

Woodworking Tips



Measure Twice. Maybe 3 Times.

We've all heard the expression, "measure twice; cut once." But how you measure is just as important as the number of times you do it. Check out these super simple tips on marking and measuring, and notice the difference in your project accuracy.

Basic Tools

Your shop may be filled with the finest cutting and shaping tools money can buy, but if you don't measure and mark precisely, your project parts will fit like a cheap suit.

Perhaps that's why woodworking catalogs offer page after page of products promising to make you a more accurate woodworker. To help you sort it all out, here are the marking and measuring tools we find essential, plus some that are just darned useful. (Sources for tools not specifically sourced will be shown on last slide.)



First, make sure you have the basics: 150mm (6") and 300mm (12") steel rules. Look for a matte or satin finish with etched markings (rather than stamped) for accuracy and readability. Increments should go down to at least 1mm (1/32"). Buy one with a combination-square head and you'll multiply its value at least threefold by adding the ability to check and mark perfect 90° and 45° angles.

Folding rule

For longer dimensions, a 1 metre folding wooden rule provides more reliable accuracy than a retractable steel tape measure because there's no hook on one end that can get damaged and affect the accuracy. Get the kind with a sliding extension

for dead-on measurement inside cases and boxes.



100mm (4") or 150mm (6") machinist square

Ideal for tool setup and for marking crosscuts precisely, it slips easily into an apron pocket. Good thing, too, because you'll reach for this more often than you might think.

Sliding bevel gauge

This simple device performs for any angle what a combination square does for 90° and 45°, making transferring or duplicating that odd angle foolproof, without even

having to know the angle.





Mechanical pencil or marking knife

Measuring to a gnat's backside means little if your old carpenter's pencil makes a wide swath. A marking knife scores razor-thin lines, and a mechanical pencil's thin mark is consistent and predictable.

Now add to your arsenal : 100mm (4")double square

Take the best features of a combination square (easy adjustability and measurement markings), mix in the best features of a machinist square (precision and pocket portability), and you'll see why we like a 4" double square. The blade slides through the body for gauging reveals on cabinet doors or for setting up saw blades and router bits, without being cumbersome like a full-size combo square.

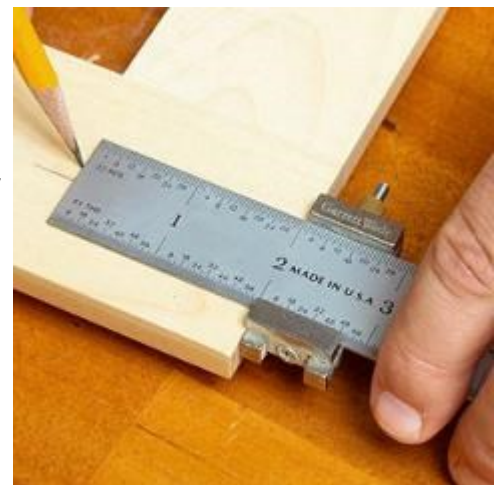


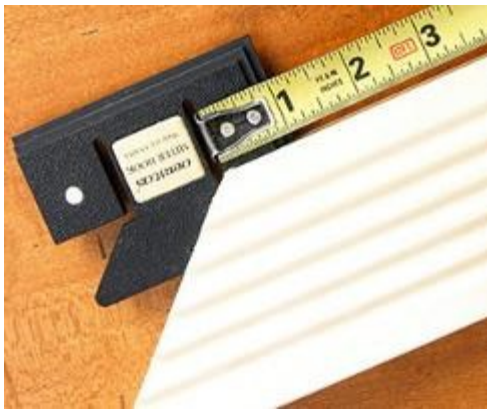
300mm (12") adjustable hook rule

Like the hook on the end of a retractable tape measure, the one on the end of this steel rule makes it easy to measure from an overhanging edge. The hook can be repositioned along the end of the rule to work with thin materials; to reach over a routed edge, as shown; or you can remove it completely if you like. Four scales (one on each edge, front and back) let you choose incremental markings from 1/8" to 1/64", depending on how accurate you want to be.

Ruler Stop

We use stopblocks on the tablesaw, router table, and drill press practically every day in the WOOD® magazine shop to ensure multiple matching cuts or evenly spaced holes. Why wouldn't you want that same reliable repeatability when marking and measuring? The dovetail slot in this handy add-on grips virtually any steel rule up to 1 3/16" wide. We put a Ruler Stop at each end of a 12" rule and flipped it end for end as we marked a series of cabinet door handles 2" up from the bottom (flip!) and 1" in from the edge.





Veritas Mitre Hook

The toughest measurement to make accurately has to be the short length (or heel) of a metred workpiece, such as the inside dimensions of a picture frame or window casing. Veritas' Mitre Hook makes this previously formidable task foolproof by giving you a solid place to hook your retractable steel tape measure. Steel pins bite into the end grain, and rare-earth magnets keep the tape from coming unhooked from the hook. As a bonus, stepped edges around the Mitre Hook act as 3mm (1/8") and 6mm (1/4") reveal gauges for perfect placement of mouldings.

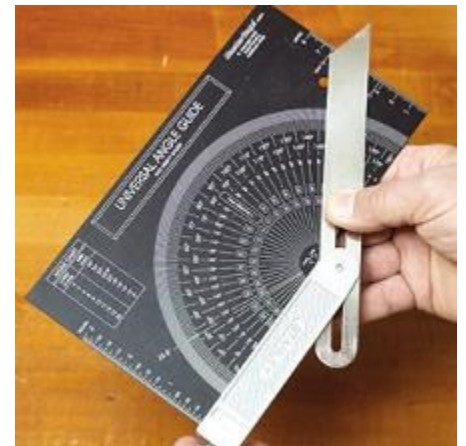


Quick Corners

We've all done it: To mark a radius on the corner of a workpiece, you pull out a coin (or soda can, or glue bottle, or roll of masking tape, or...) and trace around it. It's tough, though, to locate that temporary template perfectly on the corner. Quick Corners transparent templates self-index to any square corner for marking precise radii every time. We found the yellow template, for marking convex curves from 10mm 1/2" to 50mm (2") in 5mm (1/4") increments, the most useful. The set also includes templates for concave radii, chamfered corners, and convex radii up to 150mm (6").

Universal Angle Guide

When you need to mark a known angle (and not merely copy or match one), you can't beat the precision of this multi-function tool. Although pricey, its super-fine laser-etched markings provide a dead-on reference for any angle from 0° to 180° in 10mm (1/2") increments. Use it to set your mitre gauge or sliding bevel gauge, as shown. Either end of the Universal Angle Guide also can be used to set router bit and saw blade height, but we found the fine markings difficult to read for this purpose.



230mm (9") protractor square

This oversize bevel gauge picks up where your pocket-size model leaves off. For transferring angles from an odd-shaped piece to the mitresaw (as shown) or to your tablesaw mitre gauge, the long blades of a protractor square provide plenty of bearing surface to ensure precise setup. This device does have a degree scale that you could use to set specific angles, but the small, closely spaced markings are difficult to read.

Please note; You will find that all of these measuring tools are available from Carba-Tec, which Vince is able to get for you.

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This Club/ Guild aims to assist members to improve their woodworking skills. Not all such activities occur in our Club premises, and some activities or events are promoted through this Newsletter and others directly to members in some other ways, but they are still Club/Guild activities, please support them. These activities may include personal and group tuition of members by other members (we all try to help one another for the benefit of the Club/Guild in this way) sessions in member's workshops, wood-gathering, events promoting our activities to members of the public, and other such activities and events.

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from 4-5 weeks per course.*

Our Learning Centre is at Unit 70, Historic Village, 17th Avenue, Tauranga. That's just uphill from the now-closed Wickham School. We have our own drive-in entrance. Turn right once through the gateway and then park.

