

Work Sharp-The Wood Tool Sharpener.

A review of the tool by John Tegeler.

Recently I had an opportunity to try out the Work Shop wood tool sharpener. The tool was recently donated to the Guild by Professional Tool Manufacturing, LLC in Ashland, Oregon. I have been using chisels more and more and most recently practicing making dove tails. The chisels that I was using were brand new, and never been used and seemed to be doing a good job. So, I seized the opportunity to sharpen my new chisels and try out the new sharpener. After unpacking the basic unit, it was observed to be a compact unit with a relatively small foot print. The construction is solid with a top-grade plastic base, impact and vibration resistant, a sheet-metal housing and a cast aluminum top. It's powered by a 1/5 horsepower motor which was very adequate for my chisel sharpening duties.

The standard kit included four abrasive disks (120, 400, 1000, and 3600 grits), two tempered glass wheels, a tool rest, edge vision slotted wheel, slotted abrasives, and a small crepe stick to clean the abrasive disks. There are other accessories available.



I would highly recommend viewing the CD disk provided as it demonstrated how to assemble the unit, how it worked, and how all the features were to be used. Plus, it also provided some valuable tips on how to sharpen tools in general. I proceeded to put the unit to task and sharpen my three chisels which were brand new and only lightly used.

My first task was to determine the angle of the blade. Once that was established, I set the sharpening port to the proper angle. The port is easily adjustable and the gauge is clearly marked. Next I placed on the first sanding disk with the 120 grit on top and secured the top knob in place and proceeded to turn the sharpener on.

I took my first chisel and using a two-handed, freehand approach, I flattened the back of the chisel. I did the same with the other two chisels. I turned the abrasive over so that the 120 grit was now facing down. I undid the top knob, flipped the disk, and screwed the top knob back on and proceeded to the next step. That was easy.

The next step involves the sharpening of the bevel. This process takes place in the sharpening port area located below the grinding disks. I next moved the fence lightly against the tool using the fence alignment knob on the right side of the port. You do not want a lot of pressure as you must push and pull the chisel up into the sanding wheel disk. Once set, I slid the chisel (bevel side up) into the port between the fence and guide rail. I plunged the chisel into the wheel for 1 or 2 seconds and then pulled it back. I repeated this process until the tool had a consistent finish. It took several attempts on my chisels even though they were brand new and never used. I

was amazed at how uneven the cutting edge was. I proceeded using the same process on the other two chisels.

For the best results, I followed the same procedure and worked my way through the other three grits (400, 1000, and 3600). If you wish, you can go one more step and put on a micro bevel. My final take is this. The machine was quiet, sturdy, easy to use, and did a great job of sharpening my chisels. I went back to my shop and continued practicing my dove tails. Compared to how the chisels worked before I sharpened them, it was like night and day. I don't know if I would want to use this sharpener for small tune ups as there is a lot of effort in getting everything set up, changing the wheels and adjusting the ports. I think that I will continue using my stones and sandpaper for the quick maintenance and minor honing. It sure was nice, however, when I had several items to sharpen.

The basic unit costs close to \$200.00. There is an optional accessory kit that includes some really neat stuff for approximately \$80.00. And finally, I want to thank Professional Tool Manufacturing, LLC for their generous donation.

John Tegeler
johnteg@hotmail.com
913-461-9396



**Published by the
Kansas City Woodworkers' Guild**
www.kcwoodworkersguild.org