the drawers were already quite shallow and I didn't want to lose any more depth.

As the joints between the drawer fronts were

to be virtually invisible, it was essential that all three false fronts were cut from the same piece of oak and that the measurements were perfect, allowing just 1mm gaps between the drawers. To ensure that the fronts were correctly fitted to the drawer boxes, I inserted them and packed them out so their fronts were protruding very slightly. I then used mitre glue to fix the false fronts to them. The mitre glue gives you a moment to adjust the fit before it goes off. Once it had dried I drilled and screwed back into the false front for a permanent fix, **photo 15**.

Finishing touches

The desk was now complete except for a finish. While I like using Danish and other oils, I decided that as the desktop was likely to get heavy wear and tear I would use a matt varnish instead. I had successfully used water-based Ronseal on oak-veneered doors and an oak table I had previously made, so I went with that.

Despite the instructions saying it should be applied with a brush, I always use a mini paint roller for the large areas and a brush for the fiddly bits. This makes the application very quick and gives an even surface finish. I applied just a second coat; any more tends to build too much of a shine. This type of finish is very durable and maintenance-free, unlike oils which need sanding and refinishing from time to time.

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BY ANDY STANDING

D is for...



The aim of this series is to provide you with snippets of interesting and, I hope, useful information concerning all aspects of woodworking. It will explain some of the mysteries for those new to the craft, and will I hope inspire and entertain everyone else

The idea of pottering through the alphabet and looking at woodworking topics that begin with each letter in turn generates some unusual entries. But it's an interesting exercise in lateral thinking, because in a curious way one topic seems to lead on to another, even if there's no obvious link between them as you first consider them. Here's my latest batch; please read on, and see what useful nuggets you can pick up from my trawl through subjects beginning with the letter D (and the odd E).

DOVETAIL

The dovetail is perhaps the most iconic of woodworking joints. It is, without doubt, the best method of joining two pieces of wood together in their width and at right angles to each other. Not only is it an extremely efficient mechanical joint; it can also be highly decorative. Like almost all joints it can be cut by machine, and this will produce a perfectly acceptable result. However the best dovetails are always hand-cut, and the quality of the joint is seen as a measure of the maker's skill and artistic flair. There are several variations of dovetail joint to suit different applications.



DOUBLE INSULATION

Most power tools now are 'double-insulated'. This means that the casing of the tool is made from non-conductive material such as plastic, to protect the user from the risk electric shock. It also means that they no longer need earthing, so the tool can be wired with two-core flex.



DISC SANDER

A disc sander is a bench-mounted or floor-standing machine that is primarily used for smoothing and shaping curved components. It would usually be fitted with a relatively coarse grit for shaping and a finer grit for smoothing. A work table is fitted in front of the disc and this has a mitre guide fitted, so it can also be used for cleaning up end grain on square-ended or angled components. Disc sanders are often combined with belt sanders.



DANISH OIL

Wood finishing is the process of applying a coating to your work to protect it from damage and enhance its appearance. There are many options, from French polishing to spraying. However one of the most popular and easiest to apply is an oil finish. Oil finishes are wiped onto the timber with a soft cloth and the finish is built up in several coats. It is a fairly durable and easily repairable finish. Danish oil is produced by several



manufacturers to a variety of recipes. It is based on tung oil but combined with driers to shorten the time between coats, making it a reasonably quick way to produce a good finish.

DOWEL

A dowel is a cylindrical wooden peg which can be used to make and reinforce simple joints. In production-line furniture, dowel joints are often used to replace mortise-and-tenon joints as they are cheaper, easier and quicker to make. The joint is made as a simple butt joint; then both components are drilled to accept the dowels and the joint is glued and assembled.

The concept is simple but demands accuracy to align the joint correctly. Dowelling jigs are the simplest solution to this, as they can transfer the hole positions from one component to the other without any risk of misalignment.



DUST MASK

Another wise precaution to observe when sanding is to wear a dust mask. Even the best dust extraction can still release a little dust into the atmosphere. There are many types of dust mask, from simple disposable paper ones to powered respirator hoods.





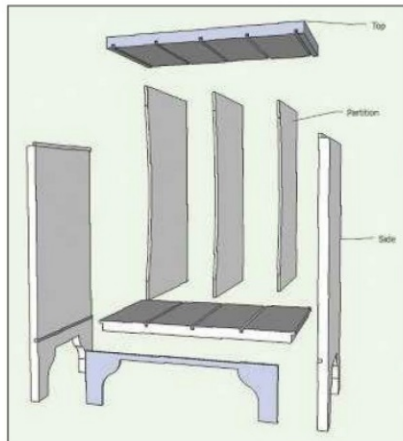
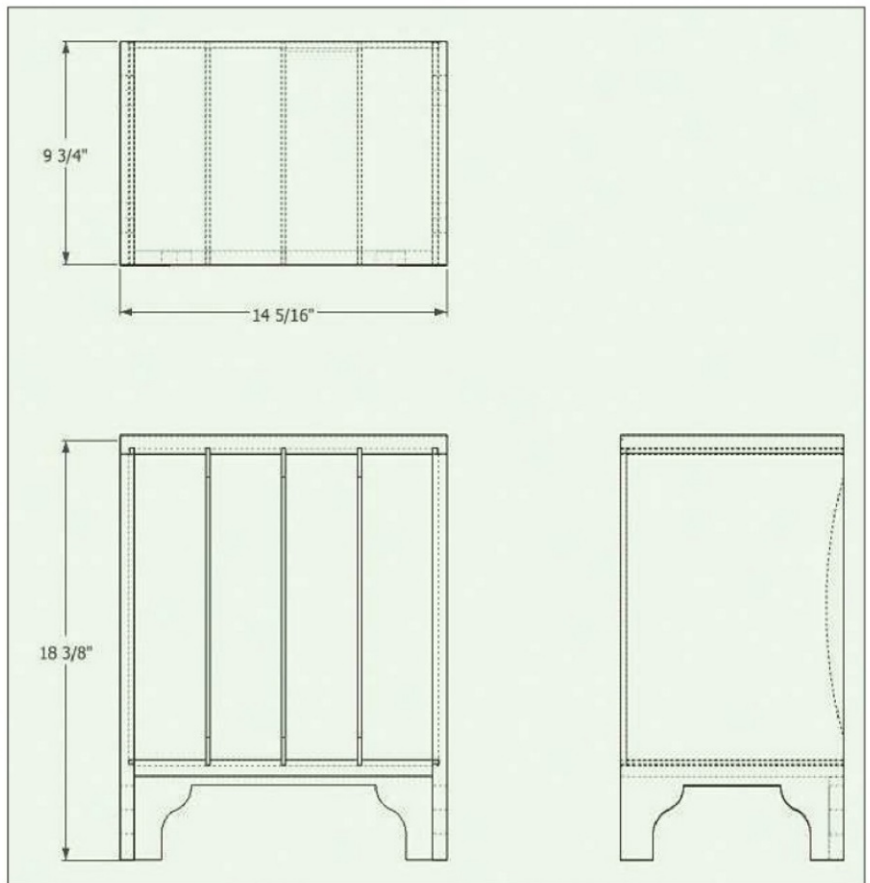
EPOXY RESIN ADHESIVE

This is a two-part glue that sets by chemical reaction. It's extremely strong and waterproof, so is popular with boat builders and the like. It sets rock hard, so can be brittle. For general woodworking it's not often used, apart from jobs such as attaching metal fittings or decoration to timber where a mechanical fixing is inappropriate.

DUST EXTRACTORS

In the past woodworkers never seemed to worry much about sawdust. It just had to be swept up at the end of the day. However, not only does it make a mess; it's extremely bad for your health, as we now know. Inhaling sawdust, particularly from mdf or certain hardwoods, can do you considerable long-term harm.

Every workshop should have some form of dust extraction kit. For larger workshops with several machines, a fully ducted system can be installed with a central extractor connected to each machine via a blast gate. For the home woodworker who, perhaps only uses only hand-held power tools, a workshop vacuum cleaner can be used, connected directly to the power tool in use.



DRAWINGS

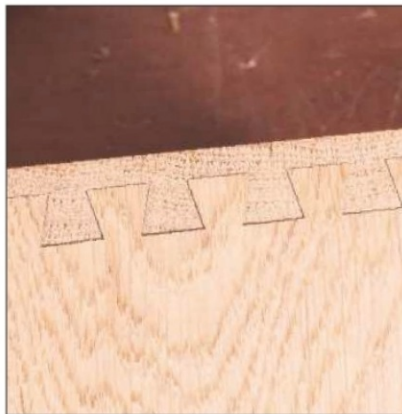
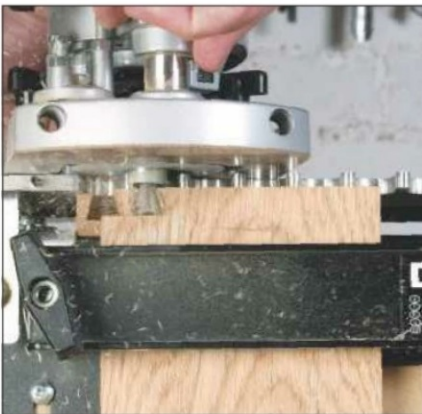
Before you start making something, you need an accurate plan of exactly what you are going to do. Sizes, measurements, shapes and materials all need to be decided before the first cut is made. Drawings need not be complicated. Indeed a plan and a few measurements will often suffice for a simple project. However, if you're intending to make a complex piece of furniture, you will need to produce

some sort of scale drawing to work from. This may seem daunting to those, like me, with limited artistic skills, but you needn't worry. These days it is easy to design and draw furniture using your computer and a CAD (computer-aided design) drawing program. A particular favourite of mine is Google SketchUp, which is completely free and extremely powerful. It's easy to learn and will do everything that you could possibly need.

DOVETAIL JIG

Cutting the perfect dovetail by hand takes skill and patience, and can also be very time-consuming if you have a lot to cut. Many makers opt to use routers and dovetailing jigs which produce strong joints

quickly, but these can lack the decorative qualities of the hand-cut version. However, with the most sophisticated jigs you can still make an attractive-looking and mechanically perfect joint.



END GRAIN

There aren't many woodworking topics beginning with the letter E, so I've taken the liberty of dropping the big one in here with the Ds.

End grain, as its name suggests, is the grain that's exposed when a board is cross-cut, severing the wood fibres. The grain along the edge of a board is known as long grain or side grain. End grain must be treated with care because it can cause problems. It's the part of the board that loses moisture fastest, so is prone to splits. It is also highly absorbent, meaning that it is difficult to make a strong end-grain to end-grain joint as the glue is sucked into the timber, so starving the joint. For the

same reason care must be taken when applying wood stain to end grain, as it will absorb more than the other timber faces, so appearing much darker.



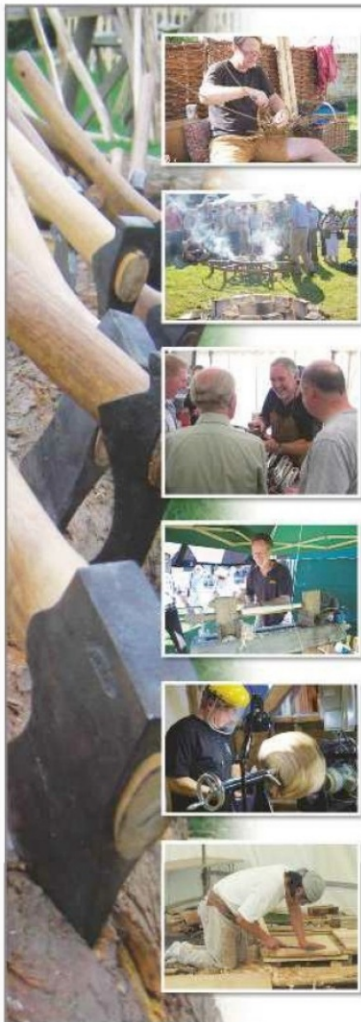
DEHUMIDIFIER

Wood is a hygroscopic material. This means that it absorbs or releases moisture in sympathy with its surrounding atmosphere, and consequently swells or shrinks accordingly. Dehumidifiers are used in the wood seasoning process to reduce the moisture content of the timber to stabilise it and make it suitable for indoor use. You can make a simple conditioning cabinet for your timber to keep it in perfect condition by stacking it in a large box with a dehumidifier. Alternatively it can be beneficial to keep a dehumidifier running in your workshop to reduce the ambient humidity.



DENTS

It's incredibly annoying when you dent your work, perhaps with a careless hammer blow or by dropping something onto the surface. Luckily there's an easy solution that doesn't involve planing or sanding the whole surface down. You simply apply a few drops of water to the dent and allow the wood to absorb it for a while. You then press the tip of a hot iron onto the area. It will heat up the water, turning it to steam and swelling the wood fibres, thereby removing the dent. To protect the wood from scorching, it's wise to place a damp cloth or a piece of paper over the dent before applying the iron. You may need to repeat the process several times for severe dents.



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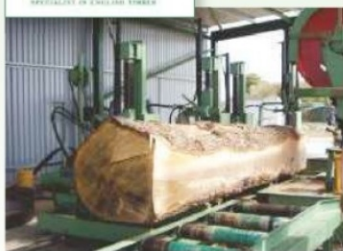
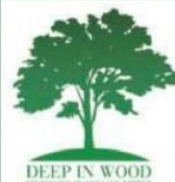
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We have many new exhibitors lined up including Leica and lasorliner levels and meters; triton, Kreg and benchdog tools; The Mafell and Bosch stands will increase capacity and will be one of nearly 100 exhibitors on hand for demonstrations and advice.

Again this year we will run the pitch side demonstrations that were so popular last year - details will follow nearer the time.

www.toolshow2013.co.uk
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BY ANDY KING

The spindle moulder

If a straw poll was taken to find out which machine puts the fear of God into woodworkers, the chances are that the spindle moulder would top the list. But it's a much maligned and incredibly useful machine...

As an apprentice at college, I was taught how to set up and adjust all the workshop machinery found in smaller shops, such as the bandsaw, the table saw, the mortiser and the planer thicknesser. The spindle moulder was the exception to the rule. We were all shown how to swap knives and blocks, but we were never allowed to work on a 'live' machine; only our tutors or the workshop technicians were allowed to do this. We

were not trusted to use the machine for real until our final year, and then only under strict one-to-one supervision.

Sensible safety

Safety is paramount on any machine, but the spindle moulder commands that bit more respect. Most woodworkers would realise the dangers of coming into contact with a cutter, but on older machines many accidents occurred after the machine had



1

The guards cover the block as well as keeping the work pressed tight to the fence



2

There's usually a hinged lid to allow access to the spindle without removing the guards



3

Some models have a set of rollers to give a smoother run past the block



4

On wider work the side pressure guard is used to cover the block aperture

been switched off. With no braking on the motor, the cutters were all but invisible to a careless user. A braked motor is an essential part of any spindle moulder, and should halt the cutter in less than ten seconds no matter what size of block you have fitted.

The importance of guarding

The spindle moulder is a very safe machine for straight work once the guarding is set up correctly. 'Shaw' guards are used so that pressure is applied downwards as well as inwards and the work is held tight to the fence and table; then all you need to do is feed it through the block, **photo 1**. They shroud the block area so any contact should be minimised if you follow standard procedures and use push sticks to make the final part of the cut.

These guards are normally bolted to the hood, often on a hinged plate to allow you to gain access to the block as necessary, **photo 2**, but without removing everything to do so.

A variation on this is a set of rollers, **photo 3**, looking like an in-line roller skate,

that makes the transfer of the work past the cutter less restricted.

When machining wide, flat stock, only the top guard is effective at applying pressure, but the horizontal pressure guard still provides a service to enclose the exposed part of the block, **photo 4**.

Cutting curved work

The spindle moulder is a very adaptable machine, and its ability to profile curved work is an important part of its make-up. For this, the ring fence plays its part, **photo 5**, but this is an even more daunting piece of kit than the standard set-up.

With the fence removed, you have to present the work directly to the cutter and that can create several additional dangers, especially as far as kickback is concerned. The ring fence acts as a guide for the workpiece, allowing you to place it against the fence at the side so the cutter block isn't touching it and then to move it around to bring it into the cutter, **photo 6**.

Fixing the template securely to the work is vital. If you allow your work to be over-long, which is good practice anyway, it can then be a simple matter of driving a couple of screws into the waste area, away from the area being removed by the cutters.

Using a power feed

Fences are a safe enough option for general spindle moulding with all the guarding in place, but the use of a power feed is a consideration that should be taken very seriously.

A series of rubber wheels driven by an independent motor feeds the stock past the cutterblock, and can be orientated to put pressure into the fence or down to the table, depending on the cut, **photo 7**.

Using a power feed has two distinct advantages. The first is increased safety, as the risk of kickback or coming into contact with the block area during machining is removed. The second is the finish. Feeding by hand may not give you the ultimate finish that a smooth, consistent pass a power feed offers.

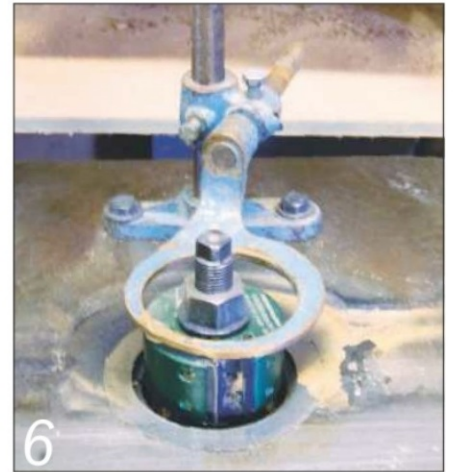
Fence amendments

If I have one reservation about newer spindle moulders, it's the use of aluminium facings for fences. Older machines had wooden facings, and these allowed false fences to be fitted easily.

Tacking a sacrificial strip across the fences to close in the aperture around the block, **photo 8**, allows you to slide the fences back in one go and break through



A ring fence is used for curved work by running it against a template



The elliptical profile allows the work to be introduced to the block slowly



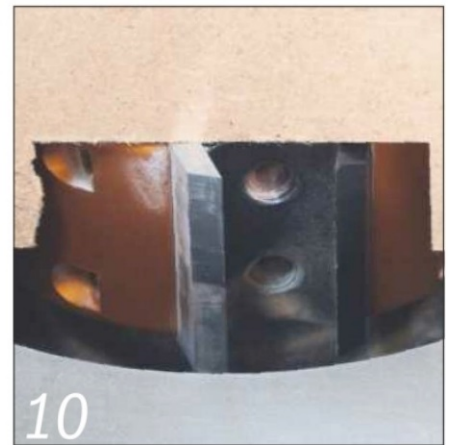
A power feed is worth considering for maximum safety and a premium finish



Sacrificial or false fences are an integral part of spindle work



After tacking the false fence in place, the machine fences are slid back as one



The result is a zero clearance fit to the block for maximum support through the cut

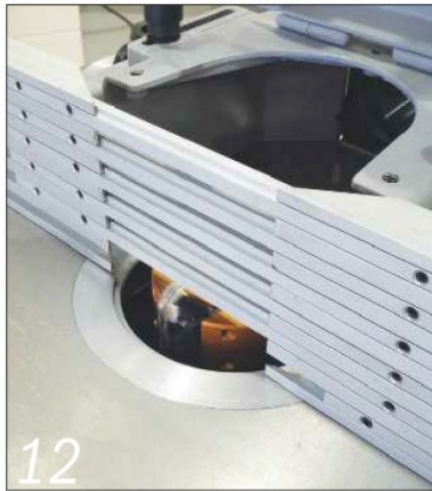
the strip, **photo 9**. This gives a zero-clearance profile around the cutter for maximum support, **photo 10**, with the additional bonus of preventing work from dragging back into the void that lies between the block and the fence in normal circumstances. With a metal fence you should still be able to come up with some sort of false fence set-up, but the original design was far better in my opinion.

The latest option is a set of sliding fingers, **photo 11**, that slide from one fence to the other to enclose the cutter and make a continuous fence, in the same way as a sacrificial false one does, **photo 12**.

The fence facings are usually independent to each other so the stock is still supported on the outfeed side, but they can often be in slight twist to each other. A tried and tested method for correcting this



11 Some modern metal fences now have sliding interlocking fingers to link the fences



12 They work in the same way, reducing the aperture and giving continuous support to the work

and while they worked well, any lack of concentration in setting up could result in a high-speed ejection of the knife and the risk of serious injury to anyone nearby.

Various retention developments have been made over the years, with serrated locking grooves in the cutter and retention wedge helping to eliminate cutter ejection should it work loose, **photo 14**. Knives now have to be retained by pins so that even if they do work loose they can't be ejected, **photo 15**.

Cutter variations

The inclusion of 'nicker' cutters on more expensive blocks leaves a premium cut where there is a quirk or rebate, eliminating



13 Shimming the fences is common practice on any spindle moulder



14 The block on the left has no anti-kickback knives, so isn't suitable for manual feed work



15 Current blocks have anti-kickback designs as well as pin retention



16 Scoring or 'nicker' cutters give exceptionally clean profiles on rebates

tearout where you need a crisp profile on the finished work, **photo 16**.

Specialist shaper blocks are available in all manner of profiles from sill blocks, scribe and profile cutters, panel raisers, **photo 17**, and beyond, allowing individual cutters to be fitted and replaced as necessary, **photo 18**. These are aimed squarely at trade and professional level to minimise down-time between swaps.

Blanking off

On the cutter safety front, the open areas of blocks and blade-type slot cutters now have to be chip-limited, either with a second set of blank knives or with a reduced gullet on a blade style. The idea is that should you come into contact with a block or knife, you'll still probably be injured... but the offending body part should be deflected away from the danger area by the limiters rather than being dragged in and mangled.

Maximum versatility

Using just a single block, a massive number of different profiles can be achieved with a

is to shim the facings with pieces of paper or thin card like to align the facings to each other, **photo 13**.

Block design

Old-style cutterblocks were largely responsible for the horrific injuries of spindle moulder folklore. In its simplest form the

cutter knife was retained through a slot in the spindle, not held in a separate block. This was known as a 'French head' and, while quick and easy to set, it was the open design that did the damage to anything that got in the way.

Older blocks had the knives retained by wedges forced against them with a bolt,



17

Specialist blocks are available for operations such as panel raising...



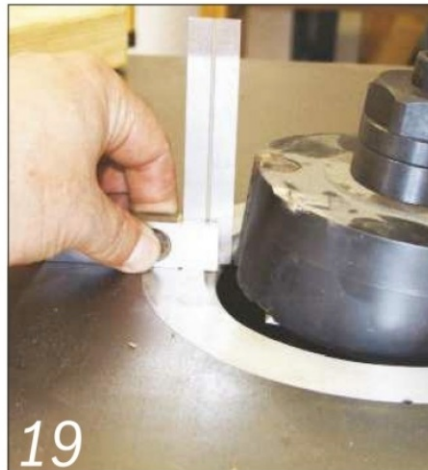
18

...and for profile-and-scribe work. They all have replaceable cutters

selection of suitable knives. Simply raising or lowering the block within the well can expose differing profiles, as can backsetting the fence, so you don't necessarily need a big range of knives to do the basics; you just need to be prepared to do a bit more swapping around.

A further development on some models is the tilting spindle, **photo 19**. On a simple rebate block you now have a whole range of bevel options, from big sill slopes down to small bevel-edged beadings.

Older machines have the block held by a large nut tightening directly onto the shaft, but to make more of the machine a countersunk tapped shaft (**photo 20**) allows suitable rebating blocks to be fitted for tenon work if your machine meets the legislation requirements to do so.



19

For additional versatility a tilting spindle offers different profiles and variations



20

A tapped spindle allows further diversity such as tenon work with a suitable block

A sliding carriage

Most of the mouldings we use run with the grain, but a spindle moulder is also capable of jointing work with tenons and scribing joints. The tenon side of things will need a spindle capable of taking a flush block to allow the work to slide over the top, but more importantly, a sliding carriage, **photo 21**. This makes the progression of the work through the cut smooth and much safer than relying on a home-made sled – or the use of the mitre fence slot if the machine has one.

Summing up

The spindle moulder is now a far safer machine than it ever was, but it still demands the utmost respect, so make sure everything is tightened down, use common sense and, if you don't have the luxury of a power feed, remember that push sticks are the most important accessory you have.



21

Crossgrain work is easy to control if you have a sliding carriage

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Stanley No.5 'before & after' photo courtesy Peter Hemsley – The ToolPost

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BY ALAN HOLTHAM

Emergency ward 10

My major workshop reorganisation continues apace, and I've at last faced up to the realisation that it isn't the size of the workshop that matters; it's optimising the layout for the type of work you do

As a machine geek I've been steadily accumulating a vast array of shop equipment for years and then shoehorning it into an ever-diminishing space, often with little regard for its usability or, more importantly, for its usefulness. The result of this is a very well-equipped shop, but with very little space in it to actually make anything!

Making space

This was really brought home recently when a large project necessitated working outside in the cold and wet as there just wasn't

enough room in my warm and cosy workshop. For a long time I've dreamed of having a big space inside for a large assembly table... and preferably one that's variable in height as my ageing back becomes more and more resistant to endless bending.

With this in mind I decided to have a ruthless review of my workshop contents with the idea of making some serious work space. First to go was the radial arm saw and its bench, **photo 1**, which was taking up a lot of room for the amount of use it got. In fact it was used more as a stand for my



1 The first expulsion from my overcrowded shop was my radial arm saw



2 In its place I bought a dedicated stand for my sliding compound mitre saw



3 The bed's height can be adjusted up to a maximum of about 850mm: perfect!



4 I couldn't envisage a future use for the tilt mechanism, but left it in place anyway



5 One large pedal controls the rise and fall, while the other locks the wheels



6 I drilled holes round the frame to take the fixing screws for the benchtop



7 The spare bed came in handy as I cut the blockboard sheets to size on it!

sliding compound mitre saw, which is far more accurate anyway. The timber storage underneath was another waste of space as the offcuts were rarely used. I've now resolved to deal with them as they occur, and the few actually usable pieces are now stored in a shed outside.

Stand and deliver

In place of the RAS, I bought a dedicated stand for my SCMS with pull-out extensions and stops, **photo 2**. This now easily copes with long lengths and the extensions then just slide out of the way when I've finished with them. It's also fully mobile so I can take it outside to work if required.

Next I had a hard look at my panel saw, **photo 3**. This again monopolised the centre

of the workshop and in reality got little use. The crosscut function of the sliding table was now covered by the SCMS, and for panel work and ripping I bought a plunge saw and track which has proved to be superb and so accurate. It makes much more sense to me working on my own to take the saw to the panel, rather than struggling to lift it onto a sawbench.

With these two machines gone and a few quid in my pocket, I now had the room to build a decent-sized assembly bench: hooray!

Lateral thinking

I mentioned earlier that I wanted the bench to be height-adjustable, so I spent some time looking at ready-made options. A motorcycle lift looked a good possibility...

until I found out that they were very expensive and very heavy. What's more, they rise and fall diagonally so they take up a lot more space than you think.

I pondered for a while about making the rise-and-fall mechanism myself. Then a chance visit to a friend in hospital provided the 'eureka' moment when I saw his bed being lowered during a treatment. Here was the perfect solution: a piece of equipment that was height-adjustable, tiltable and easily movable thanks to four large lockable rubber-wheeled castors. I was sure I could adapt such a bed into the perfect bench. The heavy-duty hydraulic mechanism would be more than strong enough for what I needed, but would cost a fortune if you had to buy the components and fabricate it yourself.



My massive panel saw monopolised the centre of the shop, and had to go too



I collected the beds using my trailer, and soon had them back in the yard



The bed was a bit too long, so I shortened it and added a new hardwood end piece



I cut away the bumper holders and flushed them off with my angle grinder



The crosspieces needed packing up to get them level with the outer frame



I applied glue to the crosspieces and dropped the assembled top into place



After positioning it, I drove fixing screws up into it through the outer frame

Finding a bed

In these situations eBay is usually your best friend, and a quick search revealed a number of ex-hospital beds for sale. Sadly they were all quite expensive and were located a long way away from me. However, patience is a virtue and I eventually saw a listing for two beds as a job lot located about 40 miles from my workshop. A quick skirmish with the bidding saw me bag the pair for £72 – a real bargain! Admittedly they did have to be collected, but they fitted easily on my trailer and I soon had them back in my yard, **photo 4**, ready for conversion.

Spoilt for choice

My first job was to put the two beds side by side and choose the better one as the

foundation for my new bench. They were actually both in pretty good condition, but the tilt mechanism was a bit worn on one of them so the decision was made for me. The ends just lift out, leaving you a good-sized platform with pedals at either side operating the rise-and-fall mechanism. The height range goes from about 450 up to 850mm, so at the top of the range it's a comfortable height for working on small projects, **photo 5**.

I couldn't really see a use for the bed's tilt mechanism, **photo 6**, but I left it in place; you can actually tilt the platform either way should you need to. More useful perhaps is the pull-out extension at one end, which although not over-strong is still very serviceable.

Stripping the bed

After giving the bed a thorough wash in a bacterial cleaning solution, it was time to start work on what I expected to be a relatively easy conversion. The mattress support was riveted in place, but a few minutes' work with the drill soon had this removed. Now you can see just how beefy the whole mechanism is, with one large foot pedal to control height and another for the three-position wheel-locking mechanism, **photo 7**. Depending how far you press the pedal you can have all the castors free, lock just two at one end, or lock all four.

Although I'd made plenty of space in the workshop, the bed was still a bit too long to be comfortable across the width of the room, particularly with a bigger top fitted.



15 I wanted to lip the top, so first I trimmed the blockboard edges flush



16 The softwood lipping was pinned and glued on, and cramped at the corners



17 A quick pass with a radius bit in the router rounded over all the edges



18 Cellulose sanding sealer and a coat of wax finished off my new bench nicely!

However, I'm a dab hand with a hacksaw and soon had it reduced in length by about 450mm. I then plugged the ends of the tubes and screwed on a new hardwood crosspiece, **photo 8**.

A little more surgery

The corner bumpers seemed unnecessary and their holders stuck up above the main frame, so I cut them away and gave the supports the angle grinder treatment to flush them off, **photo 9**.

I now had a flat outer frame, but the crosspieces needed packing up slightly to get them level, **photo 10**. I fixed the packers in place with self-tapping screws. I then drilled some holes through the edge of the frame and countersunk them from below to ready to receive the fixing screws for the new benchtop, **photo 11**.

Double lamination

The benchtop is made from two sheets of 18mm blockboard. I cut these to size using the plunge saw, resting them on the spare bed as a platform, **photo 12**; it looks as though the system is going to work! I then glued them together with PVA adhesive. For large areas like this, I find that the best way to get an even coverage of glue is to use a decorator's small paint roller to apply it.

I then screwed the boards together from what will be the underside using 32mm long screws, working from the middle outwards.

The top goes on

I applied some more PVA glue to the crosspieces of the frame and then dropped the top in place, **photo 13**. After positioning it as required, I drove screws up through the holes in the metal frame from the underside to fix it in place, **photo 14**.

I was slightly worried at this stage that the frame had a very slight bow across the width, but screwing the top on actually pulled the frame up to the top rather than the other way round, which is not what I expected. Surprisingly it's now spot-on for level across the width.

Finishing touches

You can leave it at that if you wish, but I wanted to lip the benchtop for a neater finish so I used my router with a bearing-guided router bit and a straightedge to trim the edges of both pieces of blockboard flush, **photo 15**. This is the easiest way to get a perfect 90° edge on large sheets such as this.

I glued and pinned the softwood lipping in place, and used sash cramps across the corners to pull the mitres up tight, **photo 16**.

I then rounded over the lipping to remove the sharp edges using a small radius bit in the router, **photo 17**.

To finish the job I brushed on three coats of cellulose sanding sealer. I deliberately didn't flat down between coats; I wanted the surface to have a slightly rough feel that would prevent things from slipping around on it. I then applied a coat of wax and polished this off in the hope that any glue spills wouldn't stick to the top, **photo 18**. We'll see if this works!

Operation success

So there's the finished bench. It's early days yet, but so far I've been very impressed with it. It's strong, easy to move around, locks its wheels instantly and can be used at waist height for small-scale work, or dropped right down to keep bigger projects at a suitable working height. It's all just so easy and user-friendly, and it cost me less than £100 including the spare bed!

It's wonderful to have a big clear area to work on, and my back is already feeling the benefit. This conversion is no substitute for a proper workbench for heavy chopping and planing, but it's plenty strong enough for power tool use and assembly work. It's certainly one of the best things I've ever done in the workshop.

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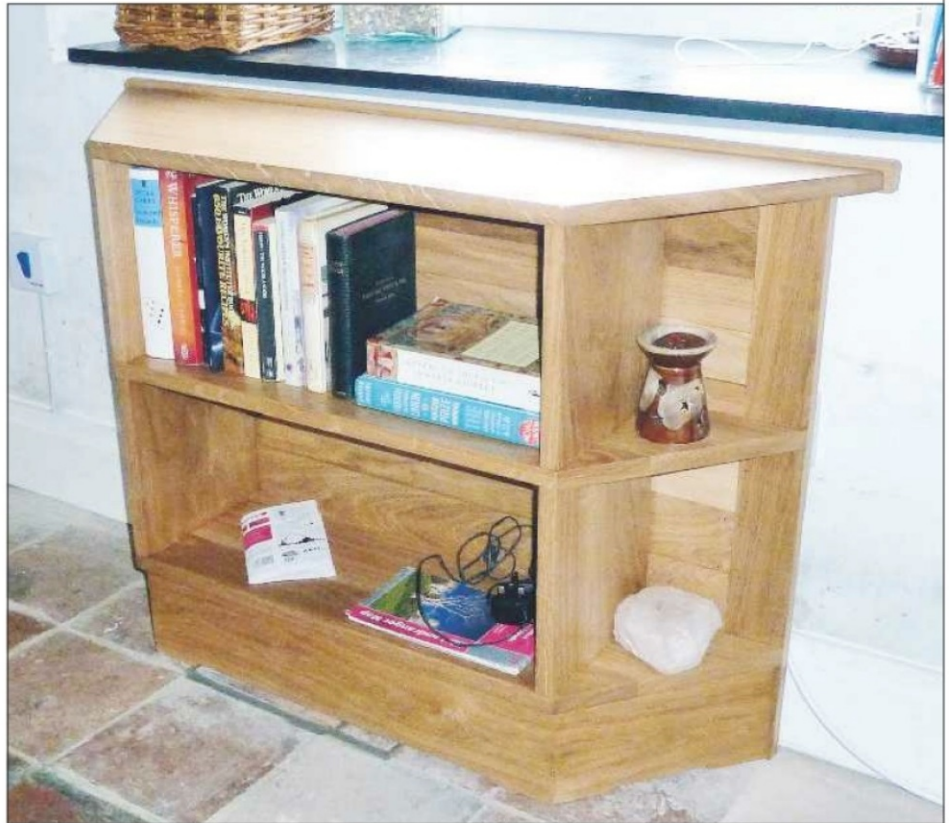
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Last year we managed to get only a very short holiday when a client cancelled a job at the last minute. So this year we were determined to seek a better work/life balance and take more time off. However, with only limited leisure opportunities available at this time of year, I've spent most of my time on the computer catching up on all those little jobs that end up taking ages to sort out.

Website update

Firstly I've reorganized our website. We set this up back in November 2009, and we've had quite a bit of work from it. However we've never had time to keep it updated, and unless a website changes I'm told that search engines such as Google start to ignore it. So we've kept the layout the same but added more kitchens and furniture, **photo 1**, and removed most of the joinery. If you'd like to have a look, please go to www.shropshire-woodsmiths.co.uk



Cutting back the joinery

There are quite a few reasons why we decided to try to reduce the amount of joinery we do. For start, it's hard to compete on price with the big manufacturers. It's heavy work at the best of times. It normally means working outside at the mercy of the weather, and Building Regulations are getting so strict that it's getting increasingly difficult to make compliant timber windows and doors. Part L of the Regulations, which covers insulation, is due to change again this year and will push everyone further toward uPVC windows, which unlike wood is about as far from being ecologically sound as you can get! How times change...

Taking the tablets

Last month we bought an iPad, and it's made internet browsing a lot easier as I can sit in front of the fire and surf the web! This has encouraged me to take a better look at the magazine's website, and in particular to investigate *The Woodworker* digital archive. For subscribers, it has every copy of the magazine printed since January 2007 available to view; that is bar one, as they've missed the Autumn Special from 2008! This makes it very easy to look through back issues when seeking inspiration for a project, and I've been re-reading quite a few articles to get myself motivated into heading for my cold workshop.

Looking after No 1

With little work on, we have quite a few projects that we want to do for ourselves.



BY KEITH SMITH

Shop notes

The one drawback with being self-employed is that you don't like turning work away in case it never comes back. For the last 18 months we've been so busy as a result that we've been working seven days a week. We decided that this year would be different...

We need a new front door, a couple of chest of drawers and a hall table, and that is just the start of the list! I find it best to get my ideas on paper with a pencil and to scribble away until I have something that looks right before turning to the computer to make some accurate drawings.

Having done a lot of technical drawing at school, I like TurboCAD for two-dimensional drawings as the process is very much like drawing with a pencil. I've been using it for over ten years and I'm pretty good at 2D drawings, but try as I might I haven't been able to produce any good 3D drawings with it. It's so full of features that the initial learning curve far too steep without having expensive training. However for 2D working drawings it's excellent. TurboCAD Deluxe costs £81.69 from Avanquest Software.

Cracking the nut

A couple of years ago I tried SketchUp, which is a free (for the simplified version at least) 3D drawing package from Google, and I couldn't get my head around how that worked either. Now with a bit more time on my hands I've had another go, and thanks to a few helpful instructional videos on YouTube I've now managed to create a really good 3D drawing of the kitchen island we made last month, **photo 2**.

I think the reason I had trouble with it is that it works in a completely different way to TurboCAD, or in fact any other CAD package I've tried. It has few controls; most of the drawing is done by pulling out or

pushing in squares and rectangles. This may sound odd but it works incredibly well, and is completely intuitive once you've grasped the concept. Including watching the videos it took me just a day to produce a decent drawing of the island unit,

photo 3. It will also produce a realistic photo image, but that will have to wait until I have more time to do my homework.

A big advantage of using SketchUp is that I can email the image file to a potential customer and they can download the program for free, which allows them to look at the image in 3D on their own computer.

Moisture trouble

I got a call recently to investigate why a door we made last year was sticking. The door is particularly exposed and we'd made it with plenty of space between each vertical plank and around the door itself, so we weren't too worried about it, thinking I would just need to plane the door edges. However, when we arrived we discovered the door had literally blown itself apart. Fortunately we were able to remove it and take it back to the workshop for repair.

A complete re-build

The first thing I did was to check the moisture content of the wood, and at around 26 per cent it was way higher than the 18 to 20 per cent I'd have expected. The panels had expanded, bowing the door (**photo 4**) and ultimately tearing the bottom tenon apart, **photo 5**. There was nothing to do but make a new door using as many of the old pieces as possible.

This time we slimmed the existing panels, added an extra one to give us more joints to allow for movement, added a pair of braces, **photo 6**, and reassembled the door leaving around 2mm between each plank, **photo 7**.

Clear and present danger

Our customers had asked for a clear finish on the door. We'd given it four coats of exterior Danish oil, but this had obviously allowed the oak to absorb a lot of moisture. With hindsight we'd have probably been better off using Sikkens Cetol. However, this is now water-based, and even though we thoroughly sanded the wood down, we didn't want to risk using it over the existing Danish oil, so we chose instead to use Osmo UV Protection Oil. Only time will tell if this is enough to deal with the movement caused by the very wet weather we've been getting. Of course we could have a tropical heat-wave this coming summer, causing the boards to shrink excessively, but at least then we could go away on holiday!

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Kitchen for barn conversion

This kitchen was for a Grade II listed barn conversion and has been dry cabineted with oak doors fitted with an oak frame for a more traditional look. The island has a granite worktop and the remaining units have oak worktops. The traditional look is enhanced by the rich oak kitchen sink, but the soft close drawers, multi-finger door, German bearing top, magnetic hinge and combination of these in a previous kitchen for the first picture.



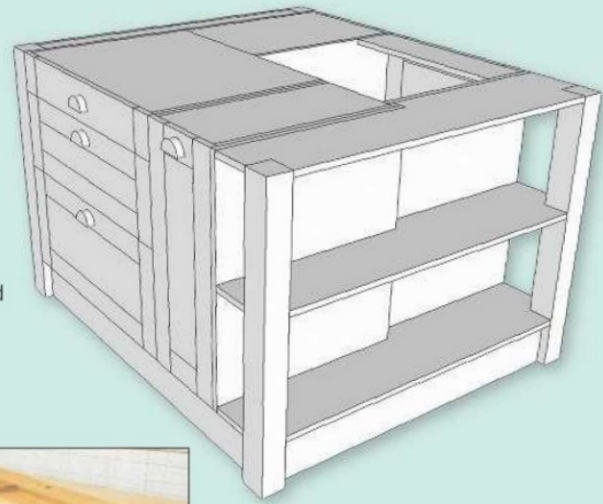
Our new website now features more kitchens and very little joinery



This is the kitchen island unit we made just prior to last Christmas...

3

...and this is the SketchUp drawing I made of the island - minus the black granite worktop



The planks had expanded across their width and badly bowed the door



The expansion had completely torn the tenon away from the bottom rail



We removed the old mortises, made new rails and added a pair of diagonal braces



We were asked recently to make a small bookcase, but the wall against which it was to stand was clearly damp. So we made it with very loose panels in the back and a big overlap at the rear of the top to keep the unit well away from the wall and allow plenty of ventilation behind it. The main photo opposite shows the final result



We reassembled the door with plastic spacers between the planks to allow for more movement

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BY BOB CHAPMAN



10 steps to better bowls

Most turners make bowls, but they don't all make them equally well. I often see bowls which could have been improved with a little more thought, so I've drawn up ten simple steps to help you get better results. Here are the first five...

1 DESIGN YOUR BOWL

Parent to toddler with paintbrush and paper: 'What are you painting?'

Toddler: 'Don't know. Haven't finished it yet!'

All too often, I suspect, turners mount a piece of wood on the lathe and begin work on it before they've really considered what they actually want to make. Yes, they know

it's going to be a bowl, but they haven't thought about the overall shape they want, the style of the rim or the foot, whether it will be decorated (photo 1) and so on.

Always design your bowl before you start making it. There are lots of variables involved, and it's always a good idea to have thought about at

least some of them before you start work. A few simple sketches might help, but they aren't essential. Thinking about your design is the most important step in getting it right,

and you may never commit the idea to paper as long as you can see it clearly in your mind's eye.

Look and learn

An eye for good design has to be cultivated. We're not born with one and it doesn't just happen. Develop it by studying the work of other turners, and look at examples made of glass, pottery and even plastic.

Concentrate on the overall shape and try to analyse why you like (or dislike) it. Look for smooth, flowing curves, and keep an eye open for bumps and hollows which interrupt the flow and spoil the shape. Study the proportions and decide whether they work or not. Develop a critical eye and consider how the shapes you see might have been improved. Often the simplest of designs work best, photo 2. All of this will lead you towards better designs of your own. Fig 1 overleaf shows some typical bowl profiles; shapes 1, 3, 5 and 8 work well, but the others all suffer from a variety of flaws.

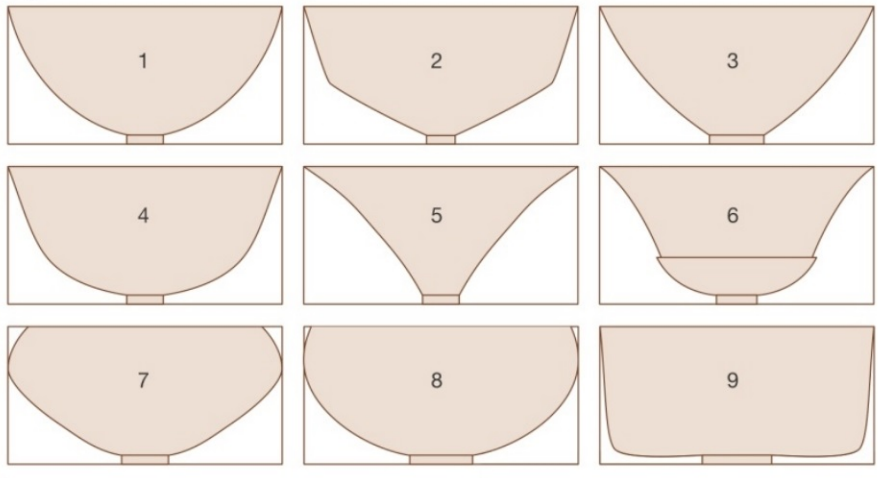
2 CHOOSE YOUR TIMBER

There's a widespread belief amongst inexperienced turners that, since trees are round and bowls are round, a bowl is made



1 Crisp texturing can make a striking decoration on the wall of a bowl

Fig 1



from a slice across the tree trunk (or branch). Unfortunately this is not the case. When a newly felled 'wet' timber log dries out, it almost always cracks from the pith centre outwards or from the outside in towards the pith centre. This happens as the heartwood and the sapwood lose moisture and shrink at different rates. A slice across the log, and any bowl made from it, will crack in the same way and for the same reason.

In his article 'Apples and pears' (*The Woodworker*, September 2012), Peter Bishop described this problem in detail when he attempted to make some small bowls from log slices, **photo 3**. Despite his best efforts to dry them slowly after turning them, he was unable to prevent them from cracking badly, as you can see in **photo 4**.



2 Extremely simple bowl designs such as this can be very effective

3 Peter Bishop cut a series of chunky log slices to make small bowls...



The right cut

Fig 2 illustrates how a bowl blank should be taken from a log. The grain should run across the bowl from side to side, **photo 5**. This vastly reduces the chance of cracking in the finished bowl, but nothing will eliminate the possibility entirely. Never include the pith centre in a bowl: it will encourage cracking. The orientation of the bowl in relation to the centre and the bark may determine the shape of the rim, and in bowl blank A in **fig 2**, a natural bark edge might be retained. Some distortion of the bowl will also occur as the timber dries further but, assuming you start with reasonably dry timber, this further movement should be small.

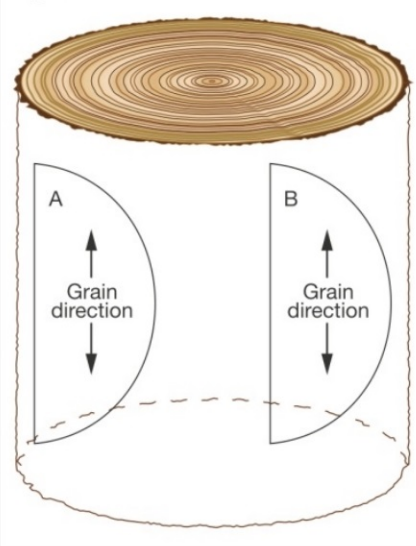
I buy air-dried timber from a local sawmill and keep it in the workshop to dry out for a couple of months before cutting bowl blanks from it. I try to avoid any obvious cracks when cutting my circles, **photo 6**, and as a result cracking of a finished piece is virtually unheard of. Occasionally there is some movement after turning, but it's usually so slight as to be unnoticeable unless you are really searching for it.

...but they all cracked with disastrous consequences as they dried out



4 ...but they all cracked with disastrous consequences as they dried out

Fig 2



3 MOUNT THE BLANK

You need to have some idea of how you're going to proceed in order to create the bowl you've designed. For the most part this means figuring out the order in which you will do things, and how you will hold the workpiece while you do it. I always follow the same procedure.

- Hold the top of the bowl (the bit that will be hollowed out) first while shaping the underside.

- Hold the underside of the bowl while hollowing out the top.



5 The grain direction can be clearly seen running across this small ash bowl



6 Take care to avoid any obvious cracks when marking out a bowl blank

■ Hold the top again while removing all trace of the previous holding method on the underside. Of course, the secret lies in how to execute these three holds.

There are many ways of holding a bowl blank on the lathe, and the chosen method will depend on the individual turner, the equipment he or she has available, and what exactly the planned design calls for. Let's have a look at the options.

Faceplates

A faceplate is a metal disc which will screw onto the lathe spindle and which has several holes for screwing it to the bowl blank. So long as you use suitably sized screws, a faceplate is a very secure means of mounting a bowl blank, and some turners make it even more secure by drilling extra screw holes in the faceplate.

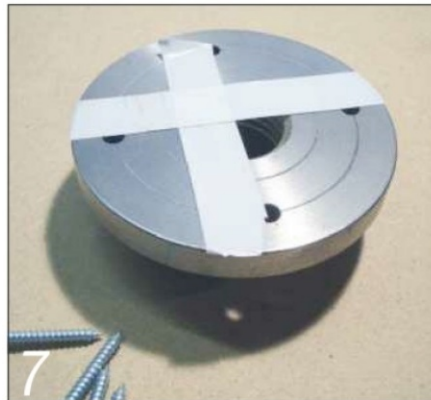
Obviously the faceplate should be central on the bowl blank, but as the centre of the faceplate is a rather large threaded hole, it is often positioned by eye, with varying degrees of success. If the faceplate is not central, the blank will not turn true, and the diameter will have to be reduced to 'bring it back to round'.

A trick I use to improve the positioning of the faceplate is to stick two pieces of tape across the faceplate so exactly half of each screw hole is exposed, **photo 7**. The edges of the tape cross in the centre of the faceplate and help you to position it with precision on the marked centre of the blank, **photo 8**. The strips can be left in place until they wear out.

The faceplate is always attached to the face of the blank which will eventually be hollowed out to make the bowl. In this way all traces of the screw holes are removed during that stage of the turning. Don't even think about leaving screw holes in the underside of your finished bowl, concealed by stuck-on green felt!

Screw chucks

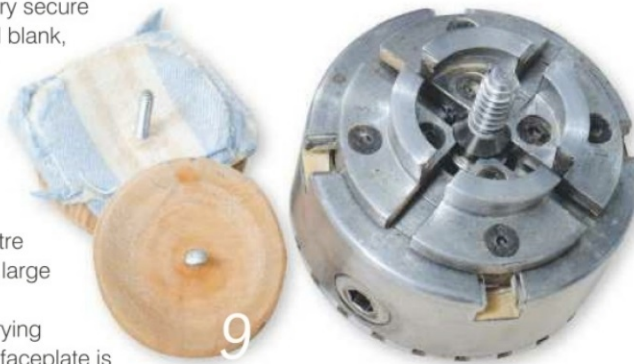
A screw chuck is a device for holding the blank on a single screw. **Photo 9** shows a couple of small home-made screw chucks, and a large one which was bought with the chuck it's fitted in. Only the larger one is used for holding something as large as a bowl blank. Note that the screw has a lip which is held behind the jaws, so it can't come out of the chuck once the jaws are tightened onto it. The bowl blank has a matching hole drilled in the middle, usually



Stick pieces of tape across the faceplate to cover exactly half the screw holes



The edges of the tape cross in the centre of the hole and make positioning easier



Screw chucks are easily made and are an extremely versatile mounting



The screw should be just long enough to hold the blank securely



To make a paper-and-glue joint, sandwich a piece of paper between the components



After turning, the two components can be separated and cleaned up

around 8mm in diameter and as deep as necessary to accommodate the length of the screw, **photo 10**. The screw shown protrudes 20mm in front of the chuck jaws and has been used to turn bowls up to 350mm in diameter.

The hole for the screw chuck is always drilled in the face of the blank which will eventually be hollowed out to make the bowl. Don't drill it any deeper than necessary, or it may start to dictate the depth of your bowl because you have to hollow at least as deep as the screw hole.

Make sure that the blank is screwed up

tight against the face of the jaws. This is essential to stop it wobbling when the lathe is turned on.

Other methods

There are several other methods you can use to hold a bowl blank – pin chucks, expanding jaws into a recess, paper and glue joints (**photos 11 and 12**) and so on, but for ease and security the methods described above are hard to beat. Before doing anything else, bring up the tailstock centre and use it to mark the centre of the blank permanently. Leave it there for



13 After mounting the blank, use a bowl gouge to shape its edge to a true circle



15 Use the long point of a skew chisel to convert the sides to a dovetail profile



17 You can leave the raised centre to form a decorative feature later on

additional support if you're unsure about the security of your chucking.

At this point in the process I usually turn the edge of the blank, **photo 13**, converting it to a true circle.

4 PREPARE TO REVERSE

Although the underside hasn't been done yet, you must think ahead to how you will hold the bowl while you're hollowing it out. The two most common methods are to form a dovetail-shaped spigot that can be gripped by the chuck jaws in compression mode, or to form a dovetail-shaped recess into which the jaws of the chuck can be expanded. Whichever you prefer, remember



14 Start shaping the spigot by cutting into the blank with a 3mm parting tool



16 If you prefer to form a recess, undercut the sides to form an internal dovetail



18 Decide how big the foot should be and cut in a little way at the mark

that the spigot or recess is not the foot of the bowl, and that you will eventually have to modify the recess or remove the spigot to do a proper job.

Spigot preferred

I always form a spigot unless there is some compelling reason why a recess should be used... and there rarely is. In my opinion the chuck's grip on a spigot is stronger than in a recess, where pressure from the curved outer edge of the jaws must hold the blank. Over-expanding the jaws in a recess might split the blank, especially as the bowl becomes thinner during turning.

It is also difficult to get callipers to the centre of a bowl if it's recess-mounted. This

means that the thickness of wood over the recess can't be measured, but it will always be less than you can actually see. With a spigot the thickness of the bowl bottom can be measured from the front of the jaws, so you always know where you stand.

The right size

The size of the spigot must, of course, match the size of the chuck. Determine the minimum diameter of the chuck jaws and make a spigot with a diameter about 5-10mm bigger than this. This ensures that the corners of the jaws will dig into the spigot slightly, increasing the grip.

Begin by cutting into the blank with a 3mm (1/8in) parting tool to form a parallel-sided spigot about 6mm deep, **photo 14**. Remove the waste wood with a bowl gouge, leaving the spigot standing proud. Then use the long point of a skew chisel to shape the sides of the spigot into a dovetail profile, **photo 15**. Make sure that the surface at the bottom of the dovetail is slightly concave so that the outer edge of the jaws will seat properly all around the spigot and prevent any wobbling.

If you are using a recess for any reason, undercut the sides to form an internal dovetail, **photo 16**. The centre can be left raised to form a decorative feature later on if you wish, **photo 17**.

5 FIT A PROPER FOOT

This dovetail spigot is *not* the foot of the bowl. The spigot must fit the chuck, while the foot must fit the bowl. A foot with a diameter about a third of the bowl diameter usually looks about right from the design point of view.

Decide on the size and cut in by about 4-5mm to mark out the foot, **photo 18**. If you've decided to use a recess, cut in to the same depth as your recess. You will then have a reference from which to measure wall thickness, and enough wood to shape a proper foot.

Next month I'll move on to describing the turning process proper, and show you five more steps that will help you to get a better bowl every time.

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Bob's double DVD entitled 'Bowled Over' expands and illustrates many of the techniques explained here. It runs for 2 hours 40 minutes, and is available direct from Bob at £19.99 plus £1.84 p&p. Visit www.bobchapman.co.uk for more information and contact details.

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BY COLIN SIMPSON

A silver lining

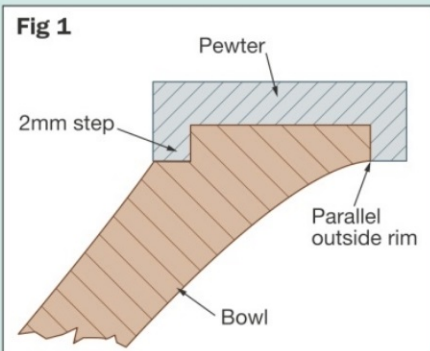
There are times when turned wood needs something to complement its looks. I've written before of colouring and texturing my work. This month I'm going to show you how I sometimes add pewter to enhance the beauty of my chosen medium

I selected a piece of oak 170mm in diameter and 75mm thick for this project. It's not quite a burr, but it does have some attractive pippy figuring. I think darker woods such as brown oak, walnut or jarrah work best because they contrast well with the pewter, although I've seen a stunning rippled sycamore platter with a pewter rim.

First shapings

Cut the blank to a rough circle, screw it to a faceplate or screw chuck and mount it on the lathe. Use a fingernail bowl gouge to true up the edge, **photo 1**, and then use a pull cut to first flatten and then start shaping the bottom, **photo 2**.

I like to cut the chucking spigot as soon



1 Start the turning by truing up the edge of the blank with a fingernail bowl gouge



2 Use a pull cut to flatten and then to start shaping the bottom surface



6 With the handle held low, shear-cut the surface to get a fine finish



7 Hollow out the bowl, starting in the middle and working towards the rim

as possible; in this case it's a dovetail spigot that I cut with a skew, **photo 3**. Then with the corner of the skew, cut a small V right in the centre of the spigot, **photo 4**. This pop mark will help you to centre the piece when it is reverse-chucked later to finish the bottom.

Now shape the bottom of the bowl using a combination of pull cuts and push cuts, **photo 5**. When you are happy with the outside shape – mine is a classic ogee or S shape – shear-cut the surface using a smaller fingernail gouge, **photo 6**. The surface doesn't have to be perfect at this stage; final finishing is done after the pewter is added.

Reverse procedure

Turn the bowl around and hollow out the inside to the final shape, **photo 7**; again the surface finish doesn't have to be perfect at this stage. Cut a step on the inside rim using a skew chisel or parting tool. Mine is 2mm wide and 2mm deep, **photo 8**. It's important to make the outside rim square and parallel to this step as the pewter will locate over it – see **fig 1** opposite. Measure both the diameter of the bowl and the diameter of the internal wall of the step, **photo 9**. These need to be accurate.

Making the pewter mould

Next remove the chuck and bowl from the lathe and mount a 200mm diameter piece of 18mm thick mdf on a faceplate. True up the face, then measure and mark the perimeter of the bowl and the step onto the face, **photo 10**. Add 2mm to the bowl's

diameter and subtract 2mm from the step's diameter, then draw two concentric circles on the mdf at these marks. So, for example, if your bowl is 165mm in diameter and the diameter of the internal wall of the step is 155mm, your two parallel circles should be 167mm and 153mm in diameter



3 Cut the dovetail chucking spigot next using a skew chisel



4 Then use the corner of the skew to make a small V that will act as a pop mark



5 Start to shape the outside of the bowl with pull and push cuts



8 Cut a small step on the inside of the rim with the skew or parting tool



9 Measure the diameter of the bowl and the inside of the step accurately



10 Transfer these measurements to 200mm diameter blank of 18mm mdf



11 Cut a parallel-sided groove 5mm deep in the mdf with a parting tool



12 I prefer to use lead-free ingots if possible; these were bought on eBay



13 I melt them in an old stainless steel teapot, but you can use a lipped pan



17 Cut a groove 2mm deep with a parting tool to match the depth of the step



18 Use the flat tip of an old screwdriver to release the casting from the mould



19 Test its fit on the bowl; mine still had a small gap around the inside



23 Then switch to a round-nosed scraper to blend in the curves underneath



24 After sanding the pewter to 1500 grit, apply some burnishing cream



25 Reverse-chuck the piece onto a small wooden dolly to clean up the foot...

respectively. It also means that the width of your step is 5mm.

Use a parting tool to cut a parallel-sided groove about 5mm deep between these two circles, **photo 11**. Clean up the groove and remove all the dust from it. Take the mdf and faceplate off the lathe and put it on a flat, level surface.

Melting the pewter

Photo 12 shows some pewter ingots I bought on eBay. These are lead-free, which I prefer. You can, of course, buy old pewter ornaments, tankards and the like and melt them down, but I'm not sure of the lead content of these and the fumes from molten lead aren't good for you, so I tend to steer clear.

I melt the pewter on a camping-gas stove

in an old stainless steel teapot, **photo 13**. You can use an old saucepan, but make sure you use one that has a pouring lip. Pewter melts at between 170° and 220°C depending on the alloy composition, and it doesn't take long to melt it on a gas stove. Don't forget to wear an oven glove when you pick it up!

Once it's molten, pour it carefully into your mdf mould, **photo 14**, and leave it to cool. The pewter ring should remain in the mould while it's being turned, but to be on the safe side I apply a few drops of superglue around the edge, **photo 15**, before re-mounting it on the lathe.

Turning the pewter

Before you start this stage, clear all the turning debris from the area. The swarf from

the pewter can be collected and re-used, so it's a good idea not to mix it up with wood shavings. Reduce the speed of the lathe to 400-450rpm.

Use a $\frac{3}{8}$ " spindle gouge to true up the surface, **photo 16**; then mark the width of the rim of the bowl in the centre of the pewter ring. In the example above, this was 5mm. Use a parting tool to cut a groove 2mm deep – the depth of the step in the bowl, **photo 17**. Try to cut this accurately, but err on the side of the groove being too narrow rather than too wide. It's easier to adjust the width of the bowl's rim than it is to cut the pewter. When the groove is complete, use the flat tip of an old screwdriver to lever the ring out, **photo 18**.



14 When the pewter has melted, pour it carefully into the groove in the mould



15 A little superglue ensures that the ring stays put whilst it's being worked



16 Use a spindle gouge to flatten the surface of the pewter, then mark the rim width on it



20 A little adjustment on the lathe was required to ensure a perfect fit



21 Now you can superglue the ring onto the bowl, which is still on its chuck



22 Use the spindle gouge again to blend the top of the pewter into the rim



26 ...or add another smaller pewter ring around the foot to complement the top one



27 The two rings balance the piece and frame the wood to perfection

Fitting the ring

Remount the chuck and bowl on the lathe and test-fit the pewter ring. **Photo 19** shows the ring fitting nicely over the diameter of the bowl, but there is a gap between the inside and the ring. I needed to reduce the depth of the step by a fraction, **photo 20**, to allow the ring to fit perfectly.

When you're happy with the fit, superglue the ring in place. I prefer to do this off the lathe, **photo 21**, but note I'm still keeping the bowl in the chuck. Allow the glue to cure and remount the piece on the lathe.

Use a $\frac{3}{16}$ in spindle gouge to shape the top of the pewter and blend it in with the curve of the bowl, **photo 22**. Pewter scrapes easily as well as cuts cleanly, and in **photo 23** you can see that I'm scraping

the underside of the ring to blend it in with the outside curve of the bowl.

Sanding and sealing

Next sand the piece to a finish. I like to sand the wood separately from the pewter because there's a danger of contaminating the wood with black pewter powder if you don't. Sand the wood to 400 grit and the pewter to 1500 grit – I use wet-and-dry abrasive for this. Seal the wood with sanding sealer and then carefully polish the pewter ring with burnishing cream, **photo 24**.

Finishing touches

I reverse-chucked the piece onto a small wooden dolly, using some soft cloth in between to protect the polished wood,

photo 25. This shows the importance of making the pop mark in the middle of the spigot (see **photo 4** again). Bring the tailstock up so that the revolving centre locates in the pop mark, and tighten the tailstock barrel just enough to keep the bowl up against the wooden dolly.

You can now clean up the foot of the bowl using a small spindle gouge, and then sand and polish it to match the rest of the bowl.

Just to do something different, I decided that I would cast another pewter ring to fit around the foot of the bowl, **photo 26**. I used the same method as for the top ring, and glued it in place before blending it into the foot. I think the extra ring at the base helps give balance to the whole piece and frames the wood attractively, **photo 27**.



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THE MIGHTY OAK

I turned the first candlestick design – on the right in the main picture – in oak. The timber was salvaged from an old porch door and was very well seasoned; indeed, it must have been over 50 years old. It was very satisfying to give the wood a new lease of life; no one will be able to do that with the plastic door that replaced it! You'll need a blank 120mm in diameter and 65mm thick for the base, and a second blank 120mm long and 45mm square for the stem.



BY IAN WILKIE



Candle power

A candlestick is a classic turning project, and if you want a matching pair you can practise your copy-turning skills as well. Both these designs are intended to be stable, with little likelihood that they'll be knocked over

Setting up the blank

Mount the base blank on a screwchuck or faceplate, **photo 1**. The photo shows my Peter Child screwchuck. I started using this chuck when I first took to woodturning 20 years ago, and it remains my favourite chuck of all because it's simple, well made and totally reliable.

Turn the blank to the round, face it off and cut a recess to suit the chuck jaws you are going to use in expansion mode. It's well worth making a small template for each set of jaws you have, with the correct recess measurements written on it; this saves a lot of time and ensures complete accuracy,

HOLDING CANDLES

I bought my candle cups from Stiles & Bates (01304 366360, www.stilesandbates.co.uk). For my first design I chose a solid brass cup (ref BCC2, sold as a pair at £3.80). These well-made cups are slightly tapered to the base, 20mm deep, and take a 22mm diameter candle. It's worth paying the extra for solid brass, rather than buying the cheaper brassed type at a third of the price.

For the second design I opted for a solid brass candle dish (ref BCD2, priced at £4.95). This design also takes 22mm candles. The cup is 64mm in diameter with a 24mm parallel stem, and is 40mm deep overall. This dished design is particularly well made and pleasing. Both types have a small hole in the base so you can screw them to their candlesticks.

There's no reason why you shouldn't turn a candle cup in wood if the candlestick is to be purely decorative. However, a good-quality brass fitting does look smart. It has the advantage of catching any dripping wax and, should the candle burn right down, it will prevent the candlestick itself from catching fire!

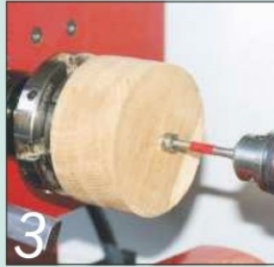




1 Mount the blank for the candlestick base on a faceplate or, as shown here, a screwchuck



2 Cut a recess to suit your chuck jaws. A dimensioned template is helpful



3 Face off the blank and drill a 12mm diameter hole to a depth of 25mm



4 Shape the base to the profile shown in the drawing, using a 6mm bowl gouge



5 Make a template from the drawing and use this to check the profile



6 Sand the wood to a smooth finish, working down through the grits



7 Leave the work mounted on the chuck and set it aside for the time being



8 Clean out the Morse taper at the headstock. I use an old bottle brush for this



9 Turn the stem blank to a cylinder, add a spigot, replace the base and glue in the spigot



10 Bring up the tailstock to cramp the blank to the base and leave it to set



11 Make another template from the drawing so you can check the stem profile



12 Turn the stem to shape. The tailstock is providing additional support



13 Use the second template to check the profile of the stem section and sand it smooth



14 Apply your chosen finish and attach the candle cup

photo 2. I'm using the Oneway chuck with standard jaws, and the recess is 55mm in diameter and 6mm deep.

Mount the chuck in the headstock and expand its jaws into the recess before facing it off. Then fit a drill chuck in the tailstock, insert a 12mm twist drill and bore a hole in the face of the blank to a depth of 25mm, **photo 3.**

Taking shape

Start to form the profile of the base as shown in **fig 1.** Here I'm using a 6mm Henry Taylor Superflute gouge in a Kelson handle, **photo 4.**

It's a good idea to make a small template from the drawing so you can check the progress as you shape the gentle curve and the fillet, **photo 5.** This is particularly useful if you intend to make a matching pair of candlesticks.

Sand the wood well, **photo 6,** taking time to work down through the grits to produce a fine finish. Abranet is a good abrasive to use for this; see the panel (below right) for more details.

Leave the work on the chuck, **photo 7,** and put it aside for the time being.

The second phase

Clean out any debris from the Morse taper on the headstock, **photo 8,** before fitting a Steb centre. Although I have a dedicated gadget for this job, I find a simple bottle brush just as effective.

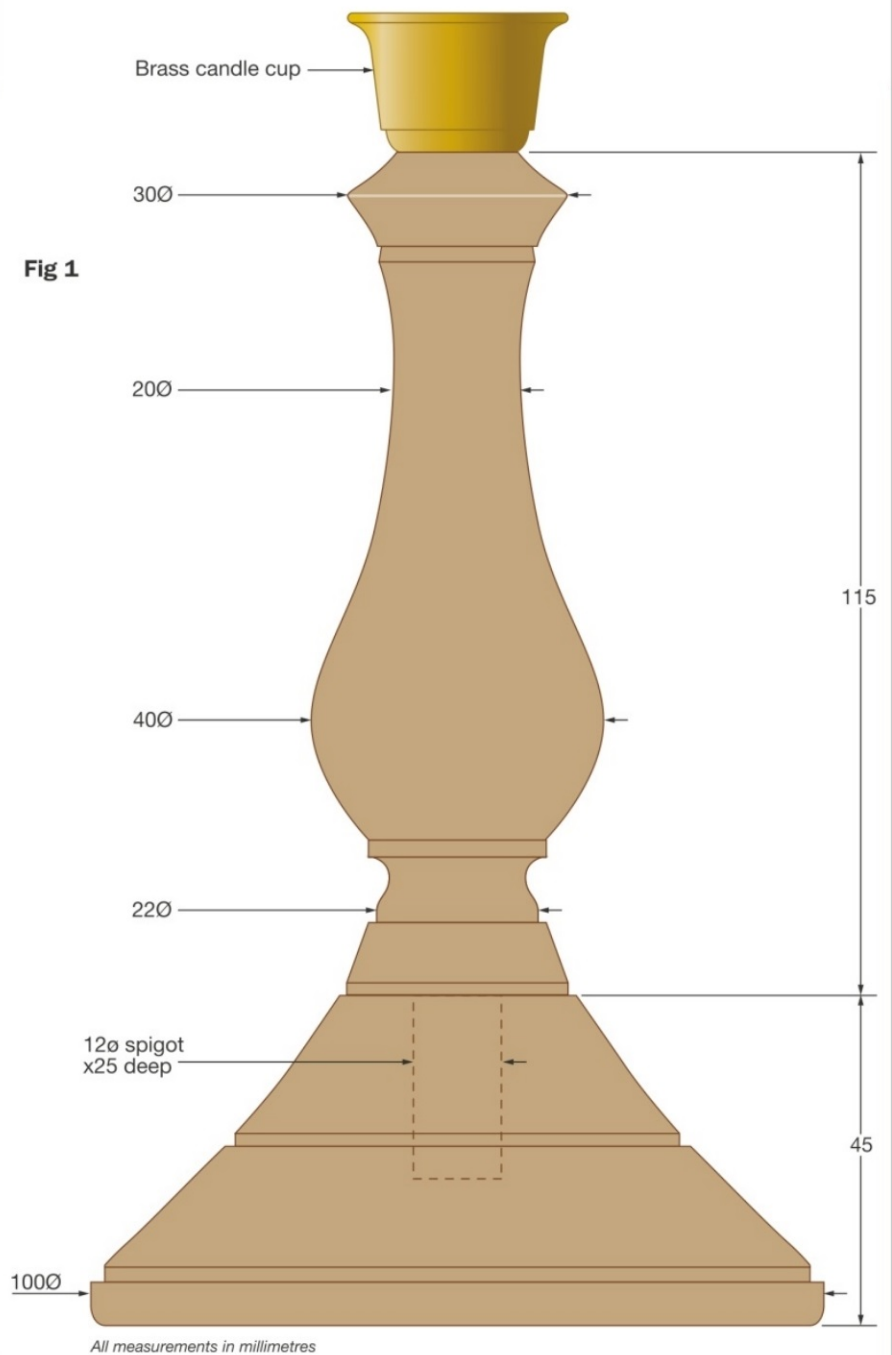
Mount the second blank that will form the stem with a Steb centre in the headstock and a revolving centre in the tailstock, and turn it to produce a cylinder 40mm in diameter. Turn a spigot 12mm in diameter and 24mm long on the end to match the hole you drilled earlier in the base. Put the chuck back on the lathe and glue the spigot into the hole in the base, **photo 9.** Tighten up the tailstock to act as a cramp, **photo 10,** and leave the glue to cure.

Forming the stem

Another template acts as a guide for the shape of the stem, **photo 11,** and gives the maximum and minimum diameters. Turn the stem to shape, **photo 12,** and check that the finished shape matches your template, **photo 13.** As mentioned earlier, this is important if you're planning to turn a matching pair of candlesticks.

Sand the wood well and examine it carefully to make sure there are no sanding marks left on the surface; polish alone won't remove them! Then apply the finish of your choice and screw the brass cup in place, **photo 14.**

Fig 1



FAVOURITE ABRASIVES

ABRANET abrasive mesh is made by Mirka of Finland, and is coated in aluminium oxide. The rear face is textured, and the grit size is printed on the back (just as well, as all the grits are the same colour!). The open mesh design allows the wood dust to fall through, minimising clogging.

Abranet is available in sheet and disc form. I use the 125 x 70mm sheets. These come in various grit sizes from 80 to 600 and are sold in packs of 10 of one size grit at £4.67 a pack. I find this abrasive very effective, long lasting and flexible. What's more, when it gets clogged it can be washed under the tap to give it a new lease of life.

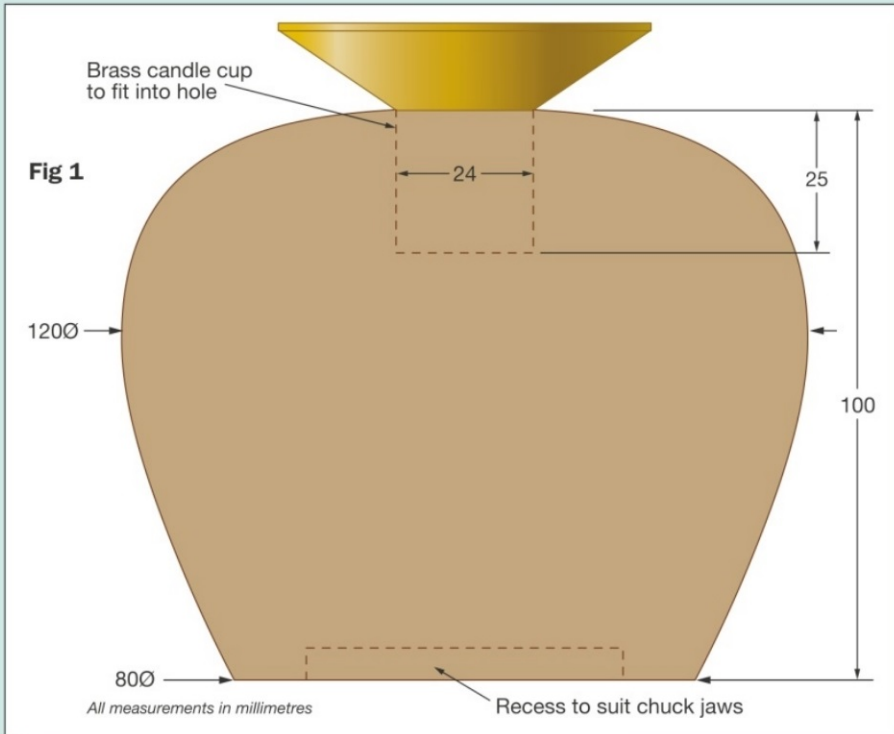
WEBRAX, made by Hermes in Germany, is a non-woven nylon mesh coated throughout with aluminium oxide grit. It comes in sheets measuring 229 x 152mm about 8mm thick,

and can be cut to size as required. A mixed pack of five sheets costs around £5.40.

The abrasive is colour-coded throughout: brown 80, green 100, black 110, maroon 120, red 180, grey 800 and gold 1000 grit. The colours make it easy to pick up the right grade without hesitation. This material is very flexible, can be washed and is extremely long lasting. I also use white Webrax (which has no grit) to finish my work, rather than fine steel wool.

Both these products should be available from your local specialist woodturning supplier, but if you have difficulty finding them or prefer to order by post, they can be found at the following websites:

- www.axminster.co.uk
- www.stilesandbates.co.uk
- www.toolpost.co.uk



THE CHUNKY WALNUT

This candlestick was turned from a meaty block of walnut; the blank size was 110mm long and 125mm diameter. The shape was chosen to suit the brass candle dish and to show off the wood to its best advantage.

Follow the same procedure as described for the oak candlestick and expand the chuck jaws into a turned recess. Then turn the blank to your chosen shape, **photo 1**. Again I used the Superflute in my Kelson handle to turn the blank.

Sand the blank well, **photo 2**. I always hold the end of the extractor hose close to the abrasive to take as much of the fine dust away as possible, and I always wear a mask.

Finishing touches

Next, fit a drill chuck in the tailstock, insert a 24mm saw-toothed Forstner bit and drill a hole to a depth of 25mm, **photo 3**. Try the brass fitting in the hole to check the fit, **photo 4**, and make any necessary adjustments.

Now you can apply the finish. I used Record Power's Speed an Eez light friction polish, and suddenly the walnut came to life! After applying two coats, I finished the job off with Liberon carnauba wax and white Webrax, **photo 5**; see the panel on page 67 for more details of this product. I then buffed up the candlestick to give a high shine, **photo 6**, and screwed the candle dish into its prepared hole, **photo 7**.



1 Mount the blank using a dovetail recess and turn it to the desired shape



2 Sand the wood well, keeping the extractor hose as close as possible to the work



3 Fit a drill chuck in the tailstock and bore a 24mm diameter hole 25mm deep



4 Offer up the brass candle dish to test its fit, and adjust if necessary



5 Apply two coats of friction polish and finish the job with carnauba wax



6 Buff up the finish using a polishing mop to create a high-gloss shine



7 Screw the candle dish to the top of the finished body and insert a candle

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Founder Member of the Saw Doctor Association



This Charnwood bandsaw fits a familiar format for a model targeted at the lower end of the market, with lots of user-friendly attributes to make it easy to get to grips with, along with some decent cutting capacities

Charnwood W730 bandsaw

This machine isn't at the very lowest end of the scale, but is aimed towards light trade use. It's of a similar, if not identical, style to several other machines out there, and is built to hit a price target as much as to deliver a specific performance.

Ease of use, quick blade swapping and simple adjustments to the guides are key factors that should be a consideration for anyone looking to buy a bandsaw, and the Charnwood is pretty good here.

Guide features

The guides are all roller-bearing style with side supports, allowing them to sit tight to the blade and run freely as the blade moves. The thrust bearings sit at 90° to these, so they can rotate freely in contact with the blade, which is well supported under cutting loads.

The top bearings are offset to their support pins. You alter their position by loosening the small thumbscrews and rotating them until they fit snugly up to the blade. They can also be slid backwards and forwards to achieve the best support depending on blade width, ideally just shy of the tooth gullet.

Holding the bearing in position with small thumbscrews works fine to begin with, but they can start to work loose once the saw is working and you'll need strong fingers to get enough purchase on them to keep them tight as they're so small. A nip-up with a set of pliers is the answer.

Moving to the lower guides, you'll need a hex wrench for the adjustments. It's reasonably easy, but it would be better to be able to adjust the lower bearings with a tool-free set up.

Changing blades

Many saws now have fast tension levers, and the Charnwood is no exception, so the blade swaps should be quick. You do have to take the fence and running rail off first though, as the table split faces forward. However, this is an advantage over tables with a side-facing split, as you don't need to twist the blade into the guides.

Changing speeds

There's the option to alter the blade speed from 370 to 800 metres per minute, which allows you to cut plastics, alloys and soft metals

£489



Initial blade tensioning is made with this top-mounted adjuster



You have to remove the fence rail in order to change the blades



The guide post adjusts on a light rack-and-pinion assembly



Softwood proved no problem for the saw, cutting quickly and cleanly



Deep cutting oak was slower, and there was some drifting in the cut

as well as the usual hard and softwoods with an appropriate blade fitted. The slower speed is especially useful for cutting plastics, as the need for a finer blade can result in the friction melting the material at a higher speed.

Changing speeds is simple enough. A winding handle pulls a drive wheel in to slacken the belt; you then you move it to its second position and re-tension it. Putting this to the test, it took about a minute or so to achieve. This is a feature you will probably use regularly, as it's so quick and easy to do.

Table and fences

Cast iron is pretty much standard across the board on bandsaws nowadays, and there's a double trunnion adjustment on the Charnwood. This is a thick pressed-steel rack-and-pinion type, so any bevel cuts are very easy to set up. A Bristol lever retains the setting, while a plastic knob alters the angles. It works fine, but the knob looks a little cheap and feels a bit flimsy – a familiar trait on machines built to a budget.

A decent enough mitre fence is supplied with the saw. It isn't the usual cheap plastic offering found with many budget bandsaws, though; this one is an alloy construction and fits the twin T-slots in the table pretty well. However, these slots are an obscure size, so any after-market upgrade fences such as Kreg, Incra and the like won't fit.

Using the saw

It's good to see how any bandsaw copes with deep ripping, as this will put it under maximum load. Some 200mm thick oak seemed a good test challenge. Taking the cut slowly the saw had the power to cut it well, although there was some drifting.

The 5-skip tooth blade supplied for test purposes was a bit too fine for deep ripping like this. A 3-skip version would be a better choice in this instance; the fewer the teeth when ripping, the faster the cut can be made, and as it clears the waste that bit quicker it also helps minimise drifting. Similar rip-cutting on 150mm thick pine was a breeze, and the cut was far quicker by comparison.

SPECIFICATION

MOTOR	1100W
TABLE SIZE	550 x 400mm
TABLE TILT	0-45°
BLADE LENGTH	2560mm
BLADE WIDTHS	6 to 19mm
CUTTING SPEEDS	370 and 800m/min
THROAT WIDTH	340mm
MAX DEPTH OF CUT	230mm
WEIGHT	92kg
ACCESSORIES	Cabinet floorstand, rip and mitre fences, 12mm British-made blade

VERDICT

The saw is rated for light trade use, but it's more suited to the keen amateur user.

PROS

- Good capacities
- Two speeds for versatility

CONS

- Some lightweight construction
- Guide thumbscrews can work loose

VALUE FOR MONEY 

PERFORMANCE 

FURTHER INFORMATION

- Charnwood
- 01530 516926
- www.charnwood.net



The wing nuts on the upper guides are difficult to secure tightly



The lower guides require the use of a hex wrench to adjust them



The double trunnion makes table tilts easy to fine-tune accurately

Hitachi has launched this efficient little cleaner without batteries in a clever move to keep the cost down. That's fine if you already have other Hitachi cordless tools already

Hitachi R18DSL cordless vacuum cleaner



£30

SPECIFICATION

BATTERY (BSL1830)	18V 3.0Ah Li-ion
RUN TIME	ca 30mins
DRY CAPACITY	670ml
WET CAPACITY	150ml
VOLTAGE	18 volts
WEIGHT (with battery)	1.5kg

VERDICT

For small spillages or a quick clean-up, this unit performs well and is easy to empty and clean.

- PROS**
- Wet and dry use
 - Competitively priced
 - Uses existing Hitachi batteries

- CONS**
- Must be kept upright (wet use)
 - The battery will cost you £50!

VALUE FOR MONEY

PERFORMANCE

FURTHER INFORMATION

- Hitachi UK
- 01908 660663
- www.hitachi-powertools.co.uk

It's often very useful to have a small cordless vacuum cleaner, which saves having to drag a full-size cleaner or workshop extractor around to clean up after a small job. The Hitachi R18DSL has the added advantage of being able to tackle both wet and dry spills, and can be taken anywhere where there's no power supply.

Battery extra

The machine is marketed without a battery, hence the reasonable price, and it's obviously aimed at people who already own cordless Hitachi gear and a battery charger. It takes the new slide-on standard 18V

batteries which come with all of the latest cordless machines from Hitachi. With the battery fitted it feels balanced in the hand and is easy to operate.

A very quick glance around the internet at the competition reveals that most competitors lack power, and their built-in batteries take up to 16 hours to recharge. The Hitachi BDSL1830 charger takes 45 minutes to recharge an 18V battery.

The cleaner tested

Dust collection is excellent, but don't expect anything approaching HEPA standards as the removable filter unit isn't designed for that. The filter is easy to shake clean and can be washed. Emptying dust from the machine is simple too.

Liquid collection works surprisingly well, and my test piece of wet carpet was left damp with most of the water sucked into the machine. You do need to remember that it has a limited capacity and must be kept upright until it's emptied.



The R18DSL comes with a crevice tool, a brush adapter and a squeegee



Dust collection is very efficient, and the machine is light and easy to handle



Liquid spills can be tackled within the 150ml maximum capacity limit

There are many people who make a living doing small-scale jobs such as fitting blinds, architectural ironmongery and the like, and a little drill like this will tick all the boxes for them. It's a great all-rounder

Bosch GSB 10.8V-2-Li combi drill driver

Just when you think you've seen all the 10.8V drill drivers on the market, up comes Bosch with a new addition. So what's different? In looks, very little: it has the 10mm single-sleeve spindle-lock chuck, the two-speed gearbox and the small trigger-operated LED light of previous models, but this is the first one with the addition of a hammer function.

Performance matters

This diminutive little tool boasts 30Nm of torque under its bonnet. That still doesn't give it huge capacities in the drilling stakes, but it will manage 19mm in timber – handy for fitting mortise locks on the odd occasion, but better suited for smaller drilling and driving tasks in general.

The hammer function hits 10mm diameter as a maximum, well within the range of wall plug sizes in general use, and it proved very capable when I tried drilling a few 7mm holes in standard concrete blocks. However, as with many battery drills with impact function, harder brick and stonework will prove more demanding.

The format of all of these drills is limiting in the stamina stakes, but that's the trade-off you have to make for such a compact tool. Its overall head length is just 187mm, so it's ideal for working in tight spaces.

Collar functions

Bosch has taken a leaf out of Makita's book for shifting between drilling, driving and hammering modes, and has included a simple but effective dual collar system. The forward one offers 20 torque settings when you need consistent screwdriving, while the collar just behind swaps into the alternative modes and overrides the torque setting so you have maximum torque without having to alter the torque collar itself. This option lets you drop back into a preset driving position simply and speedily. This is one of the best features on any drill if you use the torque function often.

If you want additional control, the variable-speed trigger is very responsive; you can trickle in screws very precisely.



£205

SPECIFICATION

BATTERY	10.8V 1.3Ah Li-ion
NO-LOAD SPEEDS	0-380 and 0-1300rpm
IMPACT RATE	0-19,500/min
MAX DRILLING CAPACITY	
	wood 19mm
	steel 10mm
	masonry 10mm
MAX SCREWDRIVING TORQUE	
	soft 13Nm
	hard 30Nm
WEIGHT	1kg
ACCESSORIES	Two batteries, charger

VERDICT

This is a brilliant tool that has raised the bar once again with the introduction of the hammer function.

- PROS**
- Impressive hammer function for such a small drill
 - Double collar for torque/drill functions

- CONS**
- Low amp-hour batteries won't last long under heavy load conditions

VALUE FOR MONEY PERFORMANCE

FURTHER INFORMATION

- Bosch
- 0844 892 0115
- www.bosch.co.uk



The dual collar lets you shift between torque and drill functions with ease



A squeeze of the trigger illuminates an indicator showing the remaining battery power



The batteries have overload protection and slot into the handle

Squeezing the trigger also operates the very bright LED worklight



Multi-tools are extraordinarily useful tools, capable of plunge cutting, flush cutting, detail sanding, polishing and more. Here's a pair of very capable models from Makita. Take your pick: the corded TM3000C or the cordless BTM50

Makita BTM50 & TM3000C multi-tools



£349.95
(BTM50)

£256.95
(TM3000C)

I first discovered multi-tools some years ago. I was researching detail sanders, and one was sent to me for review. I was initially sceptical of both its capabilities and its usefulness. Surely this was a model-maker's tool, not suitable for more major jobs. How wrong I was! After using it for a while I was converted, and I've had one in my toolkit ever since. Not only is it very useful; it's also very safe, as it's impossible to cut yourself with it when using a toothed blade. Because the oscillation angle is so small, if the blade touches you, your skin simply moves with the blade. Consequently hospitals use this type of tool for cutting through plaster casts, secure in the knowledge that they can't cut the patient inside.



Both machines come with a comprehensive range of accessories



The TM3000C's dust extraction adaptor fits neatly below the body



Makita multi-tools use a bolt and an Allen key to secure the blades



The variable speed settings make light work of cutting timber

Design features

These two tools are similar in appearance, with blue plastic bodies and rubber inserts around the grip and on the front. A sliding power switch is mounted on the top, and at the rear they both have a variable-speed adjusting wheel.

The cordless BTM50 is supplied with one 3Ah battery and a charger that will recharge it in 22 minutes. There is a warning light mounted beside the variable-speed control to alert you when the battery is running low. It's also fitted with an LED worklight mounted on the nose.

Changing blades

In common with most multi-tool manufacturers, Makita uses the OIS (Oscillating Interface System) for mounting blades on both these machines. This is a ring of 12 studs around the spindle which locate into corresponding holes in the blade and stop it from slipping. Blades can be fitted in increments of 30° around the spindle. An adapter is also supplied so that non-OIS accessories can be fitted too. Some manufacturers use quick-release blade changing systems, but Makita use a bolt and an Allen key (stored on the tool body) for the job.

The supplied accessories are particularly good. A selection of blades for both wood and metal are included, along with a sanding head, abrasives and a clever dust extraction adapter for each machine.

Using the machines

Apart from the BTM50 being a little heavier, there is little to choose between the performance of the two machines. Both are powerful and robust. They are excellent detail sanders and their dust extraction is faultless. The supplied blades are of high quality and cut quickly and cleanly.

Summing up

It's difficult to find much to complain about here. Both these machines are first-rate professional tools, as you would expect from a company such as Makita. They are supplied in sturdy carry cases with a comprehensive set of accessories. Be prepared to shop around for the best price on-line.

SPECIFICATION

	TM3000C	BTM50
MOTOR/BATTERY	320W	18V 3.0Ah
OSCILLATION RATE	6000-20,000/min	
OSCILLATION ANGLE	± 1.6°	
WEIGHT	1.4kg	2.1kg

ACCESSORIES Storage case, dust extraction attachment, selection of blades, sanding head and abrasives, adapter, charger (BTM50 only)

VERDICT

These are both excellent professional-quality tools, offering powerful performance

PROS

- Solid and well-made
- Good performance
- Wide range of accessories

CONS

- No quick-release blade change

VALUE FOR MONEY

PERFORMANCE

FURTHER INFORMATION

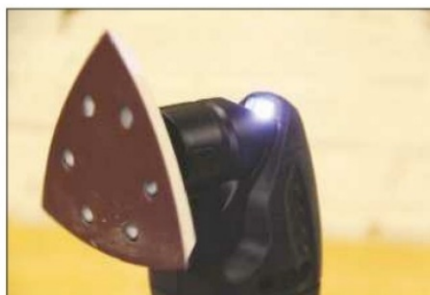
- Makita
- 01908 211678
- www.makita.co.uk



Multi-tools can slice through pipes and rods like a knife through butter



Sanding performance is excellent and dust extraction faultless



The BTM50 cordless model is fitted with a useful LED worklight in the nose



A small battery level warning light is located next to the BTM50's speed control

After the troubles that beset Triton a couple of years back, they are now back with some decent equipment and have several product launches planned. One of the first off the starting blocks is this wetstone grinder

Triton TWSS10 wetstone grinder

First impressions on unpacking the machine from its box were very favourable. The finish on the orange livery is very slick, with bright plating on the tool post sockets, tool post and blade jig. But the biggest surprise was the plain cardboard box inside, printed with the words 'Diamond wheel'. Opening it revealed a sandy coloured stone of similar composition to most other wetstones.

The real McCoy

Diamond stones are usually a metal wheel with a plated surface and the diamonds bonded in. An alternative is a CBN wheel (cubic boron nitride – a material almost as hard as diamond), again bonded to a steel substrate. The inclusion of a grading stone (to dress the wheel) in the box suggests that perhaps this was a new type of a diamond wheel.

That particular side of the description needs clarification as to exactly what the stone composition is. It would be pretty pointless (as well as extremely costly) to impregnate a man-made composite stone with diamonds. It's certainly as thirsty as other wet stones, sucking up around a litre of water before it was ready to use.

Setting up

Assembly is minimal – a simple matter of putting the grinding wheel on and sliding the water trough into place. The tool post has a micro adjuster, held with knobs through each post socket. However, with the threaded leg of the post held with one of these knobs, this could well become deformed over time and make adjustments very difficult as it would begin to bind on the threads. The Tormek post has a flat portion ground on it to overcome this.



£224.41

Accessories supplied

The grinding jig for sharpening chisels and plane irons is of great quality – certainly far better than that supplied with a Scheppach grinder. It follows the original Tormek design, so the cramping pressure is applied to the flat back of the tool being ground. On a plane iron this is not a problem, but narrower bevel edged chisels can have the pressure applied too much to one side and as a result will be set up for an uneven grind.

Tormek have addressed this by altering the cramp pressure to the opposite side of the tool, but you'll just have to check the pressure here and tweak it as necessary. It's not a huge problem once you get accustomed to using it.



This plastic upstand serves as a rudimentary water deflector



Grinding angles for different tools are set with this nifty setting jig



Fine adjustment of the tool post position is very easy to achieve

Using the grinder

The tools are positioned on the stone using the supplied magnetic gauge. There's an adjustable scale for angles, along with a further gauge for setting to the leather wheel diameter or to accommodate for wheel deterioration over time. It would have been good to see a simple indicator on the machine casing to check how much the stone is wearing, but it's easy enough to measure the wheel occasionally.

To set things in motion you have to rotate a knob on the casing that engages the drive spindle against the rubber-tyred drive wheel. The advice is given to slacken this off after use to preserve the shape of the drive wheel.

The relatively thin drive spindle is very smooth, so leaning a little hard on a tool to grind it can slow and stall the wheel. Even so, it does grind well at its own pace, but a heavily damaged tool will take that bit longer to get into shape. A rougher or knurled drive spindle would give a more controlled bite, as would a bigger diameter drive spindle.

Water everywhere

Fitted to the body alongside the stone is a small plastic chute to deflect the water back into the trough. It's a neat idea and works reasonably well on narrower tools, but a wide plane iron overshoots it and the water trickles over the casing. A higher and more extended angle would help make it more successful, but it's a useful addition nonetheless.

The extra-long jig rest on the tool post accommodates wide blades very well, with no danger of the jig slipping off as you progress, and the fit between jig and post is very snug. Most importantly, the post is parallel to the wheel so it runs true across the wheel as you move it.

Summing up

There seem to be more negatives than positives when you look at the comments above, but in actual fact these are more niggles than negatives and the majority could easily be rectified. In use the Triton does a great job, and is very well made.

The main issues that need addressing are a beefing up of the drive as well as some sort of confirmation of content on the stone itself. But look past that and the grinder is certainly decent enough in its own right to consider buying.

There's a full range of jigs for other tools and jigs available, so it's a comprehensive kit. We'll be having a closer look at those in a forthcoming issue.

SPECIFICATION

MOTOR	120W
WHEEL SIZE	250 x 50mm
WHEEL SPEED	125rpm
HONING WHEEL SIZE	225 x 30mm
WEIGHT	14kg
ACCESSORIES	Support arm extension, angle guide, square-edge jig, stone grader, honing compound

VERDICT

This is a well-made grinder to rival the Tormek brand, but with a few niggles that could be easily rectified.

PROS

- Great build quality
- Good performance in general

CONS

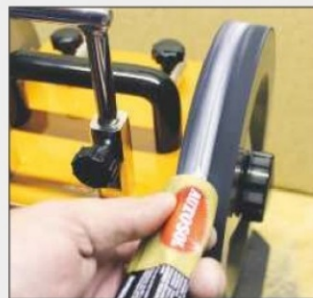
- Can stall under heavy pressure
- Jig needs careful adjustment on narrow tools

VALUE FOR MONEY 

PERFORMANCE 

FURTHER INFORMATION

- Triton
- www.tritontools.com



The leather wheel is dressed with the supplied Autosol polishing paste



Work with the wheel turning away from you to get a razor-sharp edge



You rotate this knob to engage the drive spindle against the drive wheel



The grinder works really well on wider blades such as plane irons



Take care not to over-tighten the jig on narrower bevel-edged tools

Nail guns offer the fastest way of making lots of repeat fixings. You can fire them from an electric or gas-powered tool, or use a gun like this one, powered by a compressor which can also drive other air tools

Senco FinishPro 18MG nailer kit



...and I'll just hold that with a couple of brads.' So says New Yankee Workshop host Norm Abrams on virtually every TV show and every project he makes, and a workshop nailgun is certainly very useful in that respect.

If all you want is a small gun capable of firing 18-gauge brads for fixing mouldings or lightweight framing, then the nailer and accompanying compressor in this kit will serve you well.

Well appointed

The compressor has a relatively small tank capacity (only 4.5 litres). That means it has a low air delivery rate, so you'll find it unsuitable for jobs such as paint spraying as it won't be able to keep up with the air demand.

However, it scores highly in the controllability it offers, having two dials – one indicating tank pressure and the other for regulating the airflow to the tool itself. This means you can adjust the pressure to suit the tool if you have other air tools that are suitable for low air volume work. There are also safety cut-outs for the motor, as well as

a safety release valve for the tank. There's a bit of routine maintenance involved with any compressor, but as this is an oil-free model it's just a matter of operating a drain-off valve to let out any build-up of condensation, plus cleaning the small air intake filter.

Using the compressor

Of course, a small tank means that the motor kicks in more often. The tank works on a maximum pressure of 125psi, kicking in once it drops below 90psi, so demanding work with long pins or frequent operation will have it kicking in regularly. Although it's pretty quiet, this could still get a bit grating as it takes almost a minute to recharge each time.

One big plus is its portability. The tubular frame has a foam rubber grip for comfort and the compressor weighs only 9kg, so in the shop or out and about, it's easy to use as part of your day-to-day set-up.



This small red lever is used to select sequential or bump firing



A toggle clip on the nose is released to free any jammed fixings



The small depth adjustment dial can be a little stiff to operate



The outlet air pressure can be set and adjusted using this dial

Small but perfectly formed

The nailgun supplied is well matched to the compressor, and it comes complete with a coiled hose, safety goggles, a selection of brads and the hose connector for the gun, so it's ready to use straight out of the box.

This miniscule gun will fire brads suitable for architrave work and so forth. It weighs just over a kilogram, and will get into far tighter spaces than electric or gas-powered nailers can manage, even with the air hose connected.

You could easily put the compressor in a room and walk around with the gun to do most things a gas or battery gun can, for far less money, and without the additional costs of gas or the downtime of battery recharges, so if you have a power supply for the compressor you're away!

The only other thing to consider is the need to make a couple of wraps of plumbers' PTFE tape around the hose spigot before fitting it to prevent it leaking air.

Firing options

The gun has some excellent features. The usual depth-of-drive setting of any gun is here; it's a simple plastic dial and a bit stiff to operate. However, that downside is redressed with a 'bump' mode trigger for fast firing, easily switched to sequential firing for more accurate placement of the fixings. The small lever switch for selecting this certainly screams 'budget' at you; it looks to be very cheap, but it works.

The nose has a toggle clip to free any jammed pins, plus an on-board rubber nose tip protector storage point. Lastly, there's a clever rotating air release vent at the rear of the gun to direct the exhaust air away from you.

Summing up

A 110-brad capacity easy-load magazine complete with reload indicator makes this a great starter kit for the workshop, or indeed, a kit to complement the usual power tools of the tradesman.

The use of some low-cost plastic adjusters on the gun let the side down a little, but they still work as they should. Treat them kindly, and this kit will serve you well for a range of general lightweight construction work.

SPECIFICATION

FinishPro 18MG gun

MAX OPERATING PRESSURE	120psi (8.3bar)
NAIL TYPE	AX 18g 1.4mm brads
NAIL LENGTH	15-50mm
MAGAZINE CAPACITY	110
WEIGHT	1.09kg

PC 1010 compressor

MOTOR	960W
MAX OPERATING PRESSURE	125psi (8.6bar)
FREE AIR DELIVERY	0.7cu ft/min @ 90 psi
RECEIVER CAPACITY	4.5 litres
DIMENSIONS	356 x 317 x 262mm
WEIGHT	9kg

VERDICT

At the price, this kit represents great value; the compressor build is especially impressive.

PROS ■ Excellent small kit
■ Lightweight and portable

CONS ■ Some cheap plastic parts on the gun

VALUE FOR MONEY ■■■■■■
PERFORMANCE ■■■■■■

FURTHER INFORMATION

■ Poppers Senco
■ 01925 445566
■ www.poppers-senco.co.uk



Lightweight assembly work such as making this plywood frame is an ideal application for this gun



Fixings drop into this channel. An indicator window shows when you're running low



This simple but clever collar rotates to direct the exhaust air away



The air hose is attached using standard air hose connectors

Apart from being able to cut curved components and make plunge cuts, jigsaws are also ideal for rough-cutting sawn boards into manageable sizes for further machining. With the wide range of blades available, they can tackle metal and plastic too

Metabo STA 18 LTX Li-ion cordless jigsaw



£350

SPECIFICATION

BATTERY	18v 4.0Ah Li-ion
NO-LOAD STROKE RATE	0-2700spm
MAX CUTTING DEPTH	
wood	135mm
non-ferrous metal	35mm
steel	10mm
BLADE TILT	± 45°
WEIGHT	2.8kg
ACCESSORIES	Storage case, 2 batteries, charger, blades

VERDICT

This is a high-quality machine delivering powerful performance.

- PROS**
- Fast cutting
 - Simple blade change
 - Bright LED worklight

- CONS**
- No dust extraction



FURTHER INFORMATION

- Metabo
- 02380 732000
- www.metabo.co.uk

The STA 18 LTX is a solid machine with a green plastic body and rubberised top handle. It has a small variable-speed power trigger with a lock-off button above it. On the left-hand side is a standard four-position orbital control, and there's a switch for the dust blower on the right-hand side. The baseplate is a heavy alloy design with a removable plastic anti-scratch shoe. It can be tilted for making bevel cuts and an Allen key is supplied for this job.

A tool-less system is used for blade changing. There's a large alloy lever that folds out from the front of the tool, and the blade then springs out of the holder. The replacement is simply inserted and the lever released to lock it in place

Battery performance

This tool is all about delivering power, and it uses massive 4.0Ah batteries to do so. These give excellent running time, and are actually much lighter than they look. A fan-cooled charger is supplied and this takes about an hour to recharge a flat battery. The batteries have LED charge indicators.

Using the saw

The first thing you notice about this machine is how smooth and free-running the motor is. Some power tools feel quite stiff, as though they are permanently fighting their electronic brakes. The Metabo is quite the reverse, with a wonderful fluid feel.

A gentle squeeze on the trigger brings the motor to life and the harder you squeeze, the more power it releases. With the orbital control on its maximum setting the saw cuts at a ferocious speed – much faster than my own cordless jigsaw can manage. The LED worklight is bright, and the dust blower keeps the cutting line well clear. This is a beautifully controllable and enormously powerful saw.

Summing up

This is an excellent tool and is hard to criticise. Perhaps it could have provision for dust extraction, but then, I suppose, you should also have a cordless extractor. However, overall this is certainly one of the best cordless jigsaws I have used and I would recommend it highly.



There are four pendulum action settings available for fast cutting



The solid alloy baseplate features a removable anti-scratch shoe



This large alloy lever releases the old blade and secures the new one



The 4.0Ah battery has an integrated LED charge level indicator

Despite the fact that we now have many machines at our disposal, there's still a place for hand planes in the woodworker's workshop. They all have a part to play, even if they're as small as this one

Veritas miniature low-angle block plane

This low-angle block plane is the latest in the Veritas miniature plane range, and like the others is manufactured in Canada. It has an A2 steel blade with a stainless steel Norris-style adjuster designed to set the blade very accurately. It has a fixed mouth 2.5mm wide, machined sides and a ground sole. It comes in its own fitted box.

Magic in miniature

Just like the other planes in this series, great care has been taken to produce a product with great accuracy and an excellent finish. These planes are not novelties or toys; they're fully functioning working tools and are particularly suited to modelmaking... or for use on any small project where you don't have much room to manoeuvre a standard plane.

Planing end grain can be difficult, and a low-angle block plane is designed for this task; the finish obtained across end grain

and along the grain with this tool was excellent. The adjuster can be set to remove the very finest of shavings with the minimum of effort. The blade is easily kept in tip-top condition using a good, flat stone.

Summing up

A plane of this quality will last a lifetime. Although it's expensive to buy initially, it will prove to be a good purchase over time, and the tool will always be a pleasure to look at and to use.

£46.60



The ground sole of the plane features a fixed mouth 2.5mm wide



The plane is supplied in its own custom-fitted and lined leatherette storage box



The finish created along and across the grain couldn't be finer



The blade can be adjusted to remove the very thinnest of shavings

SPECIFICATION

OVERALL SIZE	60 x 19mm
BLADE WIDTH	12.5mm
BED ANGLE	12°
BLADE BEVEL	25°
CUTTING ANGLE	37°
WEIGHT	48g

VERDICT

This little tool will always be a pleasure to use.

- PROS**
- Ready to use out of the box
 - Superbly engineered
 - Easy to adjust accurately

- CONS**
- Relatively expensive

VALUE FOR MONEY

PERFORMANCE

FURTHER INFORMATION

- BriMarc
- 03332 406967
- www.brimarc.com

Worx is a brand that has put out some great tools recently, and with this new impact driver it has the makings of a handy set of tools for use around the home as well as in the workshop

Worx DDI3.1 impact driver



Worx has come up with an impact driver a little different from the norm with its DDI3.1 model with its multi-function versatility. It's a nifty little tool that has a two-speed motor for drilling functions, a screwdriver override and an impact function, all operated by a top-mounted slider. In conjunction with the driving function there's a 22-position torque collar.

You may consider it limited in drilling mode as it has a standard 1/4in hex chuck with pull-back collar to lock the bit, so any drill bits you use need to be hex-shanked.

used on the higher setting, but you'll need to alter the speed if the drill struggles.

The drill worked well for making pilot and clearance holes and the like, but the slider proved a little sticky when selecting the right-hand impact position.

Using the driver

At 100Nm, this driver isn't going to break any records against others of its class, but bear in mind that the orange casing denotes it's a budget-priced tool (Worx Green is their pro range). With the slot-in chuck it's very easy to fit a pilot drill in that, and then to swap it out for a suitable bit and drive in a 100mm screw.

However, it wouldn't drive the same screw directly with no pilot hole, and it struggled with a 75mm one in identical testing, so bigger screws will need pilot holes. The easily swappable chuck works well for this. But with these smaller tools you have to consider whether to go up to the next level if you are driving bigger fixings regularly.

Chuck and torque options

However, a handy 10mm keyless chuck is also included, and with a suitable flat bit or similar fitted, it's capable of drilling holes in wood up to 20mm in diameter.

To utilise the higher diameter you need to slip the slider into the lower gear to increase the torque. Smaller drills can be

SPECIFICATION

BATTERY	1.3Ah Li-ion
NO-LOAD SPEEDS	0-600 and 0-2200rpm
MAX DRILLING CAPACITY	
	wood 20mm
	steel 8mm
IMPACT RATE	0-3000/min
MAX TORQUE	
	soft 15Nm
	hard 100Nm
WEIGHT	1.2kg

VERDICT

This is a budget-priced impact driver that will tackle modest jobs with ease.

- PROS**
- 10mm keyless chuck option
 - Two torque ranges for fine control

- CONS**
- No diagnostic charger
 - Slow recharge rate

VALUE FOR MONEY

PERFORMANCE

FURTHER INFORMATION

- Worx
- www.worxtools.com
- Available from Argos & B&Q stores



The various tool functions are set using this rotating top slider



Up to 22 torque settings are available with this clearly-marked front collar



The standard 1/4in hex chuck has a pull-back collar to lock the bit in place



The driver is very easy to control for all sorts of routine assembly jobs

The Flexcut detail jack knife is designed to be carried in the pocket and used to carve or whittle wood. Its one of a number of different wood-carving knives in the Flexcut range

Flexcut detail jack knife



£33.55

The 35mm long blade has a fine point intended for detailing work

The action of closing the blade puts the user's fingers in danger



This carving knife has an unusually shaped body that is claimed to be ergonomically designed to minimise hand fatigue. The two parts are made in smooth aerospace-grade aluminium and are held together with three countersunk brass rivets.

The knife reviewed here is the single blade version; there are also jack knives with more than one blade in the series. The very smooth handle measures 110mm long and the blade is 35mm long. A hanging loop at the end to attach a lanyard would have been a useful addition, because this knife is expensive and it could easily slip out of a pocket and be lost. The blade folds out and locks securely in position.

Handle with care

This is a well-made and smartly finished single-bladed knife which undoubtedly cuts wood very efficiently. However, one is immediately aware that the blade is razor sharp. Great care needs to be taken when handling the knife, as the handle is so smooth that the fingers could easily slip down on to the blade.

The real trouble comes when it's time to rotate the blade back into the handle. To do this you need to push over the spring steel locking device and move the blade into the body towards your finger. The operation is very uncomfortable and unnerving, and the chance of cutting a finger is very high. Getting other people to try the operation produced the same reaction. For this reason alone we would not be happy recommending this knife to anybody, and therefore we decline to rate it.

FURTHER INFORMATION

- BriMarc
- 03332 406967
- www.brimarc.com

Simple ideas are often the best, and any bench will benefit from a planing stop of some description. This Veritas version is one of the neatest around

Veritas planing stop

You can support work on the bench while you're planing it with a push-up end stop or a batten temporarily tacked to the benchtop. However, in the latter circumstances it's all too easy to leave a pin sticking up or to snap one off, and that's the last thing you need when using edge tools.

There's a huge range of holding options available, especially from Veritas, and their continued utilisation of the 19mm (3/4in) dog hole system is exploited further with this nifty little stop.

Simple installation

A couple of 40mm long steel posts slide into a T-track in the underside of the aluminium rail, allowing the stop to be fitted in a pair of dog holes up to 225mm apart. So no matter where the holes are in your bench, it will fit



Position the posts to suit your dog holes and push them into place



£18.55

so long as you have you have a pair of holes up to this distance apart. Rubber O-rings around the post tops provide enough friction to hold the posts and prevent the stop from sliding around in use.

Using the stop

The low-profile rail is only 5.5mm thick, so it's ideal for holding thin laths as well as wider boards for panels and other such work. It will of course support thicker stock as well.

A pair of these stops set at right angles to each other will prove handy to trap boards where you want to work a diagonal, such as when skew-planing for a cleaner cut.



The stop is especially handy for cleaning up thin drawer components

SPECIFICATION

DIMENSIONS	248 x 32 x 5.5mm
MATERIALS	Aluminium rail, steel posts
DOG HOLE DIAMETER	19mm

VERDICT

This clever bit of kit is the ideal solution for planing thin or wide stock on the workbench.

PROS ■ Superbly engineered
■ Easy to adjust and fit

CONS ■ None: it works perfectly

VALUE FOR MONEY ■■■■■■
PERFORMANCE ■■■■■■

FURTHER INFORMATION

- BriMarc
- 03332 406967
- www.brimarc.com

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MAY 2012

PROJECTS: Mackintosh-style dining chairs, Embroidery stand, Games table restoration
FEATURES: Tuning a budget bandsaw, Preparing your stock, Portable power tools 6 – multi-cutters, Shop notes
TURNING: Elm bowl with a scorched rim, Double barley twist candlestick, Tool handles
TESTS: Bosch cordless nailer, Scheppach saw bench, Quangsheng spokeshave, Makita drill/driver kit, Bosch multi-cutter, FAMAG lip-and-spur drill bits, Japanese mitre square, Trend router cutter sets, Axminster drill guide, Festool extractor



JUNE 2012

PROJECTS: Cherry dresser 1, Jewellery chest, Pedestal side tables, Guestroom towel rail
FEATURES: Marking and setting out, Portable power tools 7 – routers & router tables, Using a vertical panel saw, Shop notes
TURNING: Banksia nut projects, Metalworking tools for turners, Two-tier tripod spice rack
ON TEST: Trend combination router base, Famag Forstner bits, Dremel compact saw, Makita cordless circular saw, Trend goggles, Axminster table saw, Einhell multi-tools, Trend hex key set, Mafell circular saw with guide rail



SUMMER 2012

PROJECTS: Cherry dresser 2, Outdoor dining table, Glass-topped lounge table, Patio side table
FEATURES: Preparing tools, Tailor-made bench 1, Choosing machinery, Shop notes
TURNING: Hollow cedar gourd, Silvered candlesticks, How spalted wood occurs
ON TEST: Makita router/trimmer, Axminster pillar drill table, DeWalt laser, Trend depth gauge, Veritas palm plane, Trend sharpening stones, Axminster drum sander kit, DeWalt camera, Robert Sorby Micro modular tool system, Axminster compressor



JULY 2012

PROJECTS: Veneered DVD cabinet 1, Tenor ukulele 1, Oak blanket chest
FEATURES: Making mechanical joints, Building a tailor-made bench 2, Routing with templates, Shop notes
TURNING: Techniques for turning spalted wood, Three ways to shape small boxes
ON TEST: Festool circular saw, Draper bandsaw, JCB plunge router, Flexidisc sanding system, Elmer's glues, Makita combination table/mitre saw, Draper bench-top spindle moulder, Veritas miniature planes, Axminster double bevel marking knife



AUGUST 2012

PROJECTS: Children's outdoor climbing frame, Tenor ukulele 2, Open cherry bookcase, DVD cabinet drawers
FEATURES: Making interlocking joints, Using profile-scribing and panel-moulding cutters, Shop notes
TURNING: Desktop companion, Cutting screw threads, Dowsing pendulum
ON TEST: Axminster Stayput worklight, Mafell cross-cutting system, Axcaliber mitre trimmer, Festool Surfux oil finish system, Makita cordless biscuit jointer, Proxxon bench drill, Axminster squirrel-tail palm plane



SEPTEMBER 2012

PROJECTS: Curvy ash reclining chair, Interwoven room screen, Tenor ukulele 3, Glass-topped map table
FEATURES: Shaping your work, Getting components to fit together well, Making a ledged-and-braced door, Shop notes
TURNING: Writers' Circle trophy, Multi-centred wall plaque, Green bowl in applewood
ON TEST: Makita cordless jigsaw, Intelligent Workshop and Owas bench dogs, Osmo oil finishes, Hammer planer thicknesser, Numatic workshop vacuum cleaner



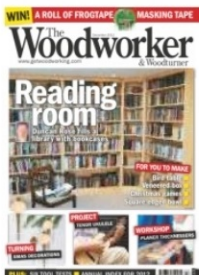
OCTOBER 2012

PROJECTS: Oak front door, Child's tricycle, Tenor ukulele 4, Curved mantelshelf
FEATURES: Letter and numeral templates, Cleaning up your work, Making a bench hook and shooting board, Shop notes
TURNING: Three easy-make pincushions, Involved turning
ON TEST: Lie-Nielsen shooting board plane, Veritas chisels, Hitachi cordless combo kit, Radian router cutters, Axminster flexible drive unit handpieces, Migier rasps and rifiers, Makita workshop/site radio, Wera screwdriver and bit sets, Dremel cordless drill/grinder, Lie-Nielsen tenon saw



NOVEMBER 2012

PROJECTS: Curved-top bookcases, Bentwood ash footstool, Tenor ukulele 5, Oak futon base, Adjustable-height workbench
FEATURES: Shop machines 1: The table saw, Restoring a bench plane, Shop notes
TURNING: Cedar wood moth-proofing medallions, Long-hole boring: making a base for a table lamp
ON TEST: Veritas optical centre punch, Bosch GSS orbital sanders, Parkside vacuum cleaner, Dremel 3000 multi-tool, Veritas sliding square, Woodster Divar saw system, Jet mini lathe



DECEMBER 2012

PROJECTS: Library bookcases, Veneered hardwood box, Tenor ukulele 6, Bird table, Traditional table games
FEATURES: Workshop machines 2: The planer thicknesser, Shop notes
TURNING: Christmas tree decorations, Square-edged yew bowl
ON TEST: Einhell circular saw, Japanese adjustable boring bits, Makita cordless random orbit sander, Axminster lathe, GemRed digital callipers, Gedore Magic shear cutting set
INDEX: Full contents listing for the January to December 2012 issues



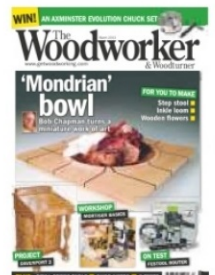
JANUARY 2013

PROJECTS: Five-bar pedestrian gate, Small workbench, Tambour-fronted chest of drawers
FEATURES: A woodworker's ABC 1: the letter A, Shop notes, Workshop machines 3: Singles or twins?
TURNING: A selection of bowls, Combined clock and table lamp, Hourglasses
ON TEST: Axminster Evolution chuck, Einhell jigsaw, Osmo wood fillers, Mafell circular saw, Dremel Moto-Saw, Osmo PolyX-Oil wood finish, Hitachi cordless combi drill, Veritas marking gauge, Einhell workshop vacuum cleaner



FEBRUARY 2013

PROJECTS: Burr oak Davenport 1, Kitchen shelving units, Gadget carry case
FEATURES: A woodworker's ABC 2: the letter B, Shop notes, Workshop machines 4: The bandsaw
TURNING: Two-stage tall vase, Toy cakes and tarts, Spinning wheel bobbins
ON TEST: Einhell circular saw, Axminster reversible air drill, Tuff Saws Vari-tooth bandsaw blades, Bosch site radio, Hitachi bench planer, Metabo TurboTec orbital sander, Makita circular saw, Festool cordless jigsaw, Jet workshop extractor



MARCH 2013

PROJECTS: Burr oak Davenport 2: fitting out and finishing, Simple step stool, Inkle loom
FEATURES: A woodworker's ABC 3: the letter C, Workshop machines 5: The bench mortiser, Adapting a drill press table, Shop notes
TURNING: 16-part segmented bowl, Sanding and finishing work on the lathe, Wooden flowers
ON TEST: Trend router table insert, Festool router, Makita biscuit jointer, Bosch table saw, Metabo cordless sabre saw, Marples marking tool set, Pax tenon saw

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01904 769154 (Yorkshire)

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01395 443857 (East Devon)

Planer thicknesser, 10 x 6in capacity, on wheeled base, as new; £200. Router table, cast iron, sliding carriage; £100.

01273 552843 (East Sussex)

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01372 273268 (Surrey)

Record planer thicknesser, model PT260, 10 x 6in cutting capacity, in very good condition, complete with RSDE1 dust extractor; £275. Perform CCBB 170mm bandsaw; £65. Rexon 13in floor-standing drill press; £50.

01440 709022 (Suffolk)

Woodworker magazines, about 110 copies from 2001 to 2012; offers. Buyer collects.

0121 554 0062 (Birmingham)

Oak spindles, 45 at 890 x 31 x 31mm, 7 ditto (slight seconds), 4 infill strips at 900 x 31 x 8mm; £95.

01702 466399 (Essex)

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01444 450753 (West Sussex)

Living Woods magazine, nos 4-13; £10 plus postage. Registered mortise chisels, 1¼in and 1½in, very good condition; £15.

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Wardrobes down the years

What a difference a couple of decades can make...

One of the perks of this job – aside from the chauffeured limos, the six-figure salary and free cakes at the patisserie next door – has to be the few snatched moments I get to spend each month browsing in *The Woodworker* archives. Over in the Long Gallery, where the sun shines weakly through aged dusty glass, I can stroll between the quiet shelves and take my pick from acres of printed pages past.

In every house or flat storage in general – but specifically clothes storage – remains a perennial problem, particularly in the smaller dwelling. While our tastes may change over the years, our industrialised human needs remain broadly the same. Hence a wardrobe (or a linen press) made centuries ago is not overly dissimilar to its modern counterpart today... notwithstanding a sliding door or two. Today I've stumbled across a couple of old *Woodworker* articles on making a free-standing wardrobe, but

separated by only twenty years in time.

These two archive 'robes are constructed on broadly similar lines, with two hinged doors, slab carcass construction, hanging space on left, shelves on the right and so on, but the differences – though subtle – speak of a changing world either side of the Second World War. Both wardrobes feature doors made from veneered man-made boards – laminated blockboard is mentioned in both articles, although chipboard makes an early appearance* in 1954 – but here things differ. The article from the 1934 *Woodworker*, in a reflection of a time when decoration was highly prized (think Art Deco), recommends that the doors be hand veneered to achieve the desired appearance ("damp the selected veneer before laying and place between boards to flatten it").

One thing that did surprise me though was the difference in jointing the sides to

the top and bottom. It's the later model which features lap dovetails, and the earlier one which applauds the use of housing joints – not necessarily what one would have expected, although the maker from the '30s redeems himself by forming these as dovetail housing joints, so we can't really criticise too much there.

Roll on next month. I've booked my ride...

Mark

*I shall be looking for the earliest possible mention of this particular (or should that be particulate?) material over the coming months: Ed.



More from *The Woodworker* archive next month...

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