
Subject: saw purchasing
Posted by [jim denton](#) on Fri, 11 Mar 2005 14:53:04 GMT
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Really getting the bug to buy a saw and making hor cabinets---the more I look at the Fostex drawing ----the more I have convinced myself that I (with out one woodworking gene in my body!!!) can do this ---So, question: table saw as a required item or radial arm saw---we are talking cutting accurately to the mm----Jim

Subject: Re: saw purchasing
Posted by [GarMan](#) on Fri, 11 Mar 2005 16:17:53 GMT
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Jim,A table saw is a great tool to have for cabinet making. On the other hand, I've completed four sets of speakers in the past two years without one. My reluctance to purchase one is based on a combination of cost, space, and infrequency of use. I've been relying on my local HD to cut the panels to size for me, and to date, all cuts have been within tolerance for my needs. For small panels, I've made-do with a circular saw and cutting guide. It can be just as accurate as a table saw, but requires more time to set up properly.Whether you need a table saw really depends on you. It'll certainly give you more flexibility and speed, and with the right jigs, allow you to do some things that you can't do otherwise. If you have the space, will use it often, and require lots of angled and bevelled cuts, then go for it. However, if you're just planning on using it to build just one set of simple squared sided cabinets, then I think there are better ways.Gar.

Subject: Consider a saw board
Posted by [colinhester](#) on Fri, 11 Mar 2005 17:38:05 GMT
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A good table saw is going to run some money and takes up a lot of room. But, there are things that can only be done with this.I would not even consider a radial arm saw. You might want to consider making a saw board (see link) if you're just making straight cuts. Dedicate a circ saw and you're off to the races....Colin
<http://members.aol.com/woodmiser1/sawbd.htm>

Subject: Re: saw purchasing
Posted by [BillEpstein](#) on Sat, 12 Mar 2005 01:18:19 GMT
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Having had a pro shop with Unisaw and Biesmeyer fence etc it was tough for me to decide what to do after being without. The problem with sawboards and jigs is how much easier it is to open another brew and watch the NFL then get them out. I bought the Ryobi that comes with built in folding legs and wheels. Its a direct drive universal motor which means noisy and not too powerful but it cuts MDF and plywood just fine. And as a bonus the cheap little fence is surprisingly accurate. It fits in the hall closet and wheels out to the patio in seconds. And yes you can build the Fostex backhorns. Question is, 'why would you want to'?

Subject: Re: saw purchasing

Posted by [Bill Martinelli](#) on Sat, 12 Mar 2005 04:18:17 GMT

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There are two ways to look at the purchase of a table saw. the first being for smaller portability and ease of ripping stock, more or less for construction, remodeling and casual use. These saws all do a decent job. Cut relatively straght and make simple task out of project that with other saw and guides are a chore and work out for your brain always making new setups and configurations just to cut a square piece with a round saw. These smaller table saws are great for what they are designed for and you will be happy you have it. Now for the second level of commitment. If your desire is to be a cabinet maker or at the least be a cabinet maker as a full time hobby. The table saw is the heart of your shop. The heart of all your work. Buy the best you can afford. this is the commitment of a lifetime for unless your turn pro and start buying sliding tables as workload demands. your table saw of choice will be the heart of your shop for the rest of your life. Funny, I remember always having to measure the fence from the miter slot for and aft the blade for every rip. Now saws have such nice fences that when you set the fence on the mark, it really cuts to that length. Nice rulers aren't good enough? you can even have a DRO these days for your rip fence! The bottom line I see is that if its a small portable saw, contractors saw, cabinet saw or full blown slider. this is the saw that your work will evolve around. From trimming to rabetts. Bill

Subject: Re: saw purchasing

Posted by [wunhuanglo](#) on Tue, 15 Mar 2005 06:10:38 GMT

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From my experience with low-rent versions of both: 1. A radial arm saw is for cross-cuts. It's very difficult to rip with due to a limited capacity and the inherent instability of the cantilevered cross arm making it prone to jams and kickback. 2. The ability of cheap radial arm saws to make good grooves, dadoes, etc...is limited by cross arm sag - you need a *very* high quality saw to get consistent depth across the entire width of the cut. 3. Table saw are made to rip. There's no doubt you can do anything on a table saw, but cross cutting an 8 foot 1X12 in half still ain't easy like it is on a radial arm saw. That's why there ain't no table saws at your local big-box pretend lumber yard for in-house use, only panel saws and radial arm saws. 4. Table saws are inherently superior

to radial arm saws when it comes to stability - no cross arm flopping around. With a table saw it's easy to get consistent-depth dadoes and grooves.⁵ I had only a radial arm saw for about 15 years. I dreaded using it every time I had to rip something and often thought up alternatives just to avoid using it. I made as many cross cuts on my 10" mitre saw as possible too.⁶ I've had the DeWalt portable table saw for about 5 years now and haven't fired up the radial arm but one time since I got the DeWalt. The DeWalt has just an amazingly accurate, stable fence. Like Bill M. says, if you're used to taking 3 minutes on each cut to measure the fore and aft distance from the blade to the fence for every cut you'll think you've died and gone to heaven with the DeWalt at only \$500. My only possible regret is not buying the equivalent Bosch saw. The Bosch soft-start motor is a nice feature - I think it probably leads to steadier nerves at the end of the day.

The DeWalt 10" portable saw

Subject: Re: saw purchasing
Posted by [Pete K](#) on Sat, 16 Apr 2005 04:54:56 GMT
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I know this post is late, compared to when the original query was made, but I would like to offer an alternative to buying a saw. If your community has an adult education program a night woodworking class in a high school wood shop provides access to some excellent equipment (the tuition is cheap tool rental) and expert instruction in safety and use. Although I have my own tools at home I've done this for years simply because I can't afford the quality tools the schools have, plus the access to excellent brains to pick. Just a suggestion.
