

“Customize Your Shop for the Way You Work” part 1



Conceptual Problem:

I know what I need a tool to do for a specific task, but manufacturers rarely make anything that works exactly as I would like. Very few tools come from the factory set-up as every shop would like. They need to be customized to the way the shop works and the function they serve.

Solution:

Modify the tools as needed for the specific application. If you do not possess the skills, hire a metal-worker or electrician to solve the problem for you. It is time and money well spent. The best way to explain what can be done is to show a few examples. Use your own creativity to find what works best for you.

1. In order to keep pieces relatively square when using an edge sander, a removable fence has been added. Place “T” nuts into the underside of the table and use large screw eyes to hold it in place. This allows for easy installation and removal with no tools. A squaring block is used to set up the fence.

2. This tool is manufactured for a variety of applications. False fences have been applied for the correct setback for the material thickness we use. In addition, height blocks have been added to the side to stop the tipping of pieces when placed along the length of the fence.



3. The hinge insertion machine did not come with a centerline. A piece of laminate has been used to bring the center section of the fence forward so it is in the same plane as the side fences. This creates the centerline feature. The side fences have also been covered with tape to prevent marring of the finished door.



4. This fence/stop system needed an extension to reach the blade. A two-part extender rod has been used with a replaceable brass tip. The fence can be zeroed by setting the pointer to zero and cutting the non-ferrous brass tip.



*Jim Falk is the president of Progressive Woodwork, Inc. and a very active CMA member.
Check out Jim's website at: progressivewoodworks.com*

Technical Solutions continued

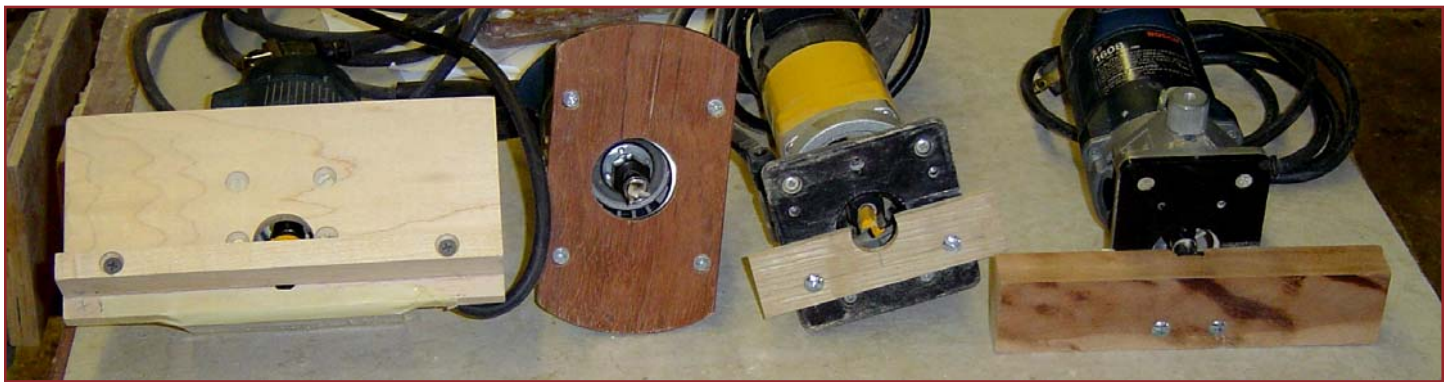
5. Many times router bits and other tooling do not come in the correct profile. Have custom bits made rather than trying to use multiple passes with "close" profiles. The time saving is tremendous.



6. Sometimes machine manufactures have great concepts; only you fabricate items outside the maximum width the machine is designed for. In this application the machines fence has been modified, along with the stop system, and the new set up allows for any width piece to be used.



7. For light-duty dedicated applications, either recycle old routers, or use laminate trimmers. After a few uses you will find that not needing to constantly change over the bit and resetting the machine recoups the cost of the router. Fixed fences permanently mounted to the bases also make quick work of repetitive tasks.



CMA Century Club

As promised, the Century Club program will go into effect January 1, 2007. Century Club dues are \$100/yr. If you are interested in participating, please submit this application form to the CMA office via fax (952-223-1416) or mail (574 Prairie Center Dr #135-105, Eden Prairie, MN 55344) no later than November 15, 2006.

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“Customize Your Shop for the Way You Work” part 2



Conceptual Problem:

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Solution:

Modify the tools as needed for the specific application. If you do not possess the skills, hire a metal-worker or electrician to solve the problem for you. It is time and money well spent. The best way to explain what can be done is to show a few examples. Use your own creativity to find what works best for you.

1. Some fence systems have specific increments. In this case a 1/32" spacer is kept with the fence system which has a designed increment of 1/16". In addition the stop block has been fabricated from a hard plastic which has been relieved on the bottom and back to allow for dust accumulation not interfering with accuracy, and allow for easy zeroing out, by cutting the piece.



2. Frequently cope slide jigs are made by the company to allow for a wide range of cutter sizes. In this application, the guide rail on the bottom of the jig has been moved to make it fit as close to the cutters as possible, and therefore provide more accuracy.



3. You do not need two shapers to do cope and stick cuts. By using one shaper, stacking all the cutters and using a stepped outfeed fence and a sliding cope jig, no second shaper is needed and the fences do not need to be moved for the different operations.



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Editor's Note: Do you have something that you would like to share with others? Send your technical solutions, favorite jigs, techniques or unique projects to editor@cabinetmakers.org.

Technical Solutions continued

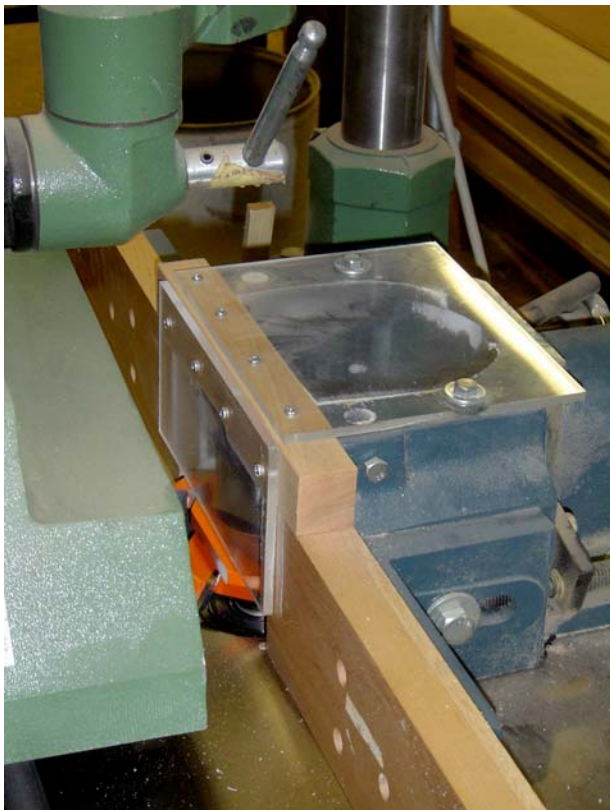
4. Frequently power feeders need to be swung out of the way for different operations. In order to get it back in the correct place a spacer block is used that is attached to the feeder with a piece of Velcro when not in use. A remote control for the vacuum system is also very handy.



5. In order to prevent snipes in the beginning or end of the board, a full shaper fence can be used. Here is an example of a fence for creating beads on a piece of wood.



6. The dust collection chute for many tools are much larger than they need to be to accommodate a variety of cutters. By reducing the size of the opening, much better dust collection is possible. The use of Plexiglas allows the user to see if there is a blockage.



7. Control your tools, do not let them limit you. Sometimes the feed speed for machinery does not go slow enough to get a quality cut, or the amount of material you are taking off bogs down the cutter. A simple speed control solves this problem.



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