

Shop-Proven Products

These woodworking wares passed our shop trials.

About our product tests

We test hundreds of tools and accessories, but only those that earn at least three stars for performance make the final cut and appear in this section. The products shown here, and those that don't make the cut, are also reviewed at toolreviews.woodmagazine.com. Prices shown are current at the time of article production and do not include shipping, where applicable.

Vacuum gobbles dust and seals it away

It's easy to suck up dust from big, stationary machines using a powerful collector, but not always so easy to capture the fine dust and debris created by portable power tools, such as a sander, router, or circular saw. DeWalt's DWV012 10-gallon wet/dry shop vacuum solved that problem in my shop. This vacuum has enough suction to keep up with those tools, while capturing even the finest dust in the included prefiltering felt bag. It also has HEPA filters to trap dust particles as fine as .3 micron that escape the bag—but even after sanding mahogany I couldn't find any sign of it on the white filters. Impressive.

A tool-actuated switch turns the vac on and off with the tool, and the motor runs so quietly, I couldn't hear it over the tool's noise. However, every 30 seconds the built-in filter cleaner pulses, and that noise can be annoying. Other great features: variable suction, a 1¼"×15' hose, easy-rolling casters (lockable in the front), and a telescoping handle for easy storage and transport.

—Tested by Craig Ruegsegger,
Deputy Editor



Tool-triggered shop vacuum (DWV012)

Performance ★★★★★
Price \$529

DeWalt
800-433-9258; dewalt.com



WISE BUYS: Benchtop 6" Jointers

A benchtop jointer flattens and squares up lumber for hundreds of dollars less than a floor-standing model while taking up less space. Though limited by short beds (additional infeed/outfeed support might

be needed for boards longer than 4'), their 6" cutters provide the same width capacity as larger machines. Of the five we tested, these three impressed us most with their power and cut quality.



The bargain heavyweight

Grizzly G0725, \$235
800-523-4777, grizzly.com

So long as we took ⅛" or shallower cuts and used a steady feed rate, the G0725 produced surfaces free of chatter marks and tear-out. The two straight knives adjust easily by loosening the gib screws and rotating the jackscrews. The cast-iron body on this 95-lb machine virtually eliminated vibration, and when we jointed 6'-long boards, that heft kept it from tipping, even without being clamped or bolted down. A nice little perk: The G0725 comes with a huge chip-collection bag that empties easily.



The cutting-edge middleweight

Steel City 40610CH, \$300
888-304-8840, steelcitytoolworks.com

The 40610CH boasts a feature not found on any other jointer in this class: a segmented insert cutterhead (*inset*). The replaceable high-speed-steel inserts—each with two cutting edges—can be rotated to a fresh edge should one get nicked. We found its cut quality good if we limited cuts to less than ⅛" deep. The quietest among these units, it lacks the high-pitched whine common to many universal motors. With a cast-iron table and aluminum fence, the 40610CH weighs 50 lbs.



The powerful lightweight

Porter-Cable PC160JT, \$250
888-678-7278, portercable.com

The PC160JT had plenty of power to face-joint 6"-wide hard maple. Its two straight knives adjust easily with a simple lock and jackscrew leveling system: Loosen the blade a little, then turn the screws to adjust the height up or down. The aluminum bed and fence make this 35-lb tool easy to stow and carry, but we had to clamp it to a benchtop to prevent tipping when jointing boards longer than 4'. Although it has a variable-speed motor, we never found a good reason to run it slower than the highest speed.