

ASK SMITTY

No woodworker (except *SMITTY*, of course) has ALL the answers. From time-to-time, everyone hits a snag, trying to figure out some sort of in-shop problem.

Don't worry. *SMITTY* can help. Just use the special e-mail link directly below to send your questions to *SMITTY*. He'll do his best to get back to you soon, with the answers to those questions.

Here are the questions...and *SMITTY*'s answers for this issue...

Adjusting Worktable height when using the Shopsmith Speed Increaser

From K. Bradford (e-mail question — city/state unknown)

I recently purchased the Shopsmith Speed Increaser with the intent of using my Shopsmith MARK V as a Router Table/Shaper...but have found it to be extremely difficult to adjust the height of the table. Is there any attachment available or jig that will allow accurate, minute adjustments to the height of the Worktable, quickly and easily?

This is your lucky day! Shopsmith has just introduced a brand-new product that will help you solve this problem. It's called the *Adjustable Stop Collar*. Just slip it over the front Worktable Tube with the narrow collar up. Tighten the setscrew on the narrow collar, locking it to the Table Tube. The bottom collar then rests on top of the Table Carriage...and when rotated, will raise or lower the Worktable 1/16" per turn, giving you a total of about 7/8" of adjustment.

Needs fix for sticky drawer glides

From Tom Darscheid, Chesterfield, MI

I'm installing drawer glides in a workshop cabinet. Some of them don't slide in and out freely. They're sticking and one is pretty hard to push in and pull out. Is this due to the cabinet being too narrow or is it something else? What can I do?

Without actually seeing them "in person", it's hard to tell.
However, some guesses would be...

- 1) As you said, the cabinet may be too narrow. If you determine that this is the problem, you could always rout or dado shallow (1/16" to 1/8") grooves in the drawer sides to provide some "relief" for the glides.
- 2) Your glides could be defective. If they're bent, or the glide wheels stick during operation, they won't work properly. You could try some spray-on silicone lubricant.
- 3) Also, glides come in a variety of qualities...some inexpensive models don't work very smoothly no matter how good a job you do of installing them.

Cut a Cove Molding

From D. Graore (e-mail question — city/state unknown)

I need to cut a cove molding that will fit on a dentil molding so it will fit a 45-degree angle. I tried cutting a 22.5-degree angle on the miter box and have had no luck forming the required 45-degree angle. What am I doing wrong?

P.S.: I'm trying to put this cove molding on a 5-sided curio cabinet with the sides angled 45-degrees. The dentil molding fits just fine when I cut them at 22.5 degrees to form my 45-degree joint.

It sounds like you're attempting to make an 8-sided cabinet with 3 sides removed so you have the remaining 5 sides protruding out away from your wall...and I'm also assuming that you want your crown molding to project out away from the top of your dentil molding at a 45-degree angle.

If I am correct about the 8-sided cabinet (I must be since your 22-1/2-degree cuts on the non-sloped dentil molding is working for you), your problem lies in the fact that you're not holding your molding in the proper position on your saw when you make your cuts.

Miters on crown moldings cannot be cut accurately when the molding is laying flat on the saw table surface. These moldings typically have flats on their back sides — one flat rests against the ceiling and the other against the wall when the molding is installed. This is what creates the "slope" of the molding when it's fastened into position.

TABLE SAW APPROACH

In order to cut these moldings properly, one of these flats must rest against the saw table surface and the other against the face of your miter gauge during the cutting process. If your miter gauge face isn't high enough, you may have to make an auxiliary wooden face for the gauge that is high enough to support your molding adequately.

MITER BOX (power or "manual") APPROACH

If you're using a cutoff saw, radial arm or miter saw, one flat rests against the table surface and the other against the back-up fence on your saw. In this case, if your saw's back-up fence isn't high enough, you may have to make an auxiliary fence that's high enough to support your molding adequately.

I probably don't have to remind you of this...but remember that the saw table surface and miter gauge face (or back-up fence) **MUST** be at an exact 90-degree angle to one another. In either case, it's extremely important that these two molding faces rest solidly against the required surfaces throughout the entire cut. If the flats twist off the surfaces while you're making the cuts, your miters won't match properly.

If your molding is symmetrical (45-degree angled slope at both the top and bottom on the back side of the molding), it makes no difference which slope is against the table surface and which is against the back-up fence or miter gauge face.

If, on the other hand, these slopes are **NOT** symmetrical (that is, the bevel on the back side of your molding is **NOT** the same on the top and bottom of the molding), you'll have to turn your molding upside-down when making your miter cuts.

In either case, your miter angle will still be 22-1/2 degrees. The difference is how you hold your molding in position on the saw as you make these cuts.

Hope this is all clear to you.

Tricks for transferring project patterns

From Jim Schmick (e-mail question — city/state unknown)

What's the easiest way to transfer patterns to actual size for cutouts? I recently retired and am interested in making crafts. I purchased my Shopsmith MARK V many years ago, but with my work schedule, had to let it go. Now, I am ready to go back to the work that I enjoy of making things out of wood and possibly supplementing my income. I have been reviewing the archives and see many patterns but most are not to scale.

The easiest way...depending on the size of the project...is to do so using a, enlarging photocopy machine (ala "XEROX"). Just enlarge your pattern in trial steps until it reaches the size indicated on the plan.

The second way (if the pattern is provided on a gridded background stating the sizes of the square grids) is to follow the drawing and re-draw the pattern onto gridded paper...which is available at many art supply stores. If you can't find such paper, you'll have to draw the grids on plain paper...then transfer your pattern onto it.

The third way is to use a pantograph...a mechanical drawing device used for enlarging and reducing drawings. Shopsmith sells such a device for \$21.99. Search their on-line catalog for part # 731286.

Table Insert hits sawblade when making bevel cuts

From Maynard B., Reisterstown, MD

I have a recently purchased used MARK V and am wondering about using a saw table insert when having the table tilted. The regular insert hits the blade after tilting table just a few degrees off horizontal. Is a special insert available? Should one be used...or can I just make the cuts without using an insert?

NEVER, NEVER make cuts without a Table Insert! Small wood scraps could fall into the blade and be thrown at you!

Whenever you tilt the table, just loosen the quill and advance the blade until it's centered in the insert, then lock the quill back down. It's that simple.

Repairing an entry door lockset

From Steve Wallace, (e-mail question — city/state unknown)

While I am a Mark V owner, I now live and work in Holland. My question concerns the repair of a wooden door in my house. The door to our living room has a decorative handle that is secured by short (approx. 10-12 mm) screws of about 2 mm dia. The handle is rather unique, and my wife doesn't want to change it. The problem is that pulling the door closed, pulls on the handle, and the screw holes have had the screws pulled out so many times that the holes are "stripped".

I can tell that the previous owner also had this problem because he tried to re-orient the handle to position the screws in new locations. Due to the design of the handle, this is not possible and so his efforts only resulted in making the holes larger and ovoid.

I have tried filling the holes with small soft wood pegs and, another time, filling them with wood filler. Each of these was successful for a period, but then the screws pull out again. I have looked for longer screws, but can not find any of the same diameter. Larger diameter screws are not feasible without drilling a larger opening in the base of the handle, something I don't feel sure enough of my abilities to do, given the ornamental nature of the handle.

So, that brings us to my question. What can I do to fill these holes so that they will retain the screws? Even something that is permanent, or non-reversible, would be appreciated. As would any suggestion.

Actually, there are a few options.

#1: Drill out the screw holes and glue **HARD** wood dowels (such as birch, beech, etc) into position. Allow to dry thoroughly, then, if possible, replace your short screws with longer ones screwed into the CENTERS of these glued-in dowels. Pre-drill pilot holes for the screws and fill them with epoxy before driving the screws in.

#2: Replace the screws with small bolts. Drill a counterbore on the opposite side of the door to accept a conventional nut (and maybe a small washer)...or a T-Nut. Put everything into position, then glue a short piece of dowel (that's the same outside diameter as your counterbore, of course) over the captive nut. Sand flush and finish.

#3: As with #2, replace the screws with small bolts...in this case, that screw into a threaded insert that you EPOXY into the holes.

#4: Try expanding plastic "molys" (like those used to hold stuff in drywall). Epoxy these into position and add more epoxy before driving-in your screws.

Planers and Jointers – which is best?

From L. Myers (e-mail question — city/state unknown)

I am about to purchase a Shopsmith MARK V and am planning to build new cabinetry for the home. Additionally, Is a planer and a jointer the same and would I need both? Finally, if the Shopsmith MARK V is so accurate, why would I need a Jointer?

A planer and a Jointer are NOT the same. A Jointer is primarily for smoothing the EDGES of boards (in Shopsmith's case, up to 4-1/8" wide)...while a Thickness Planer is designed to smooth the SURFACES of boards (in Shopsmith's case, up to 12" wide).

If you're doing any kind of cabinet or fine furniture work, you really need a Jointer. Also, a planer is an extremely desirable machine to own because it allows you to plane all the lumber you buy to EXACTLY the same thickness...a HUGE benefit when it comes to ensuring the precision and finished results of the projects you build. That's because lumber thicknesses can easily vary from store-to-store and batch-to-batch by up to 1/32" or more. This can seriously affect the outcome of your projects. Plus...a planer will allow you to buy rough-sawn lumber... saving you \$.10 to \$.20 per board foot.

So, why do you need a Jointer? Because virtually ALL sawblades leave minute "mill marks" on the cut edges of boards. If, for example, you're joining a series of boards together to form a wider panel, a Jointer will smooth these "joining" edges so well that once assembled, you'll never see any cracks or gaps between the boards.

You can also bevel the edges of boards with a Jointer, cut tapers, smooth narrow board surfaces and perform some other handy tasks. A Hollow-Ground Planer (saw) Blade (Part # 505547) will, to a certain extent, do the same job until you can afford to add a Jointer to your collection...but by and large, the Jointer is a better tool for this task.

Efficient MARK V dust collection

From Dave Gandy (e-mail question — city/state unknown)

I hook my DC3300 to the Lower Saw Guard chute, but it doesn't seem to do a very good job of catching the dust when I am using the table saw on my MARK V Model 510. (Upgraded to 520).

I have watched a lot of demos and even went to one of your academies, and your hook-ups do a much better job than mine does.

Any ideas as to what I might be doing wrong? There is nothing wrong with the DC3300. It works superbly on everything I use it for except the Lower Dust Chute.

The Upper Saw Guard helps the collection process. Hopefully, you're using this, too.

Another potential problem is the width setting of your Lower Guard. If it's sides are too close together or too far apart, this will hinder dust collection. Ideally, the "outer" side (the side furthest from the headstock) should be about an inch or so away from the saw blade.

Is your Tie Bar Guard (Part # 514115) attached properly to the Table Bar & Tube (Part # 514344)? This Guard helps direct sawdust to the Lower Guard when in position. Without it (or with it improperly installed), sawdust can easily escape the Lower Guard. Look at your "Exploded Parts Diagram" in your Owner's Manual to be sure the Guard is installed properly.

Blades for older model Shopsmith Jigsaws

From Tom Cooke (e-mail question — city/state unknown)

Years ago I bought a Shopsmith Jigsaw, and it is a fine tool. I understand the Jigsaw has not been manufactured by Shopsmith for many years. Are blades still available for it?

Shopsmith's Scroll Saw Blades will quite nicely on your older Jigsaw.