

*Workbench* Tool Review

October 2002

# Miter Saw Stands



## Eight Popular Models Tested

When all the testing was done, we came to the conclusion that every manufacturer has its own idea of how to best accommodate a miter saw. In this review, we'll help you sort through the *very* different features and benefits of each model we tested, and help you choose a stand that best suits the work you want to accomplish.

Not too long ago, I built a wood privacy fence around my backyard. As you can imagine, my miter saw was one of the most important tools during this project. Between chopping fence posts to length, cutting dog ears on the cedar slats, and making support wedges for the framework, the old miter saw was getting quite a workout.

Because of its crucial role, the saw occupied a place of some esteem, directly in the center of the yard. No further from one section of fence than any other, but also not any closer.

The saw was planted firmly on the most stable sawhorse I own. Then, to brace the long boards I was cutting, I had four more sawhorses set up as stock supports — two on each side of the saw with several

spacer blocks to raise them to the level of the saw table.

Needless to say, setting up the saw was a project in itself. And since a privacy fence isn't a one-day job, I got to repeat the process for three days in a row.

### A BETTER SOLUTION

Well, despite the makeshift miter saw stand, the fence turned out great. But I'd barely driven the last screw when I got word we'd be doing a review of *real* miter saw stands. You know the kind I mean. They're built with sturdy metal frames that fold down so you can move them easily and they have features like built-in stock supports, stop blocks, and cord wraps. In other words, they're everything that a group of sawhorses is not. So, with my fence project fresh

in my mind, I set out to evaluate these stands based on their stability, stock support, mobility, and extra features. The stands were also judged on their overall quality of construction and, of course, price.

One of the most interesting things that came out of this comparison is how very different these stands are from one another. Each manufacturer has its own idea of how to best accommodate a miter saw. To get an idea of the differences, take a look at the *Features Comparison Chart* below.

And because these stands are so different, we didn't try to choose a "one-size-fits-all, best-of-class" stand. Instead, we matched each stand to a particular scenario where it would serve best. Look for these recommendations in each write-up.

## FEATURE COMPARISON CHART

Model/Make	Ridgid MS-UV	Delta 50-155	DeWalt DW723	TracRac TracMaster	Milwaukee 48-08-0450	Rousseau HD2950	Trojan MS2000	StandRite 4024
Price	\$199	\$230	\$230	\$249	\$170	\$576*	\$360	\$205
Open Size	25"x96"x27"	35"x108"x29"	33"x150"x29"	34"x93"x32"	36"x114"x27"	36"x144"x27"	35"x156"x28"	39"x104"x15"
Weight w/o saw	78 lbs.	66 lbs.	35 lbs.	30 lbs.	56 lbs.	72 lbs.	60 lbs.	40 lbs.
Stock Support	8 ft.	9 ft.	16 ft.	8 ft.	10 ft.	12 ft.	13 ft.	10 ft.
Stop Blocks	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Optional	No	No
Scale	No	No	No	No	No	Optional	No	No
Wheels	12"	13"	None	None	None	10"	10"	None
Cord Wrap	No	Yes	No	No	No	No	No	No
Hold-Down	No	Yes	No	No	No	No	No	No
Fence Extension	No	Yes	No	No	No	Optional	No	No
Table Extension	No	Yes	No	No	No	Optional	No	No

\*Includes optional support wing and stop system. Base unit retails for \$346.



**R**idgid's miter saw stand is a new product for this company, though considering the outstanding quality of this unit, you'd think they'd been building them for years.

This stand came out of the box 90 percent ready for work. All I had to do was attach the wheels, connect the stock supports, and mount the miter saw in pre-drilled holes. (For other than Ridgid saws, you'll need to drill mounting holes.) It took less than 15 minutes to assemble the stand and head to the job site.

And speaking of the job site, the Ridgid stand adapts well to any environment. First off, the large wheels make it easy to pull over rough ter-

rain, curbs, stairs, or whatever else gets in the way. And once you've reached your destination, you've got a couple of choices of how to use the stand.

If you've got a few short pieces to cut, you can just set the stand flat on the ground. A short pair of legs on the end of the stand opposite the wheels holds the unit level. And when the stand is folded down, the stock support rollers are still usable.

For more involved projects, expanding the MS-UV is a breeze. Just fold down the legs opposite the wheels. Then fold down the wheels themselves.

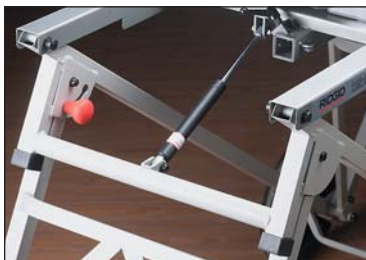
A nice feature here is a hydraulic shock under the saw table that actu-

ally provides some lift assistance (*see photo below*). The shock also helps prevent the stand from slamming closed when you fold the stand down.

When working with long boards, the stock supports can be extended out to an overall length of 8 feet.

When the work is done, the saw knocks down to roughly the size of a two-wheel dolly, and it can be stored vertically in a corner of the garage or shop.

Considering the ease of setup, rugged construction, useful features, adaptability, and portability of this stand, I can't imagine anyone who wouldn't be thrilled with it all for under \$200.



▲ A hydraulic shock attached to the frame of the Ridgid MS-UV lightens the load during setup.



▲ This stand moves easily and unfolds quickly into a sturdy unit with up to 8 feet of stock support.



▲ Cord wrap stores cord neatly and releases it instantly.



▲ Roller supports adjust rapidly to hold all lengths of board.

**D**elta's miter saw stand strikes an excellent balance between being loaded with features and still being collapsible and portable.

It has fully adjustable roller stock supports, an aluminum fence and table extension with a stop block, stock hold-down, on-board cord wrap with quick release, and large all-terrain wheels for maneuvering on rough job sites.

The stock supports are particularly impressive. They can be adjusted quickly for height by sliding the roller up or down and for length by hooking an arm in one of three different positions.

The aluminum table and fence extension, although small, is helpful

for squaring workpieces to the saw. And an aluminum stop block comes in handy for making repetitive cuts.

Another thoughtful feature, which we found only on this stand, is a cord wrap. Considering that this stand is designed to be stored with the saw attached, it's nice to have a place to wrap the cord. Even better, you don't have to unwrap the cord when you're ready to use it. Simply rotate the retainer out of the way and pull the cord off for service.

Even with all the features on this unit, the stand still folds down into a relatively compact size for transportation and storage. And when it's folded, moving the stand around is easy thanks to the large wheels and

foam padded handle.

The trade-off for this ingenious stand is that it's a bit complicated to assemble and use.

It took me nearly three hours to unpack and assemble the unit. And once it was together, I suffered a couple of knocked shins and pinched fingers before I learned the intricacies of setting the stand up while staying out of the way of all the moving parts.

Overall, this stand has excellent features, a reasonable price (about \$230), and superior construction.

As long as you've got the patience to assemble it and learn its mannerisms, you'll have a miter saw stand adaptable to any project you take on.



▲ It's hard to believe that all the features on the Delta stand can be condensed into such a small package.



▲ A cushioned hand grip takes the pain out of moving this stand around the job site.



▲ The stock supports double as stop blocks on the DeWalt.

**H**ere's a good miter saw stand for a busy DIY'er. Don't have time for assembly? There's very little required with the DeWalt miter saw stand. Plan on moving around your job site quite a bit? This 35-lb. unit is an easy one-handed carry thanks to the built-in handle. And when the work is done, remove the saw from the stand with the quick-release levers, fold the legs up under the stand, and you're ready to go.

Of course, in between the setting up and knocking down, you'll no doubt want to cut some lumber. That's when you'll appreciate the 16 feet of stock support offered by the extendable beams. Each support also has a flip-up stop that makes repetitive cuts quick and exact.

Another useful feature of this stand

is that the saw can be positioned anywhere along the main beam. That's accomplished with quick-release mounts that attach to the base of the saw. By squeezing a lever on each of the mounts, you can slide the saw along the beam to reposition it or remove it from the stand altogether.

Because the saw can be repositioned anywhere along the beam, it allows more flexibility for tailoring the miter saw to a particular task. For instance, with the saw positioned all the way to the right end of the beam, the stand has over 12 feet of stock support to the left of the saw. Then you can position the right stock support and stop block for making repetitive cuts from a few inches in length to nearly 5-ft. long. With the saw centered on the beam, there's 8 feet of

stock support on both sides of the saw.

Because of its simple but capable design, this stand became the fast favorite of our *Workbench* project coordinator.

He spends lots of time running between projects, tying up loose ends. The last thing he wants to do is waste time setting up tools to complete just a few details. He has reported that lifting this stand in and out of the truck is no problem, and the quick setup and knockdown lets him spend more time working and less time assembling.

The stand is competitively priced at around \$230. And despite having fewer features than other stands in this price range, it's a good investment for the DIY'er on the move.



▲ The DeWalt's lightweight construction and built-in handle leave one hand free for carrying the miter saw as you move from place to place.



▲ The saw mounts have quick-release levers for rapidly repositioning the saw on the beam.



▲ Hand cranks lock and unlock the saw for relocation or removal.

There are three words to describe Milwaukee's Heavy-Duty Work Center — simple, rugged, affordable. It's a good combination for anyone who just wants to get some work done without being bothered by a lot of setup.

This stand is essentially a galvanized steel sawhorse with two cylindrical stock supports on each side of the saw.

The stock supports are designed to be set at a specific height and left alone. That should only be a problem if you plan on using more than one saw with the stand. The supports extend to give the stand a wingspan of just under 10 feet.

To make the most out of the stock support capacity, the miter saw can be positioned anywhere along the length of the beam. This is done by loosening the mounting

brackets with a crank handle (see Photo at left).

For storage, the saw comes off using the same crank handles. Then the legs of the stand fold underneath the body (see Photo below).

The heavy-duty steel construction of this stand makes it a chore to move. Particularly when you consider you have to make a second trip for the saw or carry each piece with one hand.

This unit is best suited to someone who wants a rugged stand without paying much money (\$170).



◀ Although the Milwaukee is compact when folded, it's quite heavy. You may want to make a second trip to get the miter saw.

**TRACRAC TRACMASTER** TracRac.com 800-501-1587

TracRac's TracMaster miter saw stand is a no-nonsense stand with just enough features to make it helpful for most cuts.

The TracMaster is a lightweight aluminum stand with a sliding saw mount made of MDF. The stand is supported by aluminum legs that are capped with rubber feet.

One of the legs telescopes to help level the stand on uneven ground (see Photo below, left).

Setting this stand up or knocking it down is lightning fast thanks to push-button leg locks that release the legs to splay out and support the stand, or tuck underneath the main beam for storage.

The stand comes pre-assembled with a single stock support on the left-hand side. Instructions are included for mounting the support on the right side, if you choose.

Also, an additional stock support is available as an option

if you want supports on both sides of the saw. The stock support also has a flip-up work stop for making repetitive cuts.

With the stock support fully extended and the miter saw positioned at the opposite end of the beam, the stand has 8 feet of stock support capacity.

In general, this stand is light on features but heavy on convenience and portability. The price is a bit high (around \$250), considering other, similarly priced stands have more features. But it's still a decent stand that will earn its keep.



► An adjustable leg allows the TracMaster to adapt to uneven terrain.



◀ With the legs folded under and the saw removed, the TracMaster is compact and lightweight. It sets back up in just a few seconds.

# ROUSSEAU HD 2950 RousseauCo.com 800-635-3416



▲ Dual scales and dual stop blocks make the Rousseau easily adaptable to a wide range of board lengths.

The Rousseau HD, with an optional support wing and stop system, is an all-inclusive stand that's definitely at home in a shop. But on a job site it becomes a bit much to move because of its massive size and elaborate set-up and knockdown procedures.

The basic stand consists of a fixed mounting surface for a miter saw

that's supported by two folding legs. One leg sits on a pair of 10" pneumatic tires. These same legs have adjustable levelers for setting the stand up on uneven ground.

Also included in the base package are two roller work supports that give the stand an overall stock capacity of 12 feet.

The basic stand folds into an easy-to-roll, two-wheel cart that lets you leave the saw mounted.

Moving the stand becomes more difficult when you add the support wing and

stop system, as we did. These options add quite a bit to the setup time and make moving the stand a pretty good workout (*see Photo below*).

However, once the stand is in place and ready for action, these options pay off in usability.

For a job site saw, the basic stand is a decent, though pricey, choice (\$346 before options). With the support wing and stop system added, this stand becomes a bit too cumbersome if you plan to move the saw frequently.



◀ The basic stand folds down, with the saw mounted, into a mobile cart. The support and stop options are a bit of a burden to move.

# TROJAN MS2000 TrojanTools.com 800-745-2120

The straightforward design and setup of the Trojan miter saw stand make it an appealing choice for a miter saw that needs to be truly mobile. A good application would be when you're moving from room to room installing molding, for example.

There are no extras on this unit. It delivers just what you need to make your cuts and move on — a steady platform, 13 feet of stock support, and a collapsible unit that rolls on pneumatic tires.

Strangely enough, they've priced this unit as though it were overflowing with extras (\$360). So, in a nutshell, you have to pay more and get less if this is your choice.



◀ A simple and compact design may not be enough to justify the high price of the Trojan.



# STAND-RITE 4024 Standrite.com 604-936-5878

Standrite's unique miter saw stand folds into a large suitcase-like configuration during downtime, and then deploys into a long stand with large stock support surfaces when the work begins.

While this stand is certainly capable, it didn't impress me for several reasons.

Setting the stand up is more difficult than most. Also, the saw needs to be shimmed to match the stock support height and the single leg underneath each

stock support was a bit flimsy. Finally, there are no extra features.

Considering the price tag on this stand (\$205), it's hard to recommend it.



▲ Easy to carry, hard to set up, and expensive. Not the best choice.

