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April 2014

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# welcome

**D**espite various external distractions such as the economy and the weather, we like to remain upbeat here at *The Woodworker*, and hope that every page reflects the pleasure and joy that can be gleaned from the craft of woodworking itself and making things generally. Although we continue with our enforced regimen of belt tightening here at our paternal premises – I've had my company car downgraded to a family saloon, and my driver is no longer on 24-hour standby! – we hope that the quality of the woodworking content in the magazine will remain unaffected.



#### Forever feedback

It's great getting your feedback on the mag. Please keep on sending those emails and letters, as it all helps us to give you the reader what you want. My hope is that every article, even if it might not be everyone's taste (and let's face it, you can't please all the people all of the time), will contain enough ideas to either inspire or in some way guide the majority of woodworkers out there. In sheds and workshops across land and sea, we're all doing what we can to improve our immediate environments and to bring timber-related pleasure and ease to friends and family. And there's always the chance that, for a particularly well-crafted item, the benefits will be enjoyed by generations yet unborn. It's probably the closest to immortality that most of us will achieve.

#### Measure twice

Change, as we all know is both inevitable and (eventually) beneficial, but we can still keep enough things the same if we need to, especially in the world of woodwork. By a curious coincidence we're featuring a number of items with measurement system related content in this issue, so here I'm stoking the fire of controversy by adding a bit more. If you're working by yourself, particularly in a home workshop situation, there's nothing to stop you from using impetuous measurements if you prefer them. I even know one chap – Bob Dunstan – who invented his own system, 'Bob's Rule' (<http://tinyurl.com/yhspoej>), but in my opinion that's quite an extreme length to go to for workshop sanity.

#### Pay as you want

One of the things I like most about making things for paying customers is the way you generally end up working on the sort of project that you otherwise would never take on. True, there's always scope for a bit of personal interpretation – and this perhaps is the very thing that led the customer to your workshop door in the first place – but ultimately the craftsman has to comply with the wishes of the client. 'He who pays the piper calls the tune,' as they sagely observe north of the border. It's a message best not forgotten if you want to make a living out of anything in the construction industry.

*Mark*

You can contact Mark on [mark.cass@mytimemedia.com](mailto:mark.cass@mytimemedia.com)



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April 2014

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# In brief...



### Toggle family grows

Bessey toggle clamps are already available in eight versions. The company has now expanded its range with a further model, the STC-VH vertical toggle clamp with a horizontal base plate in two sizes.

The clamp is available in two sizes. Both are fully adjustable to the clamping height. The height difference, which is evened out automatically, is up to 20mm for the small STC-VH20 and up to 40mm for the larger STC-VH50. The clamping force

remains almost the same during height adjustment. Time-consuming manual adjustment of the pressure screw position is not required. The clamping force is also freely adjustable, because not all applications or materials require the maximum clamping force. It is up to 1,100N for the STC-VH20 and up to 2,500N for the STC-VH50. Thanks to an adjusting screw in the joint, the clamping force can be adjusted to the workpiece without having to use tools. [www.bessey.de](http://www.bessey.de)

### One good turn deserves another

Woodworkers at a New Forest training centre for adults with learning disabilities turned on their creative skills when an internationally acclaimed craftsman dropped in on a session to demonstrate just what a lathe can do.

The Minstead Training Trust helps adults with learning disabilities to achieve greater independence so they can lead meaningful lives. Colwyn Way (pictured on the left with Axminster sales director Alan Styles and the trust's chief executive Madeleine Durle) has travelled the world teaching his craft. He visited students on the trust's woodwork course to hand over two new lathes for the students to use.

The trust had earlier been given two lathes, and had sent out an SOS for volunteer woodturners to come along and run sessions. As a result, eight members of the Hampshire Woodturners Association



(HWA) stepped up to help. However, after working with the students on the old lathes, the turners realised that new machines would quickly be needed if classes were to continue, so they clubbed together, did some fundraising and approached Axminster Tools and Machinery for help. The company was able to supply the Trust with two lathes and chucks, and the new machines now take pride of place in the Trust's workshop where the students take it in turn to have one-to-one sessions with the volunteers from the HWA. [www.minsteadtrainingproject.org](http://www.minsteadtrainingproject.org)

### Premium drill driver

DeWalt has just announced a completely redesigned XRP Premium cordless drill driver/hammer drill driver range, featuring brushless technology and a three-speed gearbox. The latest in the DeWalt XR lithium-ion brushless series, this new model range is the seventh version of the XRP cordless drill, and represents a significant development in terms of compact size, functionality, runtime and performance.

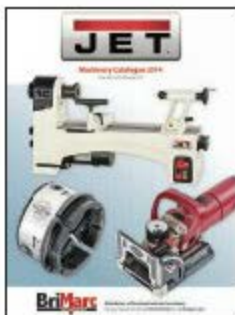
The new XRP was designed from the outset to be shorter in length and lighter in weight than previous models. The re-engineered models incorporate the innovative DeWalt E-clutch, a compact electronic clutch that enables the hammer drill/driver to be 24mm shorter in length, increasing versatility in confined spaces.

The new XRP range consists of four models; the DCD995 18V hammer drill/driver, the DCD990 18V drill/driver, the DCD937 14.4V hammer drill/driver and the DCD932 14.4V drill/driver. [www.dewalt.co.uk](http://www.dewalt.co.uk)



### More machinery

BriMarc has just published its new 2014 machinery catalogue. This 52-page issue is packed with quality brands including Jet, Lamello and Axcalber. Among the new products you will find the Jet JW-L-1221VS woodturning lathe – designed to make the woodturning experience more enjoyable by focusing on control – and the Jet 2424 lathe, which is a short-bed version of the 4224B heavy-duty lathe. Also, look out for the Clubman SK80 and SK100 chucks, and more exciting woodturning products in the Evolution Series range, all manufactured in Axminster in



Devon. You will find all of these innovative products and many more in this new catalogue. [www.brimarc.com](http://www.brimarc.com)

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### Bigger and better

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To find out more about Machine Mart, or to order your free catalogue, call in to any of the 64 superstores nationwide, call 0844 890 1265 or go online to [www.machinemart.co.uk](http://www.machinemart.co.uk)

### Deneb Puchalski masterclass

Lie-Nielsen has legendary status among hand tool enthusiasts with its blend of the highest quality manufacturing and a unique modern take on historical and valued planes of the past. Deneb Puchalski, their hand tool and sharpening guru, will be visiting the UK this April and will be running a free one-day course at G&S Timber in the Lake District.

The course, titled 'Hand tools demystified with Deneb Puchalski', will cover the following areas:

- blade sharpening and hand tool set-up;
- how to construct your own angle-setting jig, hone a micro

### Packing a punch

Metabo has just introduced the 10.8V PowerMaxx BS. With the quick-change system it's also available as the PowerMaxx BS Quick. Including the drill chuck it measures only 162mm from front to back, and is therefore the shortest drill/screwdriver on the market. It offers torque of up to 34Nm and a maximum speed of 1,400 rpm. The drill chuck can be removed, exposing a magnetic female hexagon socket in the spindle end to take screwdriver bits. The tool then measures only 122mm in length and the user can work in even tighter spaces.

The compact design also plays a role when it comes to weight – it's just 600g. However the battery pack capacity has increased from 1.5Ah to 2.0Ah. A useful battery capacity display in the casing of the machine provides an indication of the remaining run time. Whether for woodworking, constructing furniture and kitchens or general workshop use, the PowerMaxx BS is a compact problem solver that's ideal for light and medium screwdriving and drilling applications. The tool can drill holes up to 10mm diameter in steel and up to 22mm diameter in wood.

The PowerMaxx BS and PowerMaxx BS Quick are available as body-only models or as a set with two 2.0 Ah battery packs and a charger. [www.metabo.co.uk](http://www.metabo.co.uk)



bevel on your blade and minimise rust;

- planing techniques for getting a board 'four square';
  - the importance of angle of cut in relation to the material being worked;
  - chisel preparation and use.
- This is a hands-on course and

by the end of the day those attending will have a better understanding of what a truly sharp edge is and how a tool should feel in the hand. Mastering a craft takes repetition and this class will provide the skills needed to make tools perform at their best.

To attend this course in the USA would normally cost the equivalent of £150. The venue for this free course is G&S Specialist Timber, Snuff Mill Lane, Stainton, Penrith, Cumbria CA11 0HA. The date is April 7th, from 10am to 4pm. There is a café on the premises and plenty of hotels nearby. [www.toolsandtimber.co.uk](http://www.toolsandtimber.co.uk)

## DIARY

### MARCH

#### Aminster Skill Centre courses

- 10-11 Beginners cutting
  - 10-14 Beginners woodturning
  - 13 Introduction to Leigh Jigs
  - 18 Pen making\*
  - 20 Sharpening with Tornek\*
  - 24 Scroll saw course\*
  - 26 Woodturning refresher
  - 27-28 Beginners routing\*
  - 27-28 Bows and platters
  - 29 Pyrography
- \*Course held in Sittingbourne, Kent. Unit 10 Weycroft Avenue, Axminster EX13 5PH  
0800 975 1905  
[www.aminsterskillcentre.co.uk](http://www.aminsterskillcentre.co.uk)

#### Aminster turning demonstration

- & Ready Steady Turn competition
- 21-22 AT&M, Bermuda Trade Park, Nuneston CV10 7RA
- 02476 01402
- [www.aminster.co.uk/stores/nuneston](http://www.aminster.co.uk/stores/nuneston)

#### John Boddy's courses

- 13-14 French polishing Ted Vickerman
- 01423 322370 ext 257
- [www.john-boddy-s-hws.co.uk](http://www.john-boddy-s-hws.co.uk)

#### John Boddy's demonstrations

- 15 French polishing Ted Vickerman
- Details as above

#### Midlands Woodworking & Power Tool Show

- 28-29 Newark Showground,
- Newark NG24 2NY
- 01474 536535
- [www.netlon.co.uk](http://www.netlon.co.uk)

#### Record Power Road Shows

- 14-15 RS Paskin, Kiddleminster
- DY11 7QP
- 01562 829722
- 15 Snaithon Woodworking Supplies
- Scarborough YO13 9BG
- 01723 859545

#### Robert Sorby Demonstrations

- 14-15 RS Paskin, Kiddleminster
- DY11 7QP
- 01562 829722
- [www.robert-sorby.co.uk](http://www.robert-sorby.co.uk)

#### South East Woodworking

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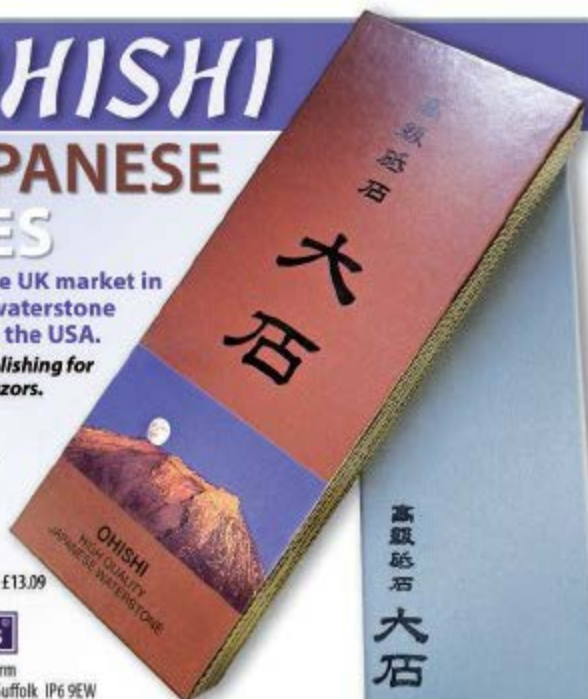
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## KEEPING BUSY

Hi Mark

This year I'm planning on building an extension on the back of my house... once the planning department (Mrs Hutson) and I finally agree on the layout. As part of the project I'll be installing two sets of bi-fold doors in English or European oak, which I'll design and build from scratch before adding the hardware, the running gear and the glazing.

I'm actually a mechanic by trade. However, I've been woodworking for more than 35 years, and in that time I've tackled many home projects from scratch, including a wooden gazebo with a cedar shingle roof, garden furniture in iroko and dozens of indoor projects in oak, maple and humble softwood. Many of my indoor projects – running up skirting boards and architraves on my spindle moulder, for example – would probably be classed as home improvement jobs.

Once the extension is completed, I'll be making a butchers' block on wheels in beech, as well as replacement kitchen units and some oak panelled doors. To help with all this I recently ordered a new AWC4 combi machine from Axminster, as my 15-year-old Max 26 is needing an upgrade.

I would be honoured to share my hobby with you and your readers, as I believe anyone who can use a tape measure and a square can achieve amazing results.  
Rob Hutson

Hey Rob, you sound even busier than me! It's great to be able to make things, especially practical stuff for the home. I like your tape measure philosophy, and look forward to hearing more about your latest projects. Keep up the good work!

## STEADY AS SHE GOES

Hello Mark

I enjoyed Colin Simpson's article 'Pot Black' in the March edition of *The Woodworker*. I too have required the use of a lathe steady from time to time, but have never really come up with a satisfactory design. Could Colin's version form the basis of an article in a future edition of your excellent magazine, or could he be persuaded to let me have a copy? My lathe is a Record Power CL3, a model I'm sure he'll be familiar with.

Best wishes

Mike F

I'm glad you enjoyed the snooker cue piece, Mike; I did too. Having played with many a wonky cue in my time, it makes you appreciate the difficulty of producing a straight 'unt' Colin tells me he has plans to write about lathe steadies soon, so please watch this space...



## IMPERIAL RULES

Dear Sir

I was disappointed by the remarks on Imperial measurements in Derek Lane's 'On the road again' article in the January issue of *The Woodworker*, where he referred to their use as 'a slight downside'. I'd like to point out that this great country was built on these measurements, and generations (myself included) were taught them at school... until we all had these crazy metric measurements forced on us by Europe.

This is one reason why I don't buy your magazine very often: I simply cannot get my head round metric measurements. Let's have one of each, to please everyone.  
Thank you.  
Dave Hoare

I entirely sympathise with your frustration regarding the metric system, Dave. Things learned in



early life tend to stick firmly in the mind and take a lot of 'un-learning'. I was talking to my plumber today, a younger man, and he has similar negative feelings towards feet and inches. We agreed that it was daft having two systems running in parallel, but I fear we may be stuck with this situation for many years to come.

What do other woodworkers think? We'll print both metric and Imperial measurements side by side if that's what you all want

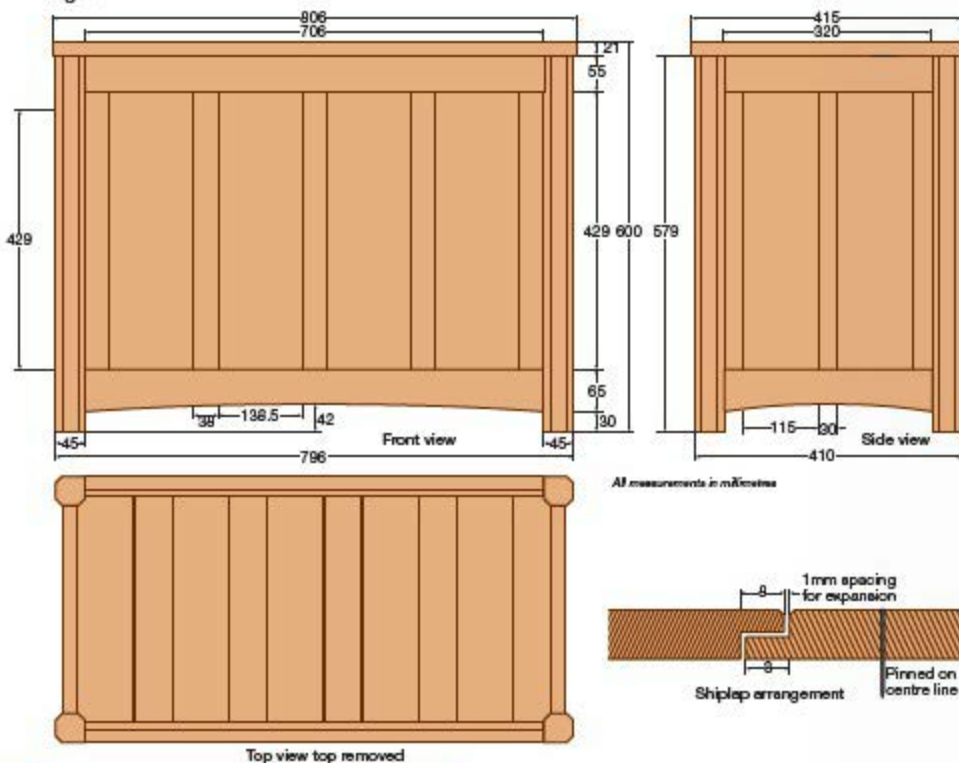


BY IAN TAYLOR

# Community chest

**Storage, storage, storage! Can you ever have too much? In my experience the answer is usually no, and this was certainly the case in the Taylor household. This project was born to create some much-needed storage capacity for the family's bedlinen and towels. I used oak to blend in with some existing chestnut bedroom furniture. The oak finishes to virtually the same colour, and so gives a good match**

Fig 1





#### BLANKET CHEST CUTTING LIST

All dimensions are in millimetres

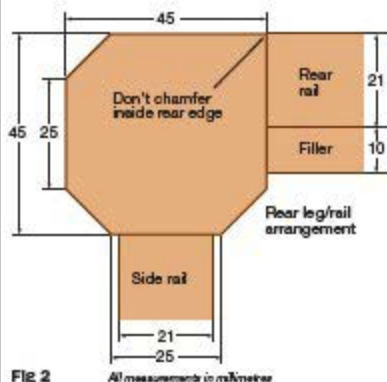
Part	Qty	L	W	T
<b>FRONT AND BACK PANELS</b>				
Upper rail	2	706	55	21
Lower rail	2	706	65	21
Vertical rail	10	429	38	21
Infill panel	8	439	139.5	9
<b>SIDE PANELS</b>				
Upper rail	2	320	55	21
Lower rail	2	320	65	21
Vertical rail	6	429	30	21
Infill panel	4	439	125	9
Leg	4	579	45	45
Top panel	1	806	415	21
Top brace	2	330	35	25
<b>BASE</b>				
Shiplap board	*	340	*	9
Plywood panel	1	726	340	9
Long support batten	2	706	30	25
Short support batten	2	290	30	25

\* The number of shiplap boards you need depends on their width. You will also need three 50mm brass hinges, two brass eye hooks and about 500mm of brass oval link chain.

#### Frame and panel sides

To keep the weight down and give some interesting detailing, I opted for a frame-and-panel construction for the walls of the chest. As well as allowing some interesting matching grain patterns for the panels, the design also gave me an opportunity to put my favourite Festool Domino jointer through its paces.

I started by preparing the panels. The finished thickness was 9mm, and I cut them in pairs from 25mm (1in) oak boards, photo 1, before putting them through the thicknesser. When you open up the re-sawn boards, you get pairs with matching grain patterns on the newly exposed sawn faces; it's known as book-matching.



**Fig 2** All measurements in millimetres

If you're careful with the thickening, to take as little as possible off the newly exposed faces, these matching patterns can be retained in the finished panels. I selected the best figured pairs of panels for the sides and front, which will be on show; the back will normally face a wall or bed end, so I wasn't so fussy here.

### A solid top

Although it would have been possible (and attractive) to repeat the panel construction in the top, we wanted to be able to also use the chest as a seat, so I chose to give it a solid top.

I had some 250mm wide oak boards in stock, but since they both had a slight twist, I ripped them down the middle before flattening and thickening them. Taking the twist out of the full boards would have lost more of the thickness than I wanted.

If you're careful to re-align the grain patterns when edge-gluing the boards, the joints are virtually invisible. A biscuit joint every 200mm or so along the mating edges, photo 2, helps to keep everything in alignment when you're gluing up the full-width panel. Apply clamps above and below, photo 3, and put it aside for the glue to set.

### Floating panels

The panels float in simple frames joined with loose tenons. One attractive feature of this approach, in addition to its speed, is that the frame stock can be accurately cut to length on a mitre saw, without having to allow for joint cutting.

You need four long rails for the front and back, and four shorter rails for the sides. The 16 vertical rails for the front and side frames are all cut to the same length. I used my hand mitre saw for this job, photo 4, but you could just as easily use a power saw. I then

cut the matching mortises in the rail ends with the Domino joiner, photo 5.

### Grooved edges

Cut a groove in the inside edges of all the rails to hold the panels – a good job for the router table. I used an 8mm router bit for this job. It's best to cut stopped grooves in the horizontal rails; this ensures that no glue from the floating tenons can leak into the groove, where it might lock the panel solid.

### Curved templates

The bottom rails on all four sides are deeper than the upper rails, and have a concave curve on their lower edges to give a bit of a lift to the design. The depth of the curve at its centre is only 12mm – see fig 1.

Arranging these curves is fairly straightforward. I started by drawing suitable curves for the long and short panels on a sheet of mdf. You could use a string loop and pencil to draw the curve. Alternatively, you can bend a strip of thin timber or board into a smooth curve and use that as a guide to draw the profile on the mdf. Use panel pins to define the end and central points of the curve, and bend the strip against these. That's the method I used.

With the profiles marked on the mdf, cut them out (by jigsaw or bandsaw) and clean them up to form two templates, ready for the next stage.



**1** The book-matched oak panels were carefully re-sawn on the bandsaw



**2** Biscuits help maintain alignment while the top is being glued up



**3** The top panel is cramped tightly above and below while the glue sets



**7** Screw the template on the inside of the rails so it can guide the router cutter



**8** The router cutter creates an exact replica of the template profile



**9** Use the curved offset from step 6 to help clamp the assembly squarely



### Shaped rails

Use the templates to transfer the profiles to the frame components, before cutting them out on the bandsaw, photo 6. Aim for around 0.5mm clearance on the waste side of the line. Keep the waste cut-off – it'll come in handy later.

The templates come into play again as router guides to clean up the curves. I screwed the mdf templates to the inside face of the rails for this job, photo 7. A bearing-guided trimming cutter in the router runs along the template edge and cuts a smooth profile on the rails, exactly matching the template. You might need to raise the

component a little above the bench top to give clearance for the bearing, as I did – see photo 8.

### Assembly time

The front, back and side panels can now be glued up. Since the floating panels are thicker than the width of the grooves they sit in, you'll need to plane or rout a chamfer on the inside face to get a good fit. I gave the visible face of each panel one coat of finish before the glue-up, to ensure that there will be no unfinished edges showing should they shrink in the future.

Since the bottom rails are curved,

clamping normally would be difficult, but if you kept the curved waste you removed earlier it can be used as a packing piece to give parallel faces for clamping, photo 9.

### Checking for square

For a successful final assembly, you need to ensure that the four panels are perfectly square. I keep a pair of battens especially for this job, photo 10. They both come to a vertical chisel point at each end, with a short extension glued on to simplify getting into the corners of frame-and-panel assemblies like this one.

Use the pair of battens to gauge the



4 A dimension stop on the mite saw allows production-line cutting



5 The Domino makes short work of cutting mortises on the rail ends



6 Cut the curve on the bandsaw, leaving around 0.5mm on the waste side of the line



10 Equal diagonals – a square assembly. Tip extensions (inset) reach right into the corners



11 Check that everything comes together accurately before gluing up



12 The plywood sub-floor is trimmed at the corners and then screwed to the support battens



13

Use a 1mm thick strip of veneer to space the shiplap boards evenly



14

The shiplap boards are pinned into place to give a neat and attractive floor



Inside dimensions of one panel diagonal. Then, keeping the same length setting, swing the pair round to gauge the other diagonal. If the two diagonals are equal, the panel is square. If they aren't, adjust the clamps to bring the assembly square and check again.

You can buy gadgets to clamp the battens and avoid slippage, but I've found that with a bit of practice you can grip them by hand perfectly satisfactorily.

### Perfect legs

The legs start at 45mm square, but are lightened by 45° chamfers on the edges. I cut the mortises for the floating tenons before chamfering the edges on the router table. The mortises on the inside faces of the back assembly are cut so that the rear panel is flush with the rear faces of the legs, with no chamfer on that edge of the leg. The sides and front assemblies require



15

I find cutting the hinge recesses by hand an extremely therapeutic process!

mortises cut centrally between the chamfered edges – see fig 2.

This gives a neat arrangement at the back of the chest where everything is in a single plane – necessary for successful mounting of the hinges for the top. A 10mm thick filler piece glued to the inside of the rear top rail gives a thicker face for cutting the hinge mortises, and a neat and solid appearance when the chest is opened.

After a dry test assembly to check everything for fit, photo 11, I glued up the front and rear panels to the legs first, and then brought in the side panels to complete the chest structure.

### Double-decker floor

The floor is constructed in two layers. A 9mm plywood sub-base sits on 30 x 25mm support battens screwed to the inside faces of the chest, photo 12. On top of this, I laid 9mm oak shiplap boards in random widths. Each is pinned to the ply panel on its centre line – see fig 1 again. I used a 1mm veneer strip to ensure even spacing, and to give expansion room for each board, photo 13. The finished floor complemented the side panels perfectly, photo 14.

### Corners trimmed

I cut a triangular piece off each corner of the chest top, to echo the chamfer in the legs. I then planed a 2mm chamfer round all the top edges, and a smaller 1mm chamfer on the lower edges.

Bracing battens on the underside of the top help to ensure it will stay flat. These are screwed to the top through a slot near each end and a normal hole in the middle. This allows seasonal expansion and contraction, while still holding the top flat.

### Hinged by hand

The top is fitted to the chest with three 50mm drawn brass hinges. I cut the hinge mortises the traditional way, photo 15, by chopping them out with a chisel. This isn't a particularly fast job but it's very satisfying, especially if you take care to get a good fit. Use a router template if you prefer.

Finally, the top is secured with a chain so it can't open beyond around 10° past the vertical. Without this, the top's weight could pull the hinges off if it was thrown back.

### Oiled to perfection

I gave the inside of the chest a coat of lemon oil to seal it and create a pleasant smell. The outside faces received three coats of my home-made Danish Oil – equal measures of boiled linseed oil, polyurethane varnish and white spirit. And then it's off to do its business, helping keep things in order and out of sight.



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BY ALAN WILLEY

# Braced for action

**The dictionary defines a table as an article of furniture consisting of a flat top on legs. This unusual table matches that up to a point, but the legs are something completely different!**



**1** I chose American white oak for this unusual project. It certainly took a lot of wood!

I had an unusual commission recently from a customer for an extending dining table. He presented me with a rough drawing of a table with two large upright legs and a third leg passing through the centre like an inverted cantilever. It captured my imagination right away and, liking the idea of a challenge, I agreed to build it.

I used American white oak for the build due to its cost and workability and with a large pile of timber machined up I prepared to start work, photo 1.

## Getting framed

I began by cutting out the parts for the table-top frame, fig 1. I then cut the two crosspieces which would be rebated into the sides to support the frame on the legs.

I marked out 150 x 25mm rebates on both of the frame sides, and removed most of the waste with the router to a depth of 15mm. Then I used a chisel to square the ends and tested the pieces for a good fit, photo 2.

The frame was sanded and joined at the corners with biscuits and triangular blocks.

I then cramped it up and set it aside after checking it for square using a tape measure across the diagonals.

Next I attached the two central bearers using biscuits and glue; one of these would be fixed to the top of the cantilever, and the other to the short vertical leg that rests on the cantilever about halfway along its length. This assembly was then clamped and set aside to dry.

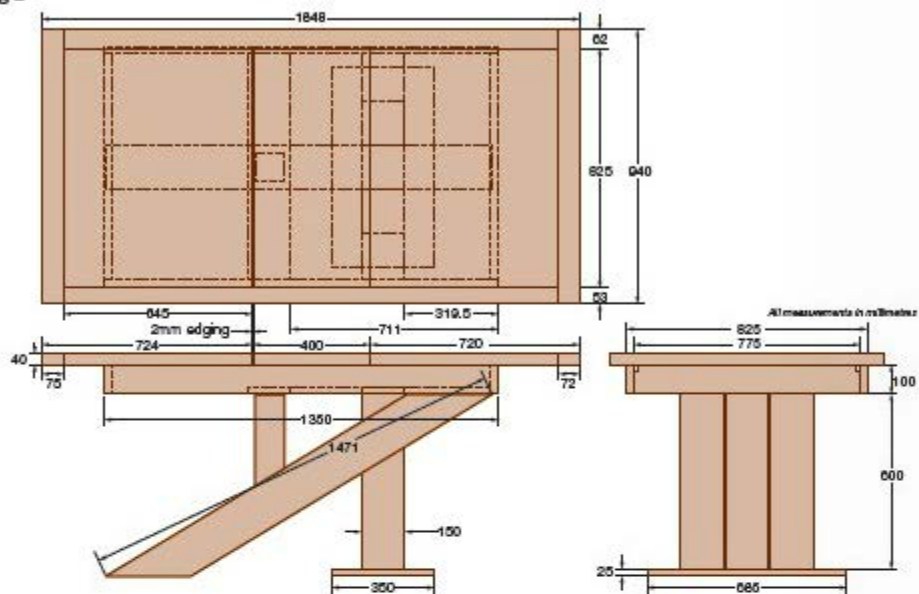
## Hollow legs

I now turned my attention to the three legs, which I planned to make as box sections, photo 3, to keep the weight down. I started with the two vertical legs and cut eight pieces of 25mm oak. Each piece was then passed over the surface planer with the fence set to 45° to form mitred edges.

I lined up all of the pieces side by side using double-sided tape and routed a 25mm wide rebate 15mm deep along both the top and bottom edges. This will house an inset top and bottom to the hollow legs to allow their attachment to the table, photo 4.

I assembled the two leg boxes by placing

Fig 1



The main frame has two crosspieces that will be attached to the legs

the four components side by side with the mitres facing down, and taped the joints together with wide masking tape. I then turned the assembly over, applied glue to the mitres, folded the sections together at right angles and taped up the final joint. Set the assembled legs aside to dry.

### Cantilever time

I now felt confident enough to tackle the much larger central leg. I cut four pieces of oak at 1471 x 150mm and again passed them over the planer at 45°. This is where the build starts to get complicated, due to the angle of the cantilever leg. I'd drawn the plans in SketchUp, but I'm always a little wary of using angles straight off the plan so I decided the best way to be sure would be



All the legs are made as box sections with mitred corner joints

to use a template.

I made this out of thin mdf, cut to the same width as the leg. By laying the table frame on its side and marking where the floor would be, then angled the template until I was happy with it and marked it. I now had a perfect template for the cantilever leg and could cut the two leg sides to match.

### Biscuited mitres

With the central leg being so long, I decided it would be tricky to join the parts using the masking tape method, so I used biscuits instead. I had to work fast as there were eight biscuits to each side. Using my soft rubber mallet to persuade them together, I finished by fitting ratchet straps to pull them up snug.

Finally I made up the last small support leg



Inset top and bottom panels allow the legs to be screwed to the frame

which was much easier as it measured only 317 x 100mm. Again using an MDF template I marked off the angle on two of the pieces and cut them to suit. After rebating the edges this assembly was glued and left to dry.

Next I cut some 25mm thick oak squares to plug each end of the hollow legs. Each one was glued and screwed into the leg end rebates through the underside to ensure that the screws didn't show in the finished piece.

### Attaching the legs

Now the top frame was turned upside down and the legs were placed in position on the underside. It took a bit of balancing and nifty cramping to get each component in place, but once everything lined up I

marked the positions of the legs on the underside of the frame. I also marked the position of the cantilever where it passed between the two upright legs so I could attach bearers at this point.

I now screwed all the legs into position through the crosspieces, with the exception of the small supporting leg between the cantilever and the underframe. This was held in place with biscuits. The main supporting frame was now complete, photo 5.

I joined two pieces of 25mm thick oak together with biscuits to make a 685 x 350mm piece for the foot of the table. This was attached to the base with glue and screws. Finally, I attached commercial table runners to each of the side rails and cut sections out of the end rails to allow them to run through.

#### Time for the tops

The three table top sections were made using 18mm veneered mdf for stability and were edged with solid wood to give the impression of a thick solid top.

I cut two pieces to 825 x 645mm for the main leaves, and one to 825 x 400mm for the removable centre section. The ends and sides were framed with 40mm thick oak, photo 6, and two extra pieces were added to the underside of the edges, again using biscuits and glue, to allow the top to be mounted on the runners.



#### A perfect fit

With the tops complete, all three sections were clamped together on top of the frame. Using the router and a straightedge, the sides were cut flush with each other and a small chamfer was cut onto the edges, photo 7.

The top was now centralised on the frame and screwed to the runners, photo 8. After testing the action of the sliding sections and ensuring the fit of the removable section underneath them, it was ready for a finish.

#### A light matt finish

My customer had requested a matt oil finish, but didn't want the wood any darker. All of the oils I've used in the past have darkened the wood, so I asked around for advice, did some reading and found a recommendation for Osmo Top Oil.

I applied two coats, but it didn't look as if there was any visible finish on the table. I personally prefer a sheen on a table, but as everyone knows the customer is always right. He liked the finish, so that's what counts in the end!



The underframe consists of three vertical legs and the cantilever



Each of the three top sections is framed with 40mm thick oak...

...before being given a small chamfer on all the external edges



The sliding sections are screwed to the runners and hide the centre section when it's not needed

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# Setting up a drill press

**This occasional series is all about setting up and fine-tuning a range of standard woodworking machines and power tools. This month we're looking at the drill press**

**T**he Jacobs Chuck Manufacturing Company was founded in 1902 by A.I. Jacobs, the man who invented something we all take for granted today – the three-jaw drill chuck. It's the chuck that makes this machine so versatile. Any round shaft small enough to fit within the chuck's capacity will automatically be centred on the quill (the spindle to which the chuck is attached), so long as the chuck itself is set true.

#### **On the stand**

It is only in recent years that the drill press has found its way into the home woodworking environment. This is due in part to the dramatic reduction in the cost of these machines. In the past the Black & Decker drill, mounted in its proprietary drill stand, was about as sophisticated as fixed drilling got. Although this arrangement was fine for boring the odd straight hole, speed control was limited (to fast and very fast) and the chuck capacity was pretty small.

#### **Pressing reasons**

There are many reasons for acquiring a drill press. The ability to bore precise, clean holes at any angle, at regular spacings, is only the beginning. The mechanical advantage of the quill's advance mechanism means that much less effort is required by the operator to bore large-diameter holes. A precise depth stop on the stand makes the boring of blind holes far more accurate than a piece of masking tape wrapped around the drill bit, but it doesn't stop there as you will see.



1 Check that the drill bit is straight by rolling it on the table



2 Rotate the bit between your fingers to centre it in the chuck



3 Use a square to check that the table is at 90° to the bit



4 Use a dial gauge and magnetic stand to check the run-out



5 Use the depth stop to lock the quill in the down position



6 Rotate the chuck by pulling the drive bands by hand

### The right angle

The whole point of a drill press is to enable the user to bore perfectly aligned holes, usually at 90° to the work surface. For this to happen, the drill press table must be at a perfect right angle to the axis of the chuck. The chuck must also be running perfectly centrally in the quill.

To set up the drill press correctly, start by checking that the table is at 90° to the axis of the chuck. To do this, select a large-diameter drill bit and roll it over the drill

press table to ensure that the bit is straight; it should roll without any bumping. If it doesn't run true, try another bit until you find one that does.

Having found a straight bit, secure it in the chuck, gently rolling it between your fingers as the chuck is tightened. This will help keep the bit centred. Tighten the bit enough to hold it firmly and then remove the chuck key, reinsert it in the next hole in the chuck and nip it up tight. The table can now be aligned with the drill bit with the aid of a square.

### Running true

Now the table is square to the bit, the run-out can be checked and corrected if necessary. The drill chuck has a Morse Taper (MT) which is a force fit into the quill. This may be slightly off-centre; if it is, it will cause the chuck – and therefore the drill bit – to run out of true.

Correcting this is a simple matter. You just need to work out which way it is out and then 'coax' it back into the correct position – a tap with a hammer is the preferred method!



7 Tap the bit gently with a hammer to align the chuck in the quill



8 The chuck may fall out if adjusting it loosens the taper in the quill



9 Remove the drill bit and close the jaws of the chuck fully



10 Fit the chuck back into the quill with a sharp upward movement



11 Give it a sharp blow with a block of wood to set it into the quill. Then re-check the alignment

The critical thing is establishing which way the chuck is running out and by how far it is doing so. The best way of doing this is to use a dial gauge mounted on a stand. These can be obtained reasonably cheaply (under £25) and have several other uses around the workshop, such as setting the height of planer blades and checking that the table saw blade is running true.

#### Using the dial gauge

Unplug or isolate the drill press from the mains supply and open the top lid. Set a large-diameter drill bit in the chuck and lock it down so that just the shank is above the table. If your drill press doesn't have a quill lock, the depth gauge can be used to prevent the quill from returning, effectively locking it in the down position. To achieve this, lower the quill, rotate the depth stop in the opposite direction to its full extent and lock it off. This will stop the quill returning and achieve the desired result.

Clamp the magnetic dial gauge stand to the drill press table and arrange the dial gauge so the stylus is running on the drill chuck. Rotate the chuck by moving the drive belt by hand. If the chuck is running true, the dial gauge needle will remain stationary.

In reality the needle will probably bounce around a little, but the average readings should be about the same. A run-out of a tenth of a millimetre (0.1mm) would be excessive. Anything under that would be hard to correct – and frankly unnecessary when dealing with wood.

#### The block alternative

If you don't own a dial gauge, you can check the run-out using a block of wood. Rest the wood against the shaft of the drill bit and rotate the bit using the drive belt, as before. If the shaft is running out, it will push the block away from the bit and create a gap that will open and close as the bit is rotated. Measure the gap at its

widest; if it exceeds a tenth of a millimetre (0.1mm), the chuck will need aligning with the quill.

To achieve this, tap the top of the shank of the drill bit with a hammer to bring it into line. If the chuck is a long way out, you may find that adjusting it will loosen the taper in the quill and the chuck simply drops out. If this happens, it wasn't fitted firmly in the first place and will need to be reinstalled and rechecked.

#### Replacing the chuck

To reinstall the chuck, remove the drill bit and close the jaws. Lower the table out of the way, release the quill so that it returns to the uppermost position and insert the chuck's taper back into it. Fit the chuck into the quill with one hand and give it a sharp upwards blow with a block of wood to set it back into its taper. Reset the table and recheck the chuck for run-out as described above. If all is well, the drill press is now ready to use.

Mark Raby



Mick Hanbury



Reg Slack



Nic Westermann



Michael Painter



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STC = Sliding Table Carriage, TWE = Table Width Extension, TLE = Table Length Extension.

Scheppach Precisa 3.0 is designed by Scheppach in Germany but made in China where Scheppach resident engineers oversee manufacturing quality control. Precisa 3.0 has the same warranty as Professional Series. Scheppach machines have been sold and serviced in the UK by NMA since 1972. Go to [nmatools.co.uk](http://nmatools.co.uk) and see what users say about NMA's unparalleled service.



BY PHIL BECKLEY

# Over my shoulder...

**Shoulder bags are normally made from material such as cloth or leather, but how about a bag made from timber? Here's an unusual idea which I've called the Caterpillar Bag!**

I travel to Germany regularly as part of my work, and this gives me the opportunity to see German craft culture at first hand. I spotted this project in a now-defunct craft magazine called *Holzidee*, which means Timber Ideas.

The wood I used for this was chestnut; the board was left over from some drawers I made during my time as a furniture restorer. What better use for it than a simple and easy project such as this shoulder bag?

## Making a start

The board had already been cut to a thickness of 12mm, so all that was needed was to skim over it with a plane to remove the bandsaw marks, photo 1. Then a light overall sanding quickly removed any other marks or blemishes.

The next stage was to cut the slats that will form the outside of the bag. As I don't have the space for a bench saw in my workshop, I used a plunge saw with a guide



**1** I started by skimming my chestnut board with a plane to remove any saw marks



**2** Cut the board into 22mm wide strips using a plunge saw and rail



**3** Hand-plane the strips to a width of 20mm and a thickness of 10mm



**4** Use a jig to drill 4mm diameter holes 15mm in from the slat ends



**5** Chamfer the edges and ends of the slats; I used a low-angle plane



**6** Cut the end panels to size and mark a 45mm radius on each end

rail to cut a series of strips to a width of 22mm, photo 2. I cut the wavy edge over-size at this stage and trimmed it to fit later when the slats were assembled, as it forms one of the 24 that are required. The wavy edge is a reminder of the natural origins of the timber, and adds an unusual twist to the design.

### Plane sailing

The strips now need to be cut to a length of 250mm and planed to their final dimensions – 20mm wide and 10mm. This gave me the opportunity to hand-plane them, photo 3, and to hear one of the sweetest sounds in the workshop – the whistling of the plane iron as it cuts cleanly through the wood!

### Accurate drilling

Next, I made a simple jig for drilling the 4mm holes in each end of the slats, and drilled them out on a pillar drill, photo 4. The centre point is approximately 15mm in from each end; this allows the slats to overhang the bag's end panels. I say 'approximately' as I wanted to make sure the finished design had a rustic look. I therefore used a shim of veneer to adjust the hole position on every other slat I drilled. This gives the appearance of slightly different lengths of wood having been used.

I then removed the arrises from all the slats, including the ends, by applying a small chamfer. I did this by eye, as my intention was to keep the design rustic. This also gave me the opportunity to use my small Veritas low-angle block plane, photo 5, which is ideal for this type of work and a pleasure to use.

Finally, I prepared the two end panels. These are 190mm long, 90mm wide and 10mm thick. I marked out a radius of 45mm on each end, photo 6, cut the curves on my bandsaw, photo 7, and then trimmed them down to their final shape with a spokeshave, photo 8.

### Assembly time

With all the parts prepared, it was now time to join the slats together, photo 9. For this I used some black plastic-coated nylon cord, available from haberdashery shops; 2m will cover the whole job. Thread the cord through the holes in the slats and pull it tight before tying the knots. The cord stretches, and pulling on it will prevent it from losing tension. Now the slats are together you can see why I called it the caterpillar bag!

Make a mark on the edge of each end panel, 30mm from the start of the curve, photo 10. This will be the position for the first slat. Cramp it in place with a 15mm overhang, photo 11, and mark this with a pencil on the undersides of all the slats. Fold the slats around both end panels, cramp them in place using the pencil line as a guide, and remove any excess adhesive.

### Ethnic fixings

I decided to add strength to the design by using timber 'nails' as fixings. I cut some thin strips of oak on the bandsaw and then shaped them to a tapered profile with a chisel. Drill a 3mm diameter hole in every third slat and on into the end panel, avoiding the cord. Then squeeze a drop of adhesive into the hole and tap each 'nail' in gently with a hammer, photo 12. Trim them all off flush when the adhesive has dried.

### Finishing touches

Drill a 15mm diameter hole in each end panel for the strap to run through. Cut this to length and knot the ends on the inside. Make a simple catch from an off-cut and attach it to the wavy-edged slat with cord. Add a cord loop to the bag to hook over the catch and keep it closed.

Treat the bag with a suitable oil finish and wax it lightly. I prefer oil finishes, as the oil allows the grain to show through and enhances the colour of the timber. And that's the caterpillar bag finished!



Cut the curves on the bandsaw, working just outside the marked line



Finish the curves with a sharp spokeshave and sand them smooth



Thread the cord through the holes in the slats and knot it tightly



Make a mark on each end panel to show where to fix the first slat



Cramp the slats to an end panel and mark the 15mm overhang on them



Glue and cramp the slats to the end panels and tap in the glued timber nails



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BY ANDY KING



# A perfect match

**If there's one job many chippies fear, it has to be fitting kitchen worktops. I have many a call from guys who are happy enough to fit the base units, but balk at tackling the worktops and ask me to do them!**

I've heard excuses ranging from 'I don't have a router' to 'It's a one-off and I don't have a jig' or 'I haven't done one for ages, so you'll be quicker than me'. Yet at the end of the day, these joints aren't really as hard as people make out. It's all down to preparation work first and foremost.

## Straight and level

Like any project, the initial groundwork is the bottom line for success. After ensuring that the base cabinets are set in level and fixed firmly, the kitchen walls need checking for true, both in straightness along the backs of the cabinets as well as in being square to any tall cabinet that stands above the top and butts against it, such as a larder or oven housing.

Check with a long straight edge, or if there is an open run of cabinets, place the worktop itself directly onto them and see how it fits to the back wall.

## Cutting back

If the wall is dramatically out of true there are two options; scribing the worktop to fit, or chopping the plaster back on the high spots so you can slip the worktop in tighter. You need to be aware with either option that if you get too carried away, the top can creep back too far to allow the overhang to cover the tops of the doors.

If you are fitting the kitchen from scratch you can scribe the backs of the units to keep things right, but a poorly fitted previous run may need either taking out and scribing or compromising by scribing or chopping the plaster just enough to give you a better fit with any gaps covered by a tile line or splashback.

## Coping with insets

You also have to account for any appliances that fit into the worktop, such as hobs and sinks. If you have one that will sit close to a



1 Carry out preliminary checks to see if the cabinets are square to the wall



2 Check your measurements and mark up the worktop to match



3 Make sure you have good support when working on any worktop



4 A plunge saw and guide rail is a godsend for cutting kitchen worktops



5 Set up the jig to suit the worktop width, using the manufacturer's instructions



6 The pins should sit tight to the worktop edges for the joint to be cut correctly

corner transition, you need to orientate the joint to ensure you have plenty of meat left in; you don't want to leave a thin sliver of worktop next to the inset. Instead you should plan for the top to run on to where an appliance will sit and butt the return up to it.

### Preparing to cut

Once you're happy with the situation and the way you're going to orientate your joints, you can begin to cut the first section of worktop. You need a good set of tools to do this for the best job possible, and while handtools can be used for initial cutting to

length and final trimming, a router is essential for the jointing up, and in truth, it's pretty much a power tool job throughout.

### Battering down

In the past I've relied on a circular saw and a guide batten for trimming worktops to length. You have to start the cut on the underside of the worktop to allow the saw to make a clean cut through the laminate... or the timber if it's a solid top.

Fit the saw with a fine enough blade and you can usually get a finish straight from the saw that needs little or no additional work,

but the alternative is to cut a little over-long and to trim back to the line with a router.

Now, however, the plunge saw is about the most important tool in my kit. It excels at cutting worktops. All you need to do is make the mark, set the rail in place and make the cut, although I still work from the underside to get the cleanest possible finish to the top face.

### Starting on the joint

With the first section of worktop cut and dropped into position to ensure it fits correctly, it's time for the first connecting joint to be cut.



7 Make a number of passes to cut the joint using a 3/4in capacity router



8 Set the workshop in position, mark the mating top and set the jig to this line



9 Depending on the joint orientation mark the top or the bottom surface



10 Set up the jig to cut pockets for the 'dog-bone' bolts that connect the tops



11 Rout the pockets to allow the bolts to sit just below the surface



12 You may have to reposition the pockets to allow access for tightening the bolts

There are many router jigs on the market. Some are more complex than others, to cater for a variety of worktop widths and for making radius cuts for breakfast bars and so forth. For most kitchens a standard jig will do the job.

#### Setting up the jig

I always make a female cut first, and this is simple enough to do as the jigs use a pin system to get the correct orientation on the worktop. It's normally set up with four or five pins, with markings on the jig for the backset pin positions relative to the width

of the worktop you're joining, while the others set the jig in the correct distance from the edge.

Be aware that you will make one cut with the top face up while the corresponding cut is made with the worktop face down. This is to prevent breakout on the leading edge, and it's simple enough to work out which way up the worktop should go once you understand the router and how it cuts.

#### Going clockwise

A router cuts with a clockwise rotation when viewed from above, so the cutting

sequence on a worktop that has a female joint at its right-hand side is that it should be cut face up, while the male part will be cut face down. Conversely a top with a left-hand female joint will be cut face down, and the male part face up.

Once the correct orientation has been established and the pins are in the jig correctly, you need to make sure that the jig is firmly cramped to the top. A couple of speed cramps are usually enough, but make sure you place them where they won't get fouled by the router as it makes the cut.



13

Mark up apertures for sinks and hobs and cut them out before final fitting



14

If the position of the joint allows it, fit a few biscuits into the mating edges



15

These will help to align the top surfaces once the joint is assembled



16

Standard bolts need a spanner, but these from Trend need only a drill driver

### Setting up the router

The router needs a 30mm guide bush and a 1/4in diameter cutter to make the joint, and the cutter must be long enough to project through the guide bush and extend to the full thickness of the top.

There are specific cutters designed for this purpose, and it's worth going for a decent cutter rather than a budget one to ensure a good tight fit once assembled.

As with any deep cut, a number of passes are required for a premium finish. I usually make the full cut in about five passes, and with very slight play in the ratio between guide bush and jig, I usually keep the router pulled against the outer edge of the jig wall until the joint is fully cut. Then I make a final full-depth skimming cut, pushing the router towards the inner edge of the jig to give a crisp finish.

### Fixing bolt holes

Although all worktop jigs come with a further set of pin positions to set the 'dog-bone' bolt positions, it's often the case that at least one of these bolts will be inaccessible because of the unit orientation. I find it easier to drop the top back into position on the units, make marks to determine the best position for the bolts

and then set the jig accordingly. You still need to use the backset pin positions if you opt for this method, to ensure the cut-outs are at the correct length.

I usually cut the mating top over-long. Depending on whether it needs to be cut from the top face or from the underside, I place it in position on the units tight to the wall. I then position the previously cut female-jointed top above or below the one to be cut, according to the cut to be made. By using the top as a template and drawing along the female profile, the jig can then be set to make the cut to this line for a perfect fit.

### Biscuit bonus

While the tops should sit down well onto the carcasses if they are set up level and the joints are pulled up tight with the bolts, a few biscuits in the joint will help to ensure that the top surfaces align flush. However, you may not be able to fit them in situations where the joints are constrained between walls or between ladder-type cupboards, as these will prevent the tops from dropping in with a biscuit joint.

### Fitting appliances

I usually tackle any appliance work prior to the final fitting. There are various ways to

sort these, but I prefer to mark up from the top. I work out the positions by checking the carcasses below to ensure that sink bowls or hobs won't be obstructed from below. I then transfer the marks to the top, making the cut marks on masking tape.

If you can lift the worktop off and onto some trestles, the cut-outs can be made easily and the top can then be dropped back on to mark any further work where the carcass rails may need cutting away.

### Final assembly

Whether it's biscuit or not, the joint should be sealed to keep it free from any water penetration that could swell and distort the worktop core. There are coloured fillers available to seal the joint as well as to take up any minor imperfections in the joint, but I prefer a silicone sealant whenever possible.

The bolts should be ripped up lightly to get the joint in position while still allowing a small amount of adjustment to set it smack on. If you can't get biscuits into the joint, you may need to tap the surfaces to get them perfectly flush before tightening the bolts fully.

Once the joints are flush and tight, it's just a matter of securing them to the cabinets with brackets and fitting any inset appliances such as sinks and hobs in place.

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BY PETER DUNSMORE

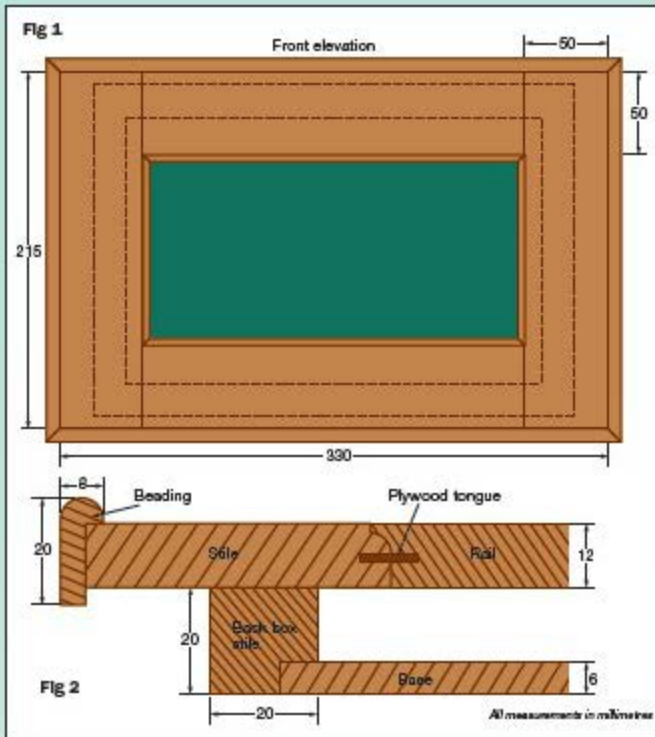
# For valour

**Many people have war medals passed down to them. A friend of mine recently asked me to design and make a small case to display a clasp of Second World War medals that had been awarded to his father. Here it is...**

**V**ery little timber is used for this project, so it's a good way to use up shorter lengths from the offcuts box. I happened to have some pieces of American walnut, and I used this to make the frame as well as the back box. The dark walnut contrasted well with the green baize, and this complemented the ribbons on the medals.

#### Different corners

I wanted to get away from the traditional mitred picture frame design with this case. As can be seen in fig 1 and photo 1, the corner joints are very similar to the profile-



## MEDAL CASE CUTTING LIST

All dimensions are in millimetres

Part	Qty	L	W	T
Top/bottom rail	2	230	50	12
Stile	2	215	50	12
Back box rail	2	290	20	20
Back box stile	2	200	20	20
Back box base (mdf)	1	260	175	6
Beading	from	1200	20	8



The complementary ovolo and cove cutters combine to create a very neat corner joint



2

Cut the four frame members to length and square the ends precisely

and-scribe type joint found on kitchen cabinet doors. These make the rounded-over bead look like a mitre joint at the corners, while the remainder of the joint appears to be simply butted together.

This joint is made using two complimentary bearing-guided cove and ovolo cutters, each with a radius of 4.8mm – Trend 46/263 and 46/12 respectively, shown in photo 1 – rather than a purpose-made profile-and-scribe cutter.

### The router table route

Accuracy is required to achieve a good joint, and this is more easily achieved using a router table with some means of fine height adjustment. Begin by cutting the timbers to the lengths shown on the cutting list, photo 2, and square the ends on an accurately set disc sander. You can of course change the dimensions to suit your own display.

Now fit the ovolo cutter in your router and form the rounded-over moulding along what will be the inside edges of the four frame sides, photo 3. Then fit the cove cutter in its place, set the depth of cut so the cove is about 2mm from the top of the timber, and cut along the ends of both the upper and lower rails, photo 4. A piece of scrap mdf cut square and held against the fence helps to support the narrow timber as it's pushed along. The bearing guides the cutter against the end of the timber, and the mdf prevents any breakout as the cut is completed.

### A stronger joint

The joint needs to be reinforced with a tongue to provide some additional strength, and you can form the necessary groove using a bearing-guided slot cutter. Set the depth of cut accurately so its top coincides with the lowest edge of the curve cut with the rounding over bit, photo 5, and cut a slot along all four inside edges. The depth of cut isn't critical, as this is adjusted with the various guide bearings available for the slotter. I went for 8mm.

### Fitting the tongues

Cut a piece of plywood into a strip to act as a tongue in the joint, photo 6. Sand it down in thickness if necessary. This completes the cutting of the four corner joints. Use PVA adhesive to glue the four timbers together to make the frame, and clamp it up square.

Fit scrap mdf softeners to prevent the cramps digging into the face of the frame, and add sash cramps to pull the timbers together and close the joint, photo 7. Use a minimum of adhesive on the curves to reduce any squeeze-out to a minimum.

Allow it to dry before releasing the cramps and smoothing the joints if required.

### Making a moulding

The frame looks a little empty as it is, and the addition of a small bead around the outside to complement the bead around the inner frame will add to the overall look of the piece. The easiest way of achieving this is to fit a hockey-stick moulding, as this will also hide the end grain on the frame corners.

The method I use to make such a moulding is to plane some walnut strips to 20 x 8mm and use an 8mm radius bead cutter to round over one edge. Then I stick the strips to both edges of a suitable length of scrap timber with double-sided tape and use a straight fluted cutter to form a 15mm deep rebate in the walnut, photo 8.

### Fitting the moulding

Carefully remove the moulding from the support timber, mitre it to length and glue it in place round the perimeter of the frame, photo 9. I use my disc sander with its table accurately set to 45° to make light work of mitring the ends. Go easy with the adhesive; any overspill will interfere with the subsequent finishing unless it's wiped away immediately.

### Fitting the glass

The glass needs to be fitted into a rebate in the back of the frame, and this still has to be cut. The previously cut slots are at the correct depth, but the excess still needs to be removed to allow the glass to sit within the frame. A bearing-guided rebate cutter makes light work of this job, using the edge of the bead to guide the bearing on the cutter. A chisel is then used to square the internal corners.

### Two rebate options

There are a couple of ways of using the cutter. The first method involves securing the frame to the work surface with double-sided tape and then running the router round the inside of the frame in a clockwise direction. You may need to raise the height of the frame slightly using scrap strips of mdf to prevent the bearing securing bolt from rubbing on the work surface. As the frame is comparatively narrow, it may be easier to use double-sided tape to attach a suitable support foot to the router base to prevent the router tipping over.

The second method is to fit the rebate cutter to the router table and set the depth of cut appropriately. Obviously great care should be taken with this method, as you have to remove the finger guards. Keep your fingers



3 Use the oval cutter to form a roundover on the four pieces of timber



4 Fit the cove cutter and machine both ends of the upper and lower rails



5 Set the depth of cut so the slotter cuts at the lower edge of the curve

6 Prepare some thin plywood tongues and slot them in to reinforce the corner joints



7 Note the use of cramps to ensure tight, flat joints, and the mdf softeners to protect the surfaces



8 Make a hockey-stick moulding with the aid of a scrap timber support



9 Mitre the ends of the moulding and fix it round the frame with adhesive



10 Keep your fingers well out of the way when cutting the rebate for the glass



11 Use masking tape to hold the mitred corners together ready for gluing



12 A small finger hole makes it easy to remove the back so you can position the medals



13 Small brass eyes are used to secure the medal clasp to the backing



14 Screw the back panel in place and add a small brass mirror plate



well away from the cutters on the outside of the frame, and move it in a clockwise direction against the cutter, photo 10.

### Making the back box

The back box that holds the medals is straightforward to make. It is simply a length of timber along one edge of which a rebate has been cut using a bearing-guided rebate cutter. The timber is cut into four lengths; then the corners are accurately mitred and glued together to make up the frame.

To hold the joints tight, but the four lengths together end to end against a straightedge and stretch some masking tape over each joint, photo 11. Then put some adhesive on the mitres and fold the frame together before applying a little more masking tape to the fourth corner. Check that the frame is square and put it aside to dry. When it is, glue it in place to the rear of the frame so it's ready to receive the back panel, fig 2.

### The back panel

In the meantime, mark up a piece of 6mm thick mdf to fit the rebate, drill a hole centred on one short edge, cut it to size and test its fit in the rebate, photo 12. The hole will allow you to insert a finger and remove the back panel in the future date if you need to change the contents.

Cover the mdf with some green baize. I used spray-on photographic mounting adhesive, as this won't bleed through the fabric. If you don't have any, PVA adhesive works so long as you spread it thinly and evenly using a roller and then allow it to dry a little before pressing the fabric into place.

The medals will probably be mounted on a brooch-style clasp, and a simple way of mounting this is to use two small brass screw eyes. Position them so the medals are centred in the display area, slide the pin through the eyes and close it, photo 13.

### Finishing touches

Before fitting the glass, apply a suitable finish to the timber. I like Danish oil as a finish as it provides a rich lustre after three or four applications. I follow this with wax, buffed to a soft sheen.

Order some 2mm thick glass cut a little undersize for its rebate, and stick it in place with some clear silicone sealant. This not only cushions and secures the glass; it also fills the small gap between the edge of the glass and the timber.

Finish the case by screwing the back panel in place, and fit a small brass mirror plate to the rear so you can hang the frame on the wall, photo 14.

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BY MICHAEL FORSTER



## RAISING MY GAME 2: Making a mark

**However meticulously you prepare your timber, you'll never get good results with your woodwork unless you bring the same level of care and attention to marking it all out...**

**W**elcome to Stage Two in my personal quest for improved woodworking. Had I but known it, for all the years that I'd felt apologetic about my work I was just a few relatively small steps away from producing much more satisfying results. The difference it made to my enjoyment of the craft was amazing – and I thought I'd share it with anyone else out there who might find it of interest.

### Another step

Last month I looked at the benefits of quick, accurate timber preparation. If it's accurate then the stage is set for a good outcome, while quick means that I can spend the greater part of my time actually making things instead of just getting ready. And being able to do the preparation at home, instead of

getting it done by the timber supplier, was a huge step on my journey out of woodworking mediocrity as I gained control of that vital foundational stage of the process.

### A new challenge

So with some straight, flat timber with square edges all prepared, I faced the next vital task: marking it all up. My old joinery instructor had a wise saying (he seemed to have one for every minute of the six-month course, but this was one of the less-forgettable examples). 'You'll never get it absolutely perfect,' he would intone, 'but the more you try, the nearer you'll get.'

Those were wise words indeed. Everyone works to tolerances – even engineers, but theirs are generally finer than ours – and so there'll always be errors in marking up.



When I did my training, this was the standard kit for marking out.



An engineer's square and a marking knife quickly raise the level of precision.



With the rule on edge, place the knife-point where you want to cut.



Position the square's stock securely against the edge of the work...



...and slide it along the edge until its blade touches the knife

Shooting back to a knifed line is a great way of cutting timber to a precise length



However, while we can't completely eliminate them we can make them so small that they won't seriously affect the outcome.

### Little and large

One thing to bear in mind is the way apparently insignificant errors can build up. For example, if a try square is a fraction out, then by the time all the joints of a frame-and-panel door – and the cabinet fronts – have been marked and cut there will undoubtedly be serious issues with the fit. Half a degree might seem a tiny error, but in a mitre joint that will add up to a gaping 1° splay in the joint. So it's about keeping the errors as tiny as possible within the limits of the material.

### Blaming your tools

The first step toward accurate marking out is to consider the kit you're using. When I started woodworking, a folding bowwood rule in the breast pocket and a pencil behind the ear were the marks of the sanctorially cool chippie – and I still own both those tools now. The rule may be metric and the pencil a plastic propelling one, but the thought's there! For

a lot of work they're still very appropriate – particularly the pencil – but now my kit also includes steel rules, marking knives and a number of engineers' squares of varying sizes (with an old-school rosewood-handled try square on the wall as a nod toward tradition).

### A cutting edge

Changing from pencils to knives – where the task is appropriate for them of course – is the second way of upping your game.



The feather edge says I'm getting close to the line. Another shaving or two...

It's easy to recognize that the thickness of a pencil line can lead to inaccuracies, but there's a bit more to it than that.

Imagine, for example, setting out the sides for a box, the squareness of which depends on precise, identical spacing of the corner joints. Mark the first one with a crisp cut-line, set the rule on edge and place the point of the knife against the appropriate calibration for the other end. Now, just press the point into the timber



...and I can use the end as a datum surface to gauge a shoulder-line



The cut-line gives me a positive location for the tip of the chisel when chopping shoulders



slightly to hold it in position while you change the rule for an engineer's square. Place it on the timber and slide it along until it touches the knife blade. The line you then square across will be about as precise as it's possible to be.

#### Plane sailing

It seems unbelievable to me now that I actually tried to cut dovetails using a pencil mark for a shoulder-line – a pencil mark a good half-millimetre wide and completely lacking any tactile reference. Now when I make a dovetailed boxcarcase, I begin by ensuring that the opposing pieces are of identical length and perfectly square.

Having cut the lines to define the ends, I sawshy of them and then use a sharp plane with the workpiece on the shooting board (more on which next month) to plane them until a feather edge appears on the

end, indicating that I'm planing away the waste side of the line and I'm within a knife-cut's thickness of where I want to be.

I then continue to plane, shaving by fine shaving, until the feathering disintegrates and disappears. Once I've done this on both ends of each opposing piece, I know that those pieces are as close to perfectly matched as I can get, so I have reliable datum surfaces from which I can cut in the shoulder lines with my cutting gauge – which in turn will give me somewhere to lodge the chisel by feel when I chop the sockets, leaving me with the tight shoulders that I only ever dreamt about in years gone by.

#### Under the knife

I'll say a little more about gauges later, and shooting boards will feature next month. Now let's look at the choice of marking knives. Ideally, the blade should be bevelled



Marking knives come in various forms. The double-bevel Blue Spruce (right) is my favourite



Chamfers must be marked with a pencil; you don't want any cut lines here

For scribing these very fine dovetail pins, only a surgical scalpel will do

on one side and flat on the other, which is just one reason why craft knives tend to be less favoured for this task. The flat side is always against the square or rule, defining the edge, while the bevel is compressing the waste side away from the clean edge you want to create.

For general marking out, Axminster provide some very solid and razor-sharp Japanese marking knives which come with a variety of bevels to left and right, and one with a double bevel that can be used either-handed. My favourite knife is a double-bevelled Blue Spruce, with a thin blade that really comes into its own when scribing dovetail pins from the tails. The flat side bears against the sawn tail, eliminating the danger of slicing into it and cutting wide. However, for ultra-fine pins – especially on houndstooth dovetails, for example – I have to use a surgeon's scalpel as nothing else will get into the single-saw-kerf gap at the tips.

#### The pencil test

Now, let's not get carried away here: of course, there are times when a pencil is



The lead in a propelling pencil guarantees a line of constant thickness



Wherever possible I like to secure work to be gauged in the vice

Having a couple of spare gauges means I can leave them set for the entire job, just in case



absolutely the right tool for the job. Marking chamfers is the obvious example, as we don't want a cut line along the edge of one of those. However, there are pencils and pencils. When I did my training it was made very clear: propelling pencils were banned from everyone's benches because (it was reasoned) the points weren't sharp enough to get a really fine line. A sharp wooden pencil was the thing, and woe betide the trainee who didn't have one always to hand (or more usually, behind the ear).

Somehow it never quite rang true for me, but I didn't then have the confidence to query it. If that sharp point didn't snap off halfway along the line, then I reckoned it would certainly wear and (the pencil tip being conical) the line would be thicker at the end than the start. So which bit of the line should I follow?

### Jet propelled

It was to be many years before my rebellious heart was warmed by reading that a certain highly respected maker always used – yes, a propelling pencil. His reasoning was that the perfectly cylindrical tip doesn't get wider as it wears, always producing a line of constant thickness. I needed no further

encouragement to go to my office stationery supplier and buy a box of the things. Now, when a pencil is the appropriate tool to use, I always know that the line will be a constant 0.5mm thick, and whether I leave all or half the line in – or keep planing until it disappears in the final shaving – I know exactly where I am in relation to it.

### Gauge it well

And this wasn't the only nagging doubt I wish I'd expressed earlier. In those days we all used traditional pin-type marking gauges. So, having got a good face side and face edge, we were taught to gauge a line for the thickness and plane down to it. No one else seemed to have a problem with that, except me!

My issue was that the inexpensive gauges we were using had quite substantial pins that made a distinctly V-shaped line. So, if the point of the gauge were set to the thickness, then I would either have to leave a feather edge on the work or plane further

to remove it so that the timber would be under-sized by half the thickness of the gauge pin. Now, that might seem flimsy, but it's probably a good half-millimetre on every component and that error could well mount up.

### Steel wheels

I now use the all-metal wheel-type gauges. I've got a Thimark, a Veritas and a couple of recently-purchased Quangshengs – which for some might raise the question: 'Why so many?' The answer to that is another of those little things that can raise the level of a maker's work.

I like to leave gauges set for the entire job, even long after I think I've finished with them. There's always the possibility that I might need to mark up another piece – most probably because I've goofed and ruined the original – or perhaps just want to re-emphasise a line that wasn't cut quite deeply enough the first time.

Trying to re-establish the original gauge setting would inevitably mean a potential inaccuracy, and the only really safe way to do it is to use the identical, undisturbed, gauge. The same principle, incidentally, can obviously be applied to other tools that are set, such as sliding bevels – so this is just one more of those little changes that might make a big difference.

### Running true

When it comes to technique, there's a little more to using a gauge than meets the eye. Keeping the fence firmly against the edge while exerting enough forward and downward pressure to get a good cut can be tricky – especially if the workpiece is being hand-held at the time. Whenever I possibly can, I get the work into the vice for gauging. This at least means it's not going to slip, and it also leaves my other hand free so that if necessary I can steady the gauge near the cutter or apply the different directional pressures with opposite hands.

### Simple things matter

As always, there's a lot more that can be said than I have space for here, but it's a matter of applying these simple principles to other woodworking processes as appropriate. The essential point is that it's about really quick wins. These very simple changes will almost instantly raise your woodworking to a new level – and with it the pleasure and pride that you get from it.

In the coming issues I'll be looking at other ways of raising your game by careful choice or tuning of kit, and at some simple practice techniques for honing the basic skills.

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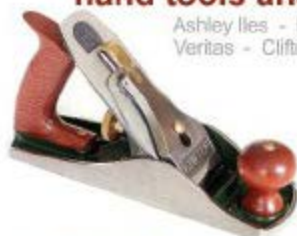
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BY BRYN EDWARDS

# Handle with care

**If you have a keen gardener in the family, why not give them a hand-made set of gardening tools? This trowel, fork and dibber are easy to turn, and the set will make an ideal present**

**M**ost gardeners prefer tools with wooden handles. Plastic is practical and metal will last for ever, but wood just feels right. I've chosen ash for my set, but many other hardwoods will do just as well.

I get my turning supplies from Ockenden Timber Company, a specialist supplier near Welshpool in Powys. They stock a vast range of timber, and their friendly advice goes a long way. You can order from them by post; contact details are in the panel

overleaf. The trowel and fork blades are available from Turners Retreat; again see overleaf for details. Lastly, you'll need an offcut of 22mm diameter stainless steel or copper pipe to make the ferrules; this is best scrounged from a friendly plumber!

As an afterthought, you can also use this technique to refurbish any old favourites with handles that have rotted or split... or been accidentally buried in a bonfire! Just saw or chisel away the old handle, clean up the tang and fit the new handle in its place.



**1** Turn each blank to a cylinder and form a spigot at the headstock end

## MAKING A TROWEL OR FORK HANDLE



**2** Grip the spigot in your chuck and turn the free end square of the blank with a skew chisel



**3** Form a smaller spigot for the ferrule at the tailstock end and check its diameter



**4** Fit the ferrule on its spigot and drill a hole in the centre of the handle



**5** Start shaping the bottom end of the handle, then mark its final length



**6** Cut in at this mark with a parting tool, then continue shaping the handle



**7** Drill a hole through the fattest part of the handle for the hanging cord



**8** Sand the handle smooth down to 400 grit, then part it off carefully



**9** Cramp the tool blade in a vice and drive the handle onto its tang. Use a wood block to protect the handle as you do this



The raw materials include three ash blanks and some stainless steel pipe

## MAKING A DIBBER



1 Rough the blank down to a cylinder and smooth it with a skew chisel



2 Mark two lines on the blank, at 6mm and 156mm from the tallstock



3 Use the skew chisel again to form a carrot shape between the two marks



4 Sand the tapered section smooth, working down from 180 to 400 grit



5 Set your dividers at 25mm and mark off the depth lines on the taper



6 Make a shallow groove in the taper at each mark with the skew chisel



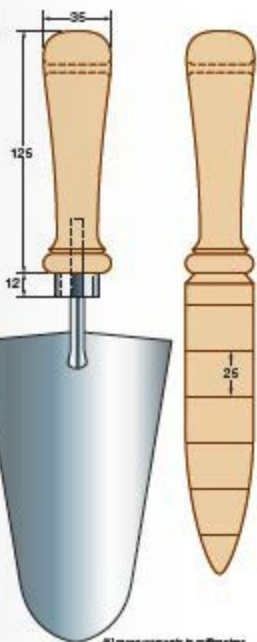
7 With the lathe running, hold wire into each groove in turn so it burns a line



8 Shape the handle to match the other tools in the set and drill a hole for the cord



9 Apply two coats of cellulose sanding sealer, then part off at both ends



### FURTHER INFORMATION

#### Turning suppliers

- Ockenden Timber
- 01588 620884
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- Turners Retreat
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- [www.turners-retreat.co.uk](http://www.turners-retreat.co.uk)

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BY IAN WILKIE

# Love me tender!

**There are many proprietary accessories available for woodturning projects, from pen kits through to pepper mill grinders and sand timers. I've selected a pair of meat mallet ends for this unusual project**

I made one of these mallets in cherry many years ago. We use it for flattening steak, pork filets and chicken breasts, and it's also good for crushing biscuit crumbs. I was pleased to find I could still source the fittings from Tumors Retreat (see page 60 for contact details). When it's finished the new mallet will find a home in my daughter's kitchen, as she's forever begging us to part with ours!

#### What you'll need

Start by assembling your components, photo 1. The aluminium meat mallet ends are made in Italy and cost £2.95 plus postage for the pair. One surface is spiked

and the other plain. The spigots on the back are 16mm in diameter and 20mm long, and are glued into the mallet head, fig 1.

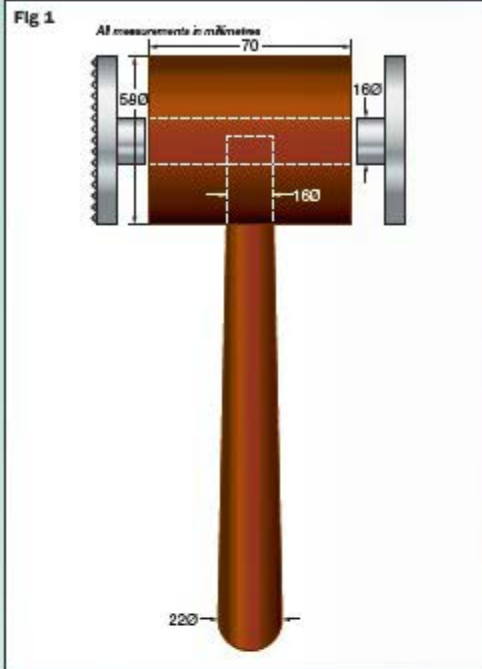
The turning blanks measure 75 x 75 x 70mm for the head and 25 x 25 x 205mm for the handle. I chose a piece of padauk I had in stock, but any hardwood would be suitable.

#### Beware allergies

Padauk is a dramatic red in colour and turns well. However, the shavings tend to cling to everything, and some people find they can irritate the skin. As a precaution I apply a barrier cream to my hands and face before turning it, and shower and wash my hair at the end of the day after clearing up



1 You'll need two hardwood blanks and a pair of metal meat mallet ends



2 Mark the centre on one face and bore a 16mm hole through the blank



3 Turn the blank on its side and drill another hole to take the handle



4 Fit each mallet end into its drilled hole and draw a circle round it

any shavings and dust. If you do find you get a reaction with any wood, it's better to avoid it and choose something else.

#### Drilling holes

Carefully mark the centres on both faces and on one side of the head blank. Hold it in a machine vice and drill a hole 16mm in diameter right through the blank using a sharp saw-tooth Forstner bit, photo 2. It's



5 It's a good idea to plane off the corners of the blank before you turn it to a cylinder

advisable to bolt the machine vice to the drill table using the T-bolts provided.

You may have to drill half way and then turn the blank over for the rest of the drilling, depending on the travel of your bench drill and the length of the Forstner bit shank.

You can see how red the shavings are! Leave them to cool down before sucking them up with your shop vac.

Now turn the blank on its side and drill a

16mm hole halfway through the blank to take the handle spigot, photo 3. It's easier to drill this hole while the blank is still square.

#### Preparing to turn

Check the diameter of the mallet ends, which should be in the region of 58mm.

Then draw round the disc on each end of the blank, photo 4, so you have a guide when turning. Before you start this, you may

wish to remove the corners of the blank using a block plane, photo 5. This makes the wood less intimidating as it spins, and reduces the risk of tear-out.

#### A cuning drive

The mallet head is best turned using a device called a stepped friction drive. The blank slips onto the drive and the drilled hole locates on the 16mm step, photo 6. This type of drive is very useful for turning all manner of items which have a drilled hole. Mine is made by Axminster and costs £10.94; they call it the Imperial Light Pull Drive, and it's available in 1MT and 2MT versions to suit your lathe.

It's very safe to use; if a dig-in occurs the wood will simply stop rotating, and there are no sharp metal edges so you can work right up to the drive without risk. The other big advantage is that the work can be removed and reversed at any stage with the confidence that it will still run true, and that's what I've done in this project.

#### Turning the head

Fit the drive in the headstock and a revolving centre in the tailstock. Bring this up so the point fits into the drilled hole at the other end of the blank. Then tighten up the tailstock to hold the wood securely, photo 7, and turn the blank to the marked diameter. Check that both ends match up with the mallet ends, photo 8.

When you're happy with the fit, sand the work thoroughly before applying a coat of cellulose sanding sealer, photo 9. Although the mallet won't be immersed in water, the ends will be wiped after use with a damp cloth so the wood does need some protection.

#### On a personal note...

I must confess to a love-hate relationship with this product! I dislike the fumes it gives off, and always make doubly sure that the workshop window is open when I use it and that I have my face mask on. I also hate the metal screw cap on the can, which can rust and be difficult to undo. However, it does a



The drilled blank locates on the 16mm step of the stepped friction drive



Fit a revolving centre in the tailstock and bring it up to hold the blank securely



Turn the blank down to the drawn circles and test the fit of the mallet ends



Sand the head smooth and apply a coat of cellulose sanding sealer



Mount the handle blank in a chuck and support it with a revolving centre



Turn the handle to a gentle taper and test the fit of the mallet head

## TOOLS FOR THE TASK

*I used just three turning tools for this project: a 19mm roughing spindle gouge, a 9mm spindle gouge and a 4mm parting tool. I find that I tend to use far fewer turning tools nowadays, despite the many I have to choose from. For spindle work I find I can get a really good finish with the spindle roughing gouge, and any intricate shaping can be done with a spindle gouge. The standard parting tool comes into its own when forming spigots. Those wishing to turn bowls will need to add a bowl gouge to this small collection.*





12 Seal and polish the handle. Protect the spigot with some pvc tape



13 Glue on the mallet ends with a slow-setting epoxy resin adhesive



14 Fit the handle and clamp the head in a vice while the adhesive sets



15

It's tenderising time... but do protect the meat with some cling film!

## KEEPING A SHARP EDGE

It's essential that turning tools are kept really sharp; a blunt tool will not produce good-quality work, however skilled you may be. I keep my blades sharp using the Sorby Pro-Edge system. This machine has proved to be an excellent buy and is now the only sharpening system I use. Its strength is that it's simple and easy both to set up and to use. The belts last far longer than I first anticipated, and it's a simple matter to change one when worn.

The basic model now retails at £277.65 at Turners Retreat. Sorby have a very good on-line video on their website ([www.robert-sorby.co.uk](http://www.robert-sorby.co.uk)) which clearly explains the system and gives useful hints and tips.



very good job sealing the wood, dries very quickly and gives an excellent base for a final finish with friction polish or wax.

Every now and again I say I won't use it any more, but I haven't found anything that does the job better so I always end up buying another can!

## Tacking the handle

Mount the blank for the handle in a suitable chuck and support it with a revolving centre, photo 10. Turn it to a gently tapered shape with a 16mm diameter, and form a 35mm long spigot at one end. Check that the handle is a tight fit into the hole in the mallet head, photo 11.

Apply two coats of cellulose sanding sealer, followed by friction polish – photo 12 – and ending with carnauba wax. Avoid the spigot area, which I've covered by green tape.

## Assembling the mallet

Glue the handle into the head. Then use a strong adhesive such as Araldite to glue each mallet end spigot in place in its socket, photo 13. Clamp the assembly gently until the adhesive had hardened, photo 14.

The 100mm jaw Wolfcraft vice shown in the photo has been in use in my workshop for years, and I was pleased to see that it's still available at the very reasonable price of £30.83. It's a quick-release model, light in weight but strong, has a good wide throat and I use it mainly for cramping and for holding wood when drilling.

And that's all there is to it. Reward yourself with a juicy steak, but do cover the meat with cling film before bashing it, photo 15!

## FURTHER INFORMATION

### Meat mallet ends

- Turners Retreat
- 01302 744344
- [www.turners-retreat.co.uk](http://www.turners-retreat.co.uk)

### Stepped friction drive

- Aminster Tool Centre
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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.

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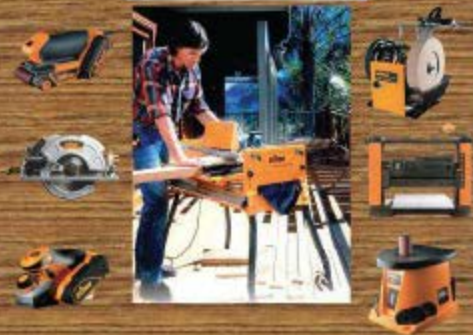
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BY COLIN SIMPSON

# Drinking companion

**Three-legged tables like this one first became popular in Georgian times. Then the Victorians took them to their hearts, and made them ever more elaborate in their design. Mine's a whole lot simpler!**

**M**y neighbours have a wine table that I've long admired. It's quite old, and has an inlaid marquetry top and ornate carved feet. I decided to make myself a similar one, so I took some measurements from it and made a template of one of the legs. Mine would be made from reclaimed pine, and I decided that I wouldn't do the marquetry or have such ornate feet. There are several ways of making it, and I'll point out alternative methods where they're appropriate, but here's how I made mine.

## Preparing your stock

I made the table top from the base slats of an old futon. Cut them a little over-size and prepare the edges on a jointer or planer. When planing edges that are to be glued together, it's a good idea to place the first piece with its top surface against the planer's fence and the next piece with its bottom surface against the fence. Keep alternating the pieces in this way, and you'll

counteract any discrepancies if the fence isn't at exactly 90° to the planer table.

## Assembling the top

When you've planed each edge, lay the pieces out on the bench. Check that the growth rings on each plank alternate – the first plank with the growth rings pointing up, the second plank pointing down, the third up and so on. This helps to prevent the table top from cupping.

I wanted to reinforce the butt joints with biscuits, so I numbered each plank and marked the positions for the biscuits, photo 1. Don't put them too near the ends of the wood, as they may show when the top is cut to a circle.

Cut the slots for the biscuits using a biscuit jointer, photo 2. Note that I'm using the jointer's fence as a register on top of the wood being biscuited, rather than the base plate of the jointer. I find this method gives a far more accurate set-up. Next, glue and clamp up the top, photo 3, and set it aside.



1 Number each plank in sequence and mark out the biscuit positions



2 Cut the biscuit slots. I use the fence as a register here for accuracy



3 Glue the top together, alternating the growth rings, and clamp it up



4 Turn the column to round, then reduce one end to 65mm in diameter



5 I cut the sliding dovetails in the column using my Trend Router/Lathe



6 Note the flat areas, which will allow the feet to fit snugly up to the column



7 Start turning at the tailstock end of the column and form the first cove



8 Cut the second bead, then shape the rest of the column with a spindle gouge

## Tacking the column

The central column is made from stock 70mm square and 390mm long. Mount it between centres on the lathe and turn it to a cylinder using a spindle roughing gouge. Then measure and mark a line 80mm from the tailstock end, and reduce this section to 65mm in diameter, photo 4.

The rest of the column could be finished at this stage, but I decided to cut the sliding dovetail joints before finishing the turning. I used my Trend Router/Lathe, photo 5, to help cut the dovetails, but if you don't have one they can easily be cut by making a jig for your router to fit your lathe. Alternatively, if you made the router cradle I described in the August 2013 issue of *The Woodworker*, you could use that.

## Cutting dovetails

I used three different router bits for this job. The first was an 18mm straight-cutting bit, used to put three small flats on the column at 120° spacings. These flats will ensure that the feet sit snug up to the column. The second router bit was a 5mm straight cutter which I used to cut a slot just short of 80mm long in the centre of the three flats. The only reason to do this was to reduce the amount of wood that the dovetail bit would have to remove. Finally I used the dovetail bit itself to cut the sliding dovetail in each pre-cut 5mm slots. After these three operations you should end up with something like that shown in photo 6.

## Back to the turning

Now you can turn the rest of the column. Remount the piece accurately on the lathe and mark out where the major shapes are going to be. I like to start at the tailstock end first and work back towards the headstock. Use a small spindle gouge to cut the first cove, photo 7, then cut the second cove just above the large bead. Now blend the bead in between these two coves, adding small fillets between these details, photo 8.

Continue working towards the headstock, using the spindle gouge to shape the work. Finally cut a 50mm tenon at the top of the column with a parting tool. You can see my finished column in photo 9, but you can of course turn yours to whatever profile you like. Lightly sand the work, taking care not to lose any of the crispness of the shapes.

## Matching legs

The legs are made from a 150mm wide reclaimed floor joist. I used my planer/thicknesser to clean it up and reduce it to the right thickness. When using reclaimed wood, make sure that all old nails and screws are removed; even a small piece of

burled metal will be enough to cause severely damage the planer blades.

I made the template for the legs from 9mm plywood, simply by holding it against one of the original table legs and drawing round it. If you use this method, remember to add an allowance to the template for the dovetail joint to attach the leg to the central column.

Place the template on the prepared stock and draw round it, photo 10. Note the arrow on the template showing in which direction the grain should run. I made four legs – one spare, in case of accidents. Next, I cut the angle at the joint end on a chop saw, but I didn't cut out the rest of the leg shape at this stage.

#### More dovetails

The next step is to cut the dovetail on each leg; I did this on my router table, photo 11. Use the same dovetail bit as you did on the column, and push the leg through the router to cut one side of the dovetail. Then turn the piece around and push it past the bit again to cut the other side.

It's a good idea to make a couple of dovetails on scrap stock at the same time. Don't remove too much stock at each pass. I needed to reduce the thickness of my dovetails by about 2mm to make them fit in the slot in the column. I therefore moved the router table's fence back 1mm, ran one of the scrap dovetails through again on both sides and checked the fit once more on the column. It was still a little too tight, so I moved the fence again and ran the scrap piece through once more. This time the fit was perfect, so I ran all the legs through the router. They fitted their slots perfectly!

#### Shapely feet

Next I cut the legs roughly to shape on the bandsaw, photo 12, keeping just outside the marked line. I then stuck the template to each leg in turn with double-sided tape, and used a bearing-guided trimming bit in my router table to clean up each one, photo 13.

Note the pin (I use a bolt) in the foreground of this photo. Place the leg against this pin before moving the piece into the cutter. This gives you much greater control over the initial entry. Once the bearing is against the template, you can move the piece away from the pin and rotate it freehand around the bearing to clean up the leg. Once I'd done this, I used the same method – but with a bearing-guided roundover bit – to soften the edges of the legs.

Lastly, I needed to notch the leg dovetails to fit into the dovetails in the column. I did this on the bandsaw, photo 14. After a little sanding, I glued the legs to the column and set the pedestal aside to dry, photo 15.



Here's my finished column. You can of course vary the turned profile



Use a template to mark out the leg shapes on your reclaimed stock



Form the dovetail on each leg by taking two separate passes on the router table



Cut the legs roughly to shape on the bandsaw, working outside the line



Attach the template to each leg and clean up the edge. Note the pin in the foreground (see text)



Notch the dovetail on each leg to fit into the groove on the column



15  
Glue the legs into their dovetails and set the pedestal aside to dry



**16**  
Draw a 490mm circle on the table top and cut it out on the bandsaw



**17**  
Glue an MDF faceplate to the top surface so you can clean up the underside



**18**  
Reverse the table top on the faceplate and clean up the edge with a bowl gouge



**19**  
Then cut an ogee shape around the top using a spindle gouge



**20**  
Cut the crosspiece to size and make a 50mm diameter hole in the centre



**21**  
Screw the crosspiece to the table top through elongated screw holes



## Turning circle

The glue-up for the top was quite dry by now, so I removed the cramps and used a home-made trammel bar to draw a 490mm diameter circle on it. I use this trammel with one of my routers to cut large circles. I'm going to turn the table top on my lathe, but if your lathe isn't big enough you can make the top with a router and trammel bar instead.

Cut the top out on the bandsaw, photo 16, and then mount it on the lathe. I hot-melt-glued the top to a large MDF faceplate so I could clean up the underside, photo 17. All the surface needed was a good sanding, and I used a sanding arbor in a power drill to do this. Don't clean up the edge at this stage.

Turn the top around and re-glue it to the MDF faceplate. Now clean up the edge to make a perfect circle, using a bowl gouge, photo 18, and then cut an ogee shape around the top using a spindle gouge, photo 19. Sand the top down to 240 grit and remove it from the faceplate.

## Full support

The last piece to make is the crosspiece that holds the top to the pedestal. This is simply a piece of pine measuring 370 x 100 x 18mm with a 50mm diameter hole cut in the centre with a hole saw, photo 20. I also tapered the ends of the piece to make it appear less obtrusive under the table.

I attached it to the table top using six screws. I drilled clearance holes for these and then elongated them to allow the screws to move a little as the table top expands and contracts in different humidities. Screw the crosspiece to the table top, photo 21, ensuring that the screws don't penetrate its surface. Don't use any glue here. The table top and crosspiece will move at different rates; glue will prevent this happening and could even cause the top to split.

Finish the job by fitting the top to the pedestal, applying a little glue on the pedestal's tenon and in the crosspiece's centre hole.

## Final touch

I intended to stain my table, probably with an antique pine stain, and then to finish it with several coats of polyurethane varnish, but the editor's deadlines prevented me from showing this. Or perhaps I was simply too keen to settle down with a hard-earned glass of wine!



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The Festool Domino is a unique jointing machine that uses rounded loose tenons to give strong and accurate joints between components. This is the cheaper of the two models the company offers

# Festool Domino DF500

You can usually pick and choose woodworking tools across the brands, but sometimes a manufacturer comes up with something completely unique and patents it accordingly, and that's the case with the Festool Domino.

It sits somewhere between the Maleit Duo doweller and a standard biscuit jointer. If you're familiar with the latter it bears a resemblance, as well as operating in a similar manner... but what it gives you is the speed of a biscuit jointer alongside the strength of a mortise and tenon joint, and that's exactly what it is: a loose tenon jointer.

## Intuitive settings

The Domino is very easy to understand with its intuitive method of setting. There's a height setting function for the depth from the top surface of the workpiece using the flip-down fence, as well as a further adjuster for altering the depth of plunge.

It's the combination of these two elements that forms the basis of jointing on the Domino. There are additional settings that make it exceptionally quick to tackle any job where a tenon is normally the joint of choice, as well as plenty more in between.



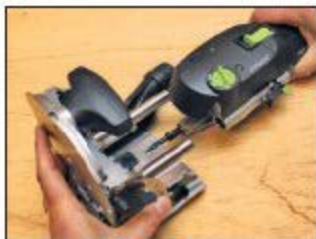
This dial sets the width of the slot the Domino jointer will cut



Plunge depths are set with this stepped release-and-lock adjuster



Indexed heights are set with this simple sliding stepped gauge



Cutter swaps are easy, with the front assembly removing completely



Cutters screw directly to the shaft and are tightened with a spanner



Setting out a joint is easy. Place the Domino to see if it's suitable...



### A choice of tenons

Domino tenons are available from 4 to 10mm thick and 20 to 50mm long. Working on the premise of a mortise being one third as wide as the stock thickness for maximum strength, the Domino will suit stock from 12 to 30mm thick. The setting scale is designed to work stock from 18 to 40mm, using the Domino tilting fence at a height that is central to the position you set it to.

You can of course double up on the Dominos you fit, so wider stock can be jointed as successfully as thinner materials, and for smaller furniture type work the machine is ideally suited.

### Working directly

Initial preparation work is a lot easier as there's no need to calculate tenon lengths; you work direct shoulder-to-shoulder component sizes. For face-frame type work especially, it's a really quick and easy method

as the setting you make is equal for both parts of the joint. In other words, the depth you plunge into the rail is equal to that in the stile.

However, on work where you have a thinner component, such as attaching a face frame to a carcass, you have to remember to reset the plunge depth into the face frame itself. This is a relatively easy mistake to make, resulting in the cutter coming through the face if you do forget to reset. In actual fact it's one of the system's main strengths once you remember to alter the setting to suit the material thickness, as you can get tenon strength connections on relatively fragile components.

### Further adjustments

The previously mentioned adjusters are the elements that control the slot depth and position. The front element is a simple stepped adjustment that slides into indented positions to set the height at which the cutter addresses the work. However, it's the rear positioned adjuster that you need to be aware of when working differing thicknesses, as it's this that controls the plunge depth itself.

Each position sets the plunge that when doubled will be marginally deeper than the actual Domino itself, and working different plunge settings in a combination will give you the option to fit thin to thick, and it's this adjustment you have to control to avoid plunging fully through the work. Get to grips with that and you have it pretty well cracked, and with the tilting fence you can be pretty ambitious in what you construct.

### Allowing for movement

But there's also a further string to its bow which helps in areas where you need some movement, either for components that need to float or to create a bit of room to aid construction. The latter is



Any settings outside the presets are made using the graduated scale



The spring shoes are useful for fast setting of cuts from an edge



Other positioning indicators include the triangle cutouts and the clear cursor



...and draw a couple of pencil marks. This will be enough for most joints



Keep plenty of pressure on the front of the tool for consistent results



A good parallel fit of the tenon in the slot is what you're aiming for

certainly advantageous on more complex projects where a range of tightly fitting Dominos would make life difficult during glue-up.

There are three settings for this; the first fits tightly to the width of the Domino, and two further settings give a little more space depending on your needs. This is very easy to achieve, the round dial on the top having indicators to show the three differing widths.

### How the machine works

A single cutter screws directly onto an oscillating shaft using a supplied spanner, and to get the cutters on and off, or to swap for a different size, this spanner plays an important role. Slip it under the catch on the body of the machine, and it releases the front end of the Domino to expose the cutter for easy swaps using the built-in spindle lock.

With a cutter that spins and also moves from side to side, you could certainly believe you are in for a rough ride, especially in some hardwoods, but in actual fact the tool is surprisingly smooth in action. Making a series of test cuts in a variety of materials it was very easy to control, with minimal vibration back through the tool.

### Extra support

The only thing you need to keep an eye on is supporting the back end when plunging, as it's quite a long machine and on thinner or smaller components keeping the weight on the front fence is tricky. However, if you can clamp or secure your work while you joint it, it frees up your hands to control the Domino for consistent jointing.

Setting out is as easy as biscuit jointing, requiring just a simple line on the joint to line up with the centre line on the fence. There are also left and right cutout positions on the fence, as well as a clear cursor for setting a joint as needed.

Alongside this are the spring feet in the front face that you can place to the edge of the work to eliminate any setting out. You simply place them at the edge of a stile and make the cut, repeating the cut into the end grain of the rail for fast framing work.

This scratches the surface of the Domino and the basics of what it's about, but there are further accessories to increase productivity which we'll be evaluating at a later date.

### Summing up

Versatility and immediate locking strength are the Domino's forte, and there's a massive amount of work that can be speeded up dramatically by utilising the system. The cost may be high, but the productivity increase and simplification of your working methods soon outweighs that initial outlay. *AK*

### SPECIFICATION

MOTOR	420W
NO-LOAD SPEED	24,300rpm
CUTTER DIAMETER	4, 5, 6, 8 & 10mm
DEPTH OF CUT	12-28mm
STOP POSITIONS	16-40mm
CUTTING ANGLE	0-90°
DUST EXTRACT OUTLET	27mm
WEIGHT	3.2kg

### VERDICT

This machine offers a fast and adaptable way of jointing frames, furniture and many other applications.

- PROS**
- Superbly engineered
  - Easy to set up
  - Accurate repeat work

- CONS**
- Expensive
  - Care needed when working with different-sized components

**VALUE FOR MONEY** 

**PERFORMANCE** 

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If your positioning is accurate, the tightest slot setting will assemble easily



Double tenons can be easily achieved on thicker stock using the fence



Thin, narrow stock can be jointed with these smaller Domino tenons

Whether you're drilling holes for shelf support studs in a new build or adding adjustable shelving in an existing cabinet, the Kreg shelf stud jig will help you get the job done quickly and accurately

## Kreg KMA3220 shelf stud jig

This clever little jig is designed to make uniformly spaced holes for shelf studs. We had some initial concerns that it wouldn't work in the UK, as we've adopted the 5mm shelf stud whereas the US prefers a 1/4in (6.35mm) size.

The jig as marketed in the UK includes a 5mm drill bit, but the drill guides are sized to take a 1/4in drill bit so you might expect it to be a sloppy fit. Cleverly, the drill shank is stepped so the part engaging in the guide is still 1/4in in diameter, while the part that drills the hole is reduced to 5mm. Its lip-and-spur profile makes clean, crisp holes. Aside from the drill guides, the jig is an all-plastic construction of excellent quality, so it should prove pretty durable in use.

### Standard spacing

The hole centres are at 32mm, a standard spacing on most mass-produced furniture sold in the UK, so the jig will work well if you are matching new to old work. The run of six holes is offset to the edge to allow a shelf of shorter depth to be fitted and supported properly, with a neat fence that slides into

keyhole slots as a reference face.

Remove the fence and gauge directly from the front edge, and you have the identical offset for the Euro hinges used in kitchen units. These also use 5mm holes at 32mm centres for the screws, so the jig can be used for setting these too.

### Using the jig

Set-up is very easy. Copying the Kreg pocket-hole jig, this one uses a similar method to set the stop collar against the drill bit to ensure that the correct depth is drilled.

Also supplied is a stepped locating pin for 5mm or 1/4in holes. This is used to set up the jig for extended runs of holes, drilling the first set and then re-positioning the jig with the pin engaged in the last hole drilled to allow the operation to be repeated as often as required.

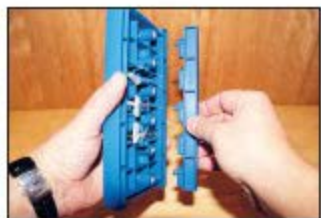
£33



There's also a neat storage solution for the drill and locating pin on the jig itself, with little tabs to hold them securely when not required. It's a shame that the Allen key for the depth stop doesn't have a home there too. AK



The on-board storage doubles up as a depth-set jig for the stop collar



The offset fence locks onto the jig by sliding its pegs into the slots



Hold the fence against the work edge and drill the first set of holes



Then insert the locating pin in the last hole drilled and repeat the operation

### SPECIFICATION

<b>KIT CONTENTS</b>	Jig, locating pin, drill, jig extender, Allen key, four 6mm shelf studs
<b>DRILL SIZE</b>	5mm
<b>HOLE SPACING</b>	32mm
<b>FENCE OFFSETS</b>	25, 38, 50 & 63mm

### VERDICT

This is a handy and accurate little jig, at a price that won't break the bank.

- PROS**
- Fast and accurate to use
  - Hardened steel drill guides
  - Removable fence
  - On-board drill bit storage

**CONS** ■ No storage for the Allen key

**VALUE FOR MONEY**

**PERFORMANCE**

### FURTHER INFORMATION

■ [www.kregtool.com](http://www.kregtool.com)



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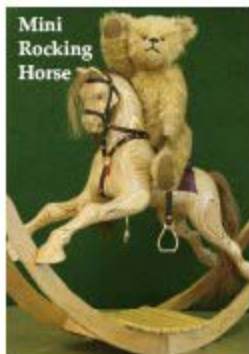
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**The Rocking Horse Shop, Fangfoss, York YO41 5JH, England**

This tool is an unusual combination – a rasp with a flexible blade that can be given a convex or concave curve, and which is handled in a similar way to a bench plane or Surfform. No wonder it has such a splendid name!

## Liogier Bastard roughing rasp

Anyone who's used a Surfform will be familiar with this workhorse of a rasp from French manufacturer Noel Liogier. However, it doesn't have the open cheese-grater format of the ubiquitous Surfform. Instead it has a solid plate of rasplike profile and proportions for the cutting surface.

That surface is incredibly sharp and effective, and with a No 3 grain (the range of Liogier files are numbered from 1 to 15, with 1 being the coarsest), it's superfast at removing stock. However, that makes it quite grabby when removing stock from an edge – to form a roundover, for example.

Although the cut is coarse, altering the angle of attack by skewing the tool can leave a very smooth surface. That allows you not only to hog off timber for roughing out, but also to give it some decent semblance of smoothness before working it further with other tools if needed.

### Flat or curved?

The frame of the file is an alloy with a thin flat steel plate that sits directly against the file plate to link them, along with the heavy threaded bracing bar above. That particular

€30  
(+shipping)

part appears to be a sort of tensioning brace, but with the file plate bolted onto the frame it's actually a loose connection. You can rotate the centre hex portion to make the file plate slightly convex or concave. This allows some curved work to be done, albeit with a relatively shallow cut in either arrangement.

### A handy handle

A novel feature on the file body is the swivelling rear handle, also available on some Surfform tools. This operates like the rear tote on a bench plane or as the traditional in-line handle on a standard rasp; the latter set-up is ideal for use on shaped work especially.

This does of course add to the price of the tool, but it's certainly very controllable and very sharp, removing stock at an

incredible rate without the need for a lot of hand pressure. The thick blade feels far more responsive than a thin Surfform plate, and replacement plates are available.

### Using the Bastard

Unlike the open mesh of a Surfform, the Liogier's rasp-style teeth can pick up debris from more resinous timbers, so a card file is essential to keep it in good working order.

We tried it on some sawn teak. By varying the attack angle to flatten it out as you would with a jack plane, the teeth become aligned and you begin to produce fine shavings. In much the same way as a scraper does, although these are much thinner as each tooth makes its own shaving.

The resulting finish left on the board was excellent, so despite the ultra-coarse No 3 grain, it's still a tool that will get you in the right ballpark, and will prove especially useful on wild-grained timbers. **AK**



The handle can be easily swivelled into an in-line position if required



Rotating the hexagonal bar gives the blade a slight convex or concave curve



The tool is used like a conventional rasp for forming roundovers...



...or like a bench plane for tensioning rough-sawn stock very quickly

### SPECIFICATION

**LENGTH** 350mm

**GRAIN COARSENESS** No3

### VERDICT

This unusual tool excels at rapid stock removal and the smoothing of wild-grained or knotty stock.

**PROS**

- Very fast cut
- Adjustable handle
- Replaceable blade

**CONS**

- Fierce to start on corner work
- Can clog on resinous stock

**VALUE FOR MONEY**

**PERFORMANCE**

### FURTHER INFORMATION

■ [www.liogier-france.fr](http://www.liogier-france.fr)

*Circular saws can be tricky and dangerous tools. In inexperienced hands they can be hard to handle, and producing a good-quality cut can be difficult. A plunge saw offers an easier – and safer – option*

## Triton TTS1400 plunge track saw

Hand sawing is a laborious process, especially when you're dealing with large sheets of material. It's both slow and challenging work to cut a perfectly straight line. A circular saw greatly speeds up the process and, coupled with a guide batten or rail, can cut very accurately. A plunge saw takes this one stage further. Not only can it cut accurately; its plunging facility also allows it to be used for intricate work such as cutting out recesses in kitchen worktops to accommodate appliances. This Triton saw can be used with or without the guide rail, and is accurate and versatile in use.

### Standard features

This is a neatly designed tool that's easy to understand and simple to operate. It sits on a solid alloy baseplate which is grooved to fit onto the guide rail. At rest the blade is entirely enclosed in the alloy guard.

On the main handle is a three-position switch, a press button and the power trigger. The switch selects which plunge mode you wish to use. There is one for blade changing, one for full plunge cutting and one for scribe cutting. The press button releases the plunge lock and allows the trigger to be activated. There is also a variable-speed wheel.

On the baseplate are several knobs. These are for adjusting the fit of the saw on the guide rail so it runs smoothly and accurately. There is a knob that controls the anti-kickback mechanism; this stops the saw being pushed back along the rail, as there's no living knife. Finally there's an additional knob that extends a small plate which fits in a groove on the top of the rail. This stops the baseplate tipping off the rail, especially when bevel cutting.

### Making adjustments

This is an easy saw to set up. The depth-of-cut scale is clearly marked, and there's a sliding stop that locks in position. There is also a flip-up stop on top of it which is used when you're not using the guide rail. The saw can also be used for bevel cutting and, again, the scales are clearly marked and simple to set.

### Guide rail options

The 1500mm guide rail supplied with the saw is alloy and comes with a pair of speed cramps which slide into the underside and hold the rail securely onto the workpiece. There are two lengths of rail available and also a jointing piece, so you can make up longer lengths to suit.

**£239.39**  
(saw)



**£47**  
(rail)



The guide rail comes with a soft storage bag and two speed cramps



This lever compensates for the track thickness when you're not using it



This three-position switch selects which plunge mode you wish to use



The first cut removes a tiny strip from the rubber edge of the guide rail

#### Adding accessories

There is a good range of accessories available for this saw. The test sample came with a transparent dust bag and a pair of soft cases, one for the rail and one for the saw. These are especially good as they are easy to carry, very protective and much more user-friendly than hard plastic cases.

#### Using the saw

The first time the saw is used with the rail, it cuts a tiny strip from the rubber edge of the guide rail so that the edge is perfectly aligned to the blade. This makes it easy to set up for subsequent cuts as the rail edge can be laid directly on the marked line.

The saw has a soft-start mechanism which is very gentle and takes just a moment to reach full speed. The plunge is smooth, and the blade leaves a planed finish on the timber. Dust extraction is especially good, whether using an extractor or just the dust bag. The anti-tip control works well and cutting bevels is a breeze.

#### Making cut-outs

This could hardly be easier. The blade guard is marked to show where the edges of the blade will reach, so it's simply a matter of marking out your workpiece, fitting the rail and lining up the saw with the rear mark on a corner. You then plunge and cut until the front mark reaches the marked corner, and release it. Repeat this operation for all four sides.

Because the blade is circular, it won't reach right into the corners of the cut-out on a thick worktop, so the last few millimetres must be cut away with a handsaw or powered jigsaw.

#### Summing up

This is a well-made and versatile tool. Its variable speed means that it can cut not only timber and boards but also other materials such as plastics. Its simple operation and good-quality accessories make it a pleasure to use, and its adaptability means that it can tackle a wider range of jobs than a standard circular saw. Overall it's an impressive machine. **AS**



The blade guard is marked to show the extent of the blade's reach

The saw sits securely on the alloy guide rail, and moves effortlessly on it



The track lock stops the saw tipping off the rail, especially when bevel cutting

#### SPECIFICATION

MOTOR	1400W
NO-LOAD SPEED	2000-3500rpm
BLADE DIAMETER	165mm
BEVEL RANGE	0-48°
MAX DEPTH OF CUT	at 90°
	at 45°
GUIDE RAIL	1500mm
WEIGHT	5.5kg

ACCESSORIES soft storage bags, side fence, 750mm rail, rail joining strip, dust bag

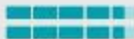
#### VERDICT

This is a well-designed and efficient tool that cuts beautifully and is straightforward to set up and use.

- PROS**
- Excellent performance
  - Good dust extraction
  - Wide range of accessories

- CONS**
- Side fence not supplied as standard

#### VALUE FOR MONEY PERFORMANCE



#### FURTHER INFORMATION

- Triton Tools
- 0844 576 0266
- [www.tritontools.com](http://www.tritontools.com)

The anti-tip control works well, and cutting bevels is a straightforward job



A set of bevel-edge chisels is a stock requirement in every workshop. This set is a classic example, featuring polished forged blades in six sizes, housed in a sturdy storage case

## Narex Premium chisel set

While many people may not be aware of the name Narex, go on the woodworking forums and the threads are awash with the brand, and the feedback is pretty much all good. However, forum talk doesn't always relate to reality: go back a few years and similar comments were being bandied around regarding the Kirschen Two Cherries brand, for example.

Regular readers may recall an independent review we commissioned at that time to Rockwell-test all the premium and trade brands, along with a few older chisels, which dispelled the myth of perceived hardness (or otherwise) in some brands...

### A simple comparison

So where does Narex sit in the scheme of things? It's pretty high up, judging by what we can see here in this excellent set of six tools. They certainly resemble the Two Cherries chisels in some respects, especially the polished blades.

However, when we looked at the latter we found that the back edges were dubbed from the polishing process, resulting in a lot of work to get them into shape. By contrast, Narex have maintained the flatness of their backs. In fact there is a marginal concavity on all six blades, so the time spent at the stone is minimal. The first hone is as easy and as quick as it takes to hone an already broken-in chisel.

Of course, if you simply want sharpness rather than shiny bling, that regime will dull the back rather than maintain the high polish unless you use certain types of stones or work down to ultra-fine grades of abrasive.

### Fine Czech steel

Narex state a Rockwell hardness of 59 HRC, a good all-round marker for quick honing and decent edge retention, and that's

proved to be the case since they've been on our test bench. They've performed well in the work we've put them through in hard- and softwoods, while quickly regaining an edge on a Trend diamond stone when necessary.

The steel is chrome-manganese with high carbon content, which



The 26mm chisel features fine edges, ideal for cleaning into tight corners



These are replicated across the range, as shown on the 6mm chisel



The hornbeam handles offer plenty to grip without being overly bulky



A quick check on paring performance on some softwood endgrain yielded first-class results

apparently inhibits rusting, and it does what it's meant to do. The edge is as good as any we've achieved on other chisels.

With a price that pits them against well-established trade brands such as Stanley and Marples, these chisels win hands down for finer work... especially as the lands (the edges of the blades) have been finely ground across all six chisels. They're not machined quite to the knife-edge proportions of some of the premium chisel brands, but at less than 1mm across the entire length of each blade, they're pretty close.

#### Generous handles

These have wooden handles, so they're best suited to mallet or hand-driven work rather than being hammered (for which there are plastic-handled Narex chisels). However, the timber used is hornbeam, a hard and durable timber that will take a lot of knocks.

There's plenty of handle to grab – 145mm including the ferrule – so they sit well in the hand, leaving lots of room to strike the domed end without fear of hand injury from a mis-strike. They're also pretty chunky, but they have a taper that still gives a good feel in the hand without being too bulky. The bulbous end is ideal for controlling fine paring work.

There's no high polish to these handles – simply a stained finish with a dull sheen – but the work is done at the sharp end so this isn't really important.

#### Summing up

Narex may well be the current darling of the forums, but away from there these are excellent chisels in their own right. Aside from the polished blades there's nothing fussy about them, and for just shy of £70 you get a set of chisels that punch way above their price band, and are an excellent set of joinery and cabinetry chisels that will serve well in any workshop. AK

#### SPECIFICATION

<b>SIZES</b>	6, 10, 12, 16, 20 & 26mm
<b>BLADES</b>	Cr-Mn steel hardened to 59 HRC
<b>HANDLES</b>	145mm hornbeam

#### VERDICT

This set of chisels represents high quality at a bargain price.

- PROS**
- Polished blades
  - Flat backs
  - Fine lands (sides)
  - Push box

**CONS** ■ None, although the handles lack finish

**VALUE FOR MONEY**

**PERFORMANCE**

#### FURTHER INFORMATION

■ [www.toolmarketingcompany.co.uk](http://www.toolmarketingcompany.co.uk)

Paring hardwood showed that these blades take an excellent edge



Prep work is minimal with all six chisels; after just a few seconds on the stone...



...the backs reveal almost Japanese-like hollows, ideal for fast honing



We tweaked the edges with some Veritas honing compound on a hardwood block

*A bandsaw is one of the main players in the woodworking machinery stakes. This Draper model is aimed at the small home workshop, where it can be used on a bench and then stored away in a corner when it's not needed*

## Draper BS200A bench bandsaw



Bandsaws are produced in a wide range of sizes, from large floor-standing machines through to small portable bench-top models. They're versatile tools which cut quietly, and are generally safer to use than saws with circular blades. Another advantage they have is that they offer a greater depth of cut than a similarly priced table saw. The Draper BS200A is a benchtop tool for the home workshop. It's a perfectly scaled-down version of larger machines, with all the guides and adjusters you would expect.

### Design features

This is a conventional tool with a pressed steel casing and an alloy worktable. It has a pair of three-spoked cast wheels with rubber tyres, and a dust extraction outlet at the base of the cabinet. An NVR switch is mounted on the spine, and the two casing doors open independently.

### Versatile table

The table is a ribbed alloy design with a slot on the right-hand side of the blade. It has a removable rail on the front edge and can be tilted to 45° using the adjuster underneath. Two fences are supplied for ripping and crosscutting. The crosscut/mitre fence runs in the slot on the right and the rip fence runs along the rail, which is marked with a rip scale.

### Guides and bearings

Bandsaw blades are flimsy, twisty things, and need a lot of support to hold them in the correct position to cut accurately. This is what the guides and bearings are supposed to do. The BS200A is well-equipped with a pair of plain metal guides both above and below the table, backed up with roller bearings. These are adjusted using a supplied Allen key. However, this isn't an easy job as the top guides are almost completely obscured by the upper blade guard, so you can't really see what you're doing.

### Changing the blade

This is a straightforward job, thanks to a tensioning knob on the top of the machine casing and a tracking control on the rear. This is a small machine and can take only fairly narrow blades, so it doesn't need to hold them at the high tension required on larger machines.



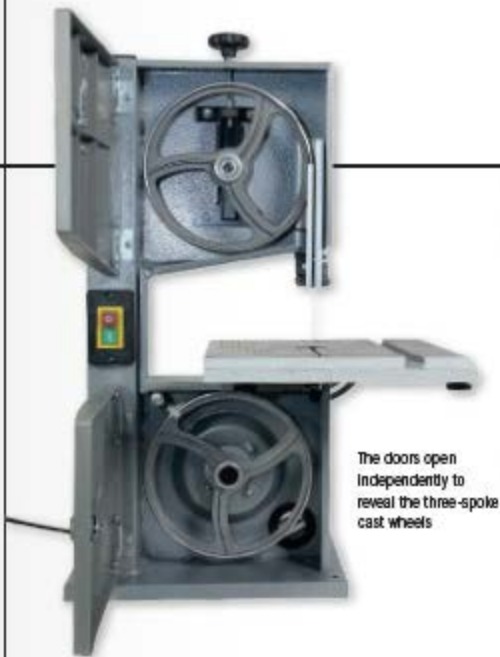
The crosscut/mitre fence runs in the slot on the right-hand side of the table



The rip fence runs along the rail, which is marked with a clear rip scale

The upper and lower blade guides are shown with the table removed





The doors open independently to reveal the three-spoke cast wheels

#### Using the saw

It's worth mentioning here that the majority of bandsaw problems are caused by poor or worn blades, and these can usually be remedied simply by replacing the blade. Unfortunately this Draper blade had probably suffered in transit and couldn't cut straight at all. Consequently we were unable to use the fences or do any joint cutting. However, we were able to cut a lot of curves!

The Draper certainly runs well. It's smooth and quiet with no vibration, making it a pleasant machine to use. The dust extraction was efficient, and once the guides had been set they gave good support to the blade. We have no doubt that, fitted with a replacement blade, this would be an impressive little saw.

#### Summing up

This is actually a really good little saw, well designed and satisfying to use. The difficulty with the blade guides could easily be resolved by removing the bottom 15mm of the upper blade guard to improve visibility, without in any way compromising safety, and a new blade would solve the other problems.

This saw would certainly be a welcome addition to any home workshop, as it provides good capabilities at an attractive price. **AS**

#### SPECIFICATION

MOTOR	250W
TABLE SIZE	290 x 290mm
TABLE TILT	0 to 45°
BLADE LENGTH	1400mm
BLADE WIDTHS	6 to 12mm
CUTTING SPEED	900m/min
THROAT DEPTH	200mm
MAX DEPTH OF CUT	80mm
WEIGHT	17.5kg

ACCESSORIES rip and mitre fences, push stick, tools

#### VERDICT

This is a competent little machine with good performance, though it's a bit tricky to set up.

- PROS**
- Bargain price
  - Compact size
  - Easy blade change

- CONS**
- Supplied with poor-quality blade
  - Guides difficult to set

VALUE FOR MONEY



PERFORMANCE



#### FURTHER INFORMATION

- Draper
- 02380 494333
- [www.draper.co.uk](http://www.draper.co.uk)

The saw is able to make smooth and accurate curved cuts to a very small radius



Unfortunately the upper blade guides are almost hidden by the blade guard



The upper blade guard adjuster and blade tracking control are readily accessible



The table can be tilted to 45° using the clearly marked adjuster underneath

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## FOR SALE



Large JCB circular saw, 240V, unused; £20.  
01902 627927 (Hertfordshire)

Stanley ratchet brace, 8in swing two-jaw model in excellent condition, with selection of auger and flat bits; £40.  
01189 712472 (West Berkshire)

Stanley Bailey No 4 smoothing plane in excellent condition; £20.  
01189 712472 (West Berkshire)

Bosch belt sander, 550W, 400 x 60mm belt, in excellent boxed condition with 15 spare belts; £50.  
01189 712472 (West Berkshire)

Black & Decker sander, 1/2-sheet orbital finishing model, 135W, in good boxed condition with dust extraction kit; £12.  
01189 712472 (West Berkshire)



Faithfull bandsaw, 14in three-wheel model; £85. Compound mitre saw with laser light; £70. Clarke bench drill; £65. Buyer collects.  
07759 071655 (Somerset)

Record No 2 lathe, swivel-head model, 36in between centres, 12-14in bowl diameter; £250. Record RPM-75 bench mortiser; £125. Record RSDE-1 dust extractor; £125. All mint. Buyer collects.  
01273 474693 (East Sussex)

Yew planks, 25 pieces, 1500 x 260 x 40mm, plus yew trunk 2m x 230mm dia, and reclaimed teak. Open to offers.  
01428 741321 (Hampshire)

Record RPBS8 bandsaw with mitre guide, spare blades and manual, suitable for hobby and small-scale DIY use; £40 ono.  
01923 776391 (Hertfordshire)

DeWalt planer thicknesser, as new; £230 ono. Peter Child pyrography machine; £60 ono. Bosch sabre saw; £45 ono. Black & Decker Mouse, new; £20 ono.  
01379 740971 (Norfolk)

Carpenter's bench, 6 x 2ft, purpose-built with cupboard, eight drawers and two vices; £350.  
01379 740971 (Norfolk)

Tormek T3 grinder, used but with original box and complete contents (stone grader, angle setter, honing paste, handbook etc); £175.  
020 8248 0335 (West London)

Trend hinge jig, little used, complete with instructions in carry case; £100 ono. Trend lock jig, used twice, complete with instructions in box; £50.  
01323 873671 (East Sussex)

Woodturning tools, nine pieces, some unused, with surface rust; £60.  
01277 861782 (Hertfordshire)

Record DML24 lathe with power chuck attachments and tools plus Record chisels, in new condition; £180 ono.  
07759 240032 (Essex)

Walker Turner spindle moulder (American), cast iron, 1hp motor, in good working order - an old but good-quality machine; £275.  
01684 592968 (Worcestershire)

Coronet Minor with circular saw table, sanding/mortising table and planer thicknesser attachments; £325.  
01684 592968 (Worcestershire)

Mortising attachment to fit Kity 1637 planer thicknesser, unused; £150.  
01684 592968 (Worcestershire)

Plane cramps; eight, plus three 1m wall rails; £400. Smart & Brown Sabel 9in precision metalworking lathe; £350.  
01308 897488 (Dorset)

## WANTED

Woodworker magazines, pre-1951 plus 1984-1986. Grandfather collecting for cabinetmaker grandson.  
01493 368180 (Norfolk)

Belt sander for 560 x 100mm belts or old Skil 1400H sander for spares; must be in working order.  
01444 246274 (West Sussex)

No 4 smoothing plane  
01902 627927 (Hertfordshire)

Spiers / Norris / Henley planes wanted by private collector; any quite beaten. Ring Ron Lowe on 01530 834581 (Leics)

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Woodworking tools: planes by Norris, Spiers, Mathieson, Preston, Slater etc, brass braces, interesting rules and spirit levels; top prices paid, auction prices beaten.  
01647 432841 (Devon)

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The Woodworker  
MARKETPLACE

- This space is available only to private individuals wishing to buy or sell woodworking machinery and tools.
- The maximum value of any item for sale must not exceed £500. A small fee is payable for items offered at over £500; please ring 01669 889852 for details.
- Each coupon is valid for one free insertion in this next available issue.
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Please publish this advertisement in the next available edition of The Woodworker. I am a private advertiser and have no trade connections.

PLEASE TICK: FOR SALE  WANTED

My advertisement (max 20 words please) reads as follows:

# Home and away

BY MARK CASS

I have to admit to enjoying a spot of work on a foreign holiday. However, after an action-packed visit to the Blue Mountains in Australia – where I earned my keep by helping to prepare for my best friend Paul-o's wedding – I was looking forward to a slightly more restful time the year after at my brother's small cottage over in Cape Cod.

They say that a change is as good as a rest, so I figure if you can get both in at the same time then you're really doing well. There's something about working abroad in this sort of holiday environment that eases the pain and worry that one otherwise might succumb to in the normal course of things. If you're doing a friend or relation a favour, then there's absolutely no pressure at all. It's just a case of taking the usual professional pride while avoiding any actual calamities.

## Cottage pie

So it came about that I was enrolled in the latest instalment of the cottage rebuild, namely, laying a new timber floor. My big brother had just bought a Stanley Bostitch compressor and nail gun on special offer at the local Tool Depot and couldn't wait to try it out. So with the main fixing method of choice decided on, all that remained now was to select the flooring material.

After a pleasant evening discussing (amongst other things) the pros and cons of various types of flooring, it was decided that tongued-and-grooved boards laid over a sub-floor of oriented strand board (OSB for short) was the way to go, and plans were drawn up to make a tour of various timber merchants and builders' yards in the area the very next day.

## Sterling zone

OSB (better known as Sterling board in the UK) is pretty much the easiest board to source anywhere, so that was no problem, but a half-decent T&G board at a sensible price (yes, we share the same penny-pinching characteristics, my brother and I) was another thing entirely. Timber yards around the world aren't too different in my experience, but it's great to see unusual species and manufactured boards in stock that are at variance with the usual stuff we might see at Travis & Perkins or Jewsons here in the UK.

## The lonesome pine

We flirted with the idea of poplar – wide boards, great colouring but absolutely no bargains and not particularly hard-wearing either. Finally, at a smaller establishment, we came across some excellent yellow pine, a hard and tough softwood that looked good, stayed straight and represented very good value for money. We were soon, as they say in those parts, 'good to go', and hastened down to Sir

Cricket's, the local fish-and-chip shop (this was New England, after all) to celebrate with an assortment of fishy treats and fizzy drinks.

## Tooling up

Most people have a toolkit of sorts knocking about the place and, while there's nothing like using your own tools on a site job, there are times when you just have to make do with what's available on the day. Being a *gastarbeiter* in a foreign country surely has to be the ultimate in site working, as there's nearly always something unexpected you'll have to deal with. One of my challenges this time was the perennial struggle of old versus new.



## Thirty seconds

Despite having had some experience of using Imperial measurements early in my life, many years of exposure to the metric system has left me comfortable with – and well disposed towards – metres and suchlike. So it was a mild disappointment to find that every tape measure on the Eastern seaboard seemed to feature exclusively feet and inches. I have to confess that at first it was a little mind-bending to have to deal with things like 1/2nds, but it took a surprisingly short time for my usually overworked brain to adapt and embrace the new old system. They're just numbers, after all...

Leafing through a copy of *The Woodworker* from December 1968 the other day, I was stopped in my tracks by this advertisement for a board and panel specialist. Readers – flatteringly addressed as woodworking enthusiasts – were invited to visit the showrooms of C F Anderson & Son Ltd of Islington Green, London N1 where, along with hundreds of panels, doors and boards for sale, ‘Ideas In Abundance’ were also available.

**Ideas for sale**

I like the thought of being able to buy an idea (a nice big fresh one please, Mr Shopkeeper), but what a tricky commodity that is to try to sell and market. Once the customer has got it out of the box (as it were), it’s difficult to return unused. But what value can be put on – or taken from – an idea? It’s not until it’s been acted upon and reached its full potential – or at least given very strong indications of what’s to come – that any good will come of it. It’s quite possible that Andersons of Islington may have unwittingly piloted the perfect way for

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**IDEAS IN ABUNDANCE**

# Advertising the past

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dispensing Ideas for profit way back in the 1960s. Give one away free with every door or panel purchase over a set value, or say a guinea or even thirty bob.

**Home schooling**

What great times we’ve lived in! Once the preserve of hard-working and keenly aspirant citizens, the Correspondence Course (along with the exciting-sounding Night School) provided a chance for individuals to advance their learning and so progress to better things in life. Featured alongside Anderson’s ad, this 100-page ‘Guide to Success’ from Chambers College

In London (intriguingly directed to Department 819D) offered the hungry woodworker an opportunity to choose from any number of ‘Home Study’ courses in a wide variety of trades and professions, woodwork teacher included. In its own uncomplicated way, this sort of thing could be seen as a vocational precursor to today’s very popular Open University courses. It’s extremely unlikely, but if anyone out there has a copy of this book, please let me know

**Past inspiration**

So let’s take every available opportunity to get the most we can out of a magazine

advert, especially if it’s of the ‘vintage’ variety, there’s plenty to be learnt from even the most unlikely sources. At this rate I may well join the growing number of entrepreneurs who constantly seek inspiration from the past with a view to marketing it in the present, but if anyone else has a better idea, I’d love to buy it.

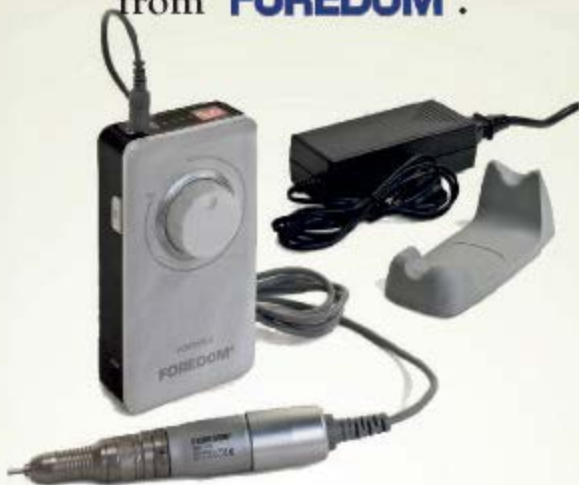
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More from *The Woodworker* archive next month...

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### What They Say...



#### The Woodworker

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#### Good Woodworking

"In use the Record performs well. It feels solid and secure and the finish is good. The wheel kit is a real boon, making it easy to push the machine around the workshop. Overall this is a good all rounder and with that 5 year guarantee, it certainly looks enticing."

#### The Woodworker

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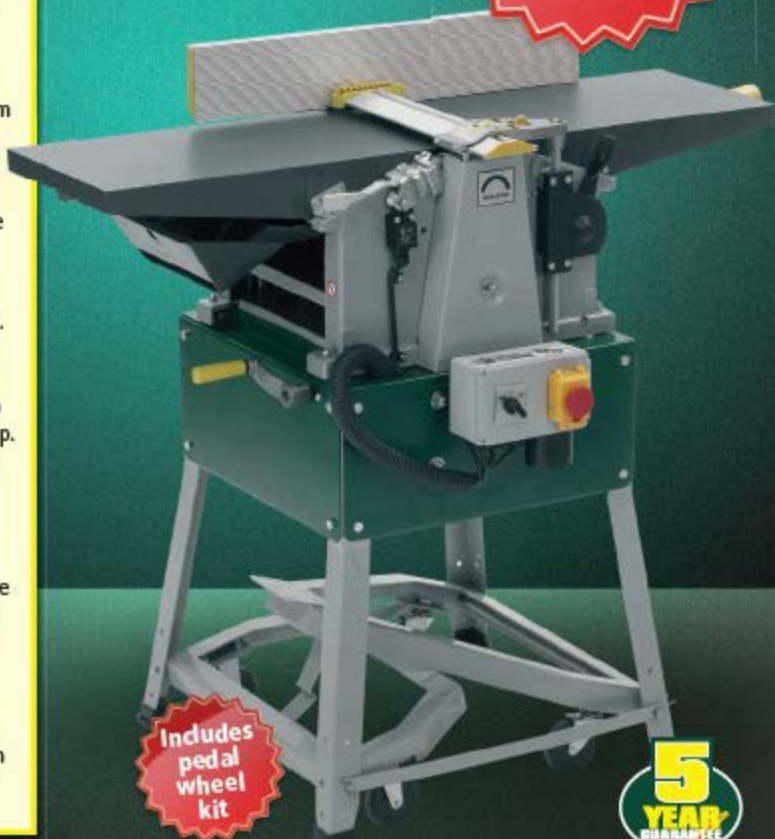
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