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…

Permanent dust collector piping

From Billy Smith via e-mail

I have a 2hp, 3480 rpm, 1600 CFM Dust Collector that I want to set up in my shop. It has two, four inch outlets, so I can set it between my MARK V and my router table. It's sitting about six feet from each machine that I need to hook up. Can I simply run a four inch flexible hose across the wall...then install a gate-valve dropping from the four inch hose to a two inch hose near each machine?

Yes, you can...considering that you're only going about 6 feet in either direction.

If you were to be going longer distances, it would be wise to install hard metal lines to a point near each machine...then your reduction blast gates and flex lines to your tools.

The ridges in flex lines create a lot of friction and slow down the air flow...hampering your collection efficiency.

Be careful about using PVC lines. They can build up static electricity...which can be dangerous. Even plastic flex lines can do this. You should ground your Dust Collection lines to be safe.

***Firing-up* a *discovered* MARK V**

From Larry F. via e-mail

I recently bought an old school house and in the cellar, I found a Shopsmith MARK V model 500. I was wondering what I should do to get it running. The machine has very little rust and only a couple of places where the paint is chipped. Even the cord seems to be in fine shape!

I have no idea how long it's been sitting there...perhaps not to long. The person I bought the place form had no idea how long it was down there, either.

DON'T TURN THE SPEED DIAL UNLESS THE MACHINE IS RUNNING !

My vote....plug it in and turn it on. If it runs OK, turn the speed dial up & down **(ONLY WHILE THE MACHINE'S RUNNING)** and see how everything sounds. If it sounds OK, you're probably alright.

If it doesn't, call our TOLL-FREE Technical Services Hotline at 1-800-762-7555. Shopsmith's Technical folks will gladly walk you through all the necessary steps to identify what (if anything) is wrong with it. Sounds like you got a GREAT BONUS with your purchase ! Welcome to the Shopsmith Family.

Plywood or glue-up?

From Brian G.via e-mail

I am relatively new to woodworking and would like to take on a larger project. In this case, I'd like to make myself a computer desk for my home office. I have been getting some different plans and modifying them to suit my needs. Before I start the project, I have a question about which type of wood to use for it. More specifically, should I use some high grade plywood or use glued-up wood stock like a red-oak? I wonder if the plywood would be too difficult to hide the edges.

If you're planning to have a "natural wood-looking" desk, use high-quality Oak, Maple, Cherry or Birch veneered plywood for all large panels...and matching wood for frame rails & other, smaller components.

Slice off strips of matching hardwoods and use them for edge banding your plywood. If you use birch ply, you could use maple edging....or purchase a roll of birch edge banding.

If you're planning to paint your desk, use A/B grade plywood for the large panels (with the "A" side visible, of course) and poplar for all other components.

Be sure to use a brush-on filler coat over everything before painting to achieve the smoothest surfaces. You'll still have to "band" the plywood edges prior to finishing, of course.

Shop Vac vs. Dust Collector

From Tim E. via e-mail question

I have a question regarding the shop smith DC3300 dust collector. I'm wondering what the static pressure capability is of this unit. I was hoping that I could use it as a replacement for a standard shop vacuum. I realize that it won't generate nearly the water lift of a shop vacuum, but just how well <u>will</u> it work?

Dust Collectors and Shop Vacuums are DRAMATICALLY different in that respect. Where shop vacuums have low air volume and high static pressure that enables them to pick up heavy objects such as screws, nails and other "heavy" debris"....dust collectors typically deliver low static pressure and high air volume so they're better suited for capturing large volumes of lightweight stuff (such as dust).

Will the DC 3300 pick up dust off the floor? Of course it will...but I wouldn't use it to suck up heavy debris and wood chunks. Large objects can damage dust collectors.

Bandsaw refuses to *"pitch-in"* !

From R. Greene via e-mail

I have a with the sides of the blades on my 14-inch Bandsaw building up with sawdust (I cut a lot of yellow pine). Next thing you know, my roller guides get coated...then the blade doesn't track properly. Sometimes I can cut all day and not have any problems. What am I doing wrong?

You're cutting the wrong wood! Just kidding. Actually, yellow pine is absolutely loaded with pitch and resins.

I would suggest that you do the same thing with your bandsaw blades that most woodworkers do with heir circular saw blades....clean off the pitch frequently.

How? Remove the blade and coat it with spray-on sawblade cleaner. Allow it to sit for a half hour, then rinse off, dry and go back to work.

CAUTION: Back-up bearings are another issue. Unfortunately, spraying these cleaners on bearings could ruin them...so you may have to scrape the "crud" off them or use steel wool, etc. Cleaning the bearings will obviously be more difficult.

Woodworker loses his groove

From Dennis C. via e-mail

I have my Shopsmith set up in the shaper mode and am running an 18" long piece of 3/4" wood through. I am making the groove portion of a tongue and groove joint.

At the beginning of the cut, the groove is centered. At the end of the 18" cut, the groove is off by 3/32". I believe that all connections are tight. What is going wrong? I am scared to do the tongue portion until I have this figured out and corrected. Can you help me?

After reviewing this problem with a number of folks...the consensus is that either something is loose or slipping....or....your stock is thicker on one end than it is on the other.

Please check to be sure your table is not slipping in the carriage...your quill lock is not slipping...the arbor is not slipping on the spindle...or the headstock is not slipping on the way tubes.

You can check this by placing a piece of tape on the way tubes where they pass through the headstock....or on the Table down-tubes where they pass through the carriage. Attach the tapes **before** making your cut...then, check the tape again **after** you make your cuts.