

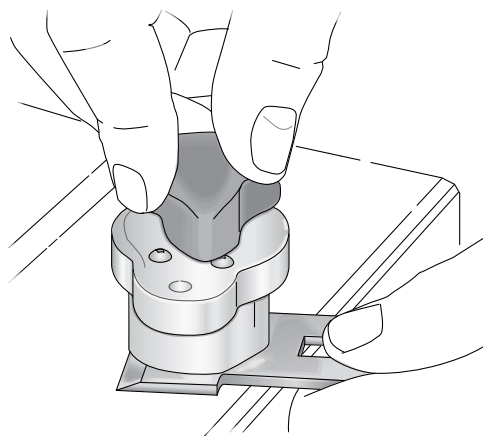
Shortcuts

ILLUSTRATIONS BY MARY JANE FAVORITE

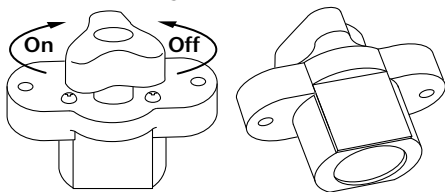
Pressure Where You Need It

This Shortcut allows easier control of holding a plane blade while flattening its unbeveled face. Secure a “Mag-Jig” rare earth magnet as a handle to hold on to as you flatten the face. It gives you more control and is easier on the fingers. The Mag-Jig is available from Lee Valley Tools (leevalley.com or 800-871-8158).

Robert Davison
Georgetown, Ontario



Knob rotates to activate or deactivate magnet.



“If the crafts survive, their work will be done for love more than for money. ... People are beginning to believe that you cannot make even toothpicks without ten thousand pounds of capital. We forget the prodigies one man and a kit of tools can do if he likes the work enough.”

— David Pye (1914-1993)
Master craftsman and author

Easier Square Holes

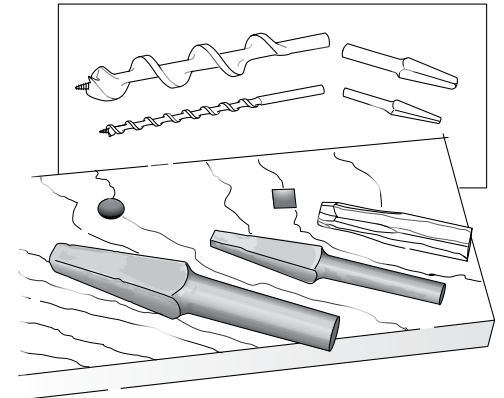
When pegging mortise-and-tenon joints, many woodworkers like the look of a square peg. A square peg can be a stylistic statement, or simply a detail correct to the period of the furniture reproduction.

In either case, some woodworkers struggle with getting a square peg to fit neatly into a round hole. Sometimes the square peg will compress the circumference of a round hole into a perfect square; but often there are gaps left behind. Or worse, the work splits.

To combat this problem, I hacksawed off the tapered ends of some old square-shanked auger bits (rusty ones can be had for a song at any flea market). They come in two sizes typically. The smaller square shank tapers up to $\frac{1}{4}$ ". The larger ones taper up to $\frac{3}{8}$ ".

Hacksaw off the tapered shank, plus about 2" of the round section of the shank. Dress the round area of the shank with a file to remove any sharp edges left from the hacksawing.

Now you can use these two tools to transform round holes into ones with square lips. Here's how: Drill your round hole for your peg. Then drop your new tool into the round hole and tap it with



a hammer until it cuts the right square lip. Now drive your peg home. It helps to whittle one end of the square peg round and to stop tapping the peg as soon as the square section of the peg seats in the square section of the hole. Use a flush-cut saw to flush the peg to your workpiece surface then sand to finish.

Marc Adams
Franklin, Indiana

Accurate, Inexpensive Woodworking Squares

Inexpensive drafting triangles can be “drafted” into service as a highly accurate square for marking out perpendicular lines and directly confirming the fact that assemblies are square (or not). I’ve never trusted measuring assemblies on the diagonal because that can be an inaccurate measurement at times.

So here’s what you do: Take a plastic 12" 45° drafting triangle (you can buy one at any store for architects, artists or students). Then carefully joint and rip a narrow strip of $\frac{1}{2}$ " x $\frac{1}{2}$ " hardwood so it is slightly shorter in length than one of the legs of the right triangle. Plow a shallow groove in the hardwood. Our square was .010" thick, so a single saw blade kerf from a thin-kerf blade was perfect. In any case, the groove should be the same width as the thickness of the drafting square and the hardwood should fit tightly on the plastic square. Finally, epoxy the hardwood strip onto the square, using tape as a clamp.

Now you have a versatile square ideal for case-work layout. It rests easily in place on your work

without tipping off (like a framing square will do), and the transparency is a plus for seeing your work. And you have a much longer reach than a typical 6" combination square. Make several squares in several sizes, and you’ll be set.

Robert W. Lang, senior editor

