

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...

Checking Jigsaw Oil Levels

From Robert R. via e-mail question

I have an older model Shopsmith Jigsaw that I purchased recently with a used MARK V. Unfortunately, I don't have a manual for it and it seems to be very noisy during operation. I suspect that it's low on oil...but don't know how to check it. Can you help?

Actually, checking the crankcase oil is a fairly simple operation. Start by mounting the Jigsaw on your MARK V, as if you were going to use it. Remove the cover plate from the drive hub side of the machine, then back out the filler screw in the base. Be careful not to lose the fiber washer.

If no oil runs out once the screw is removed, squirt 10-weight (**NON-DETERGENT**) oil into the hole until it begins to run out. When the reservoir is full to the level of the hole, replace the filler screw and washer.

Determining angles for compound cuts

From John U. via e-mail question

I'm attempting to build some unique tapered boxes and need help determining the proper setting angles for making the required compound cuts. Is there a chart that provides these angles?

Yes, there are numerous charts available for making these determinations. Here's a website address that will help you compute the proper angles.

<http://www.delorie.com/wood/compound-cuts.html>

Mattress Dimensions

From J. Wren via e-mail question

I love the four post bed plan in the July/August issue of Hands-On and have decided to build one. However, I would like to make my bed king-sized. What are the right measurements for king-sized mattresses ?

Here's a link that will provide the correct measurements for all mattress sizes. Given these dimensions, you should be able to modify your plans accordingly.

<http://www.originalmattress.com/products/dimensions.asp>

Jointer cupping problem

From Dale Carter via e-mail question

I have a jointer that I purchased quite a few years ago and it has worked very well until just recently. I have done everything I know to eliminate "cupping". The infeed and outfeed tables are level or parallel with each other and the knives are equal in height with the outfeed table. I use a Rotacator to set my knives and then I joint or grind the knives so they are all equal.

The downside of the Shopsmith jointer is ..." There is no outfeed table adjustment"

I would appreciate your input.

This sounds like a knife setting/position problem. I have to assume that the "cupping you refer to is end-to-end not side-to-side on the board. This is caused by the knives being set too low in relationship to the outfeed table. I don't know what a "rotacator" is. It sounds like you're using this to somehow grind the knives in the cutterhead while in the jointer using the outfeed table as a reference.

This is nothing like how we describe how to do this in the manual. Because our jointer does not have an adjustable outfeed table, the procedure in the manual must be followed. When the knives are set properly, they MUST be .003" to .005" ABOVE the outfeed table — not even with the outfeed table.

Choosing the right saw blade

From Arnold G. via e-mail question

Which saw blade do you recommend using for cutting MDF ?

Any hard, composite material with a high glue content such as MDF, particleboard, flakeboard, etc is best cut with a carbide tipped saw blade. Ordinary steel blades will dull very quickly when cutting composite materials.