



Woodworking tips

Adding resawing capacity



Sometimes an extra 6" of resawing capacity on your bandsaw can make a huge difference. Say you want to cut veneer or book-matched panels from a beautifully figured board that's too wide to fit between your bandsaw table and upper blade guides. Wouldn't it be great to solve the problem with an inexpensive kit and half an hour's work?

What you need is a riser block—a simple extension that fits between the base and arm of a typical cast-iron bandsaw frame. Not all saws accept a riser block, but many popular 14" models do. (Check your owner's manual or ask your dealer to find out if you have the option.) Your riser block kit should also include a longer guide post, connector bolt, blade, and blade guards. Expect to pay your dealer between \$60 and \$90 for the entire works.



Separate the saw arm from the base

Begin by removing the blade, upper blade guides, guide post, and both blade guards. Store the parts in a labeled box or bag. Next, follow the steps shown here to install the riser block kit. Although you can do it alone, you may want to enlist an assistant to help when you reinstall the saw arm.

Remove the bolt that holds the saw arm to the base. The arm simply lifts off, but be prepared - it's heavy and awkward.

Add and align the riser block



The typical riser block includes indexing holes on the bottom and matching pins on the top, so it's self-aligning. If your riser block has no pins, align the outer edges flush with the base. Reinstall the saw arm, as shown in the top photo.

Add the connector bolt

Place the connector bolt into the slot on the saw arm, and set the saw arm atop the riser block. Access is tight, but you can reach the connector bolt head and nut with box-end or open-end

wrenches. (On our bandsaw, the head and the nut take different-size wrenches.) Tighten the bolt securely.



Determining the power-switch location

The power-switch position varies from one bandsaw to another; ours stays at its original height by attaching to threaded screw holes in the riser block. If your switch moves to a higher position, you might have to increase the cord's available length; sometimes that's as simple as removing a wire tie.



Add the blade guards

Now, start to install the other components of the riser-block kit. The longer rear blade guard mounts just like the original one. The guard shown in photo fits over two attachment posts, and two screws secure it in place.



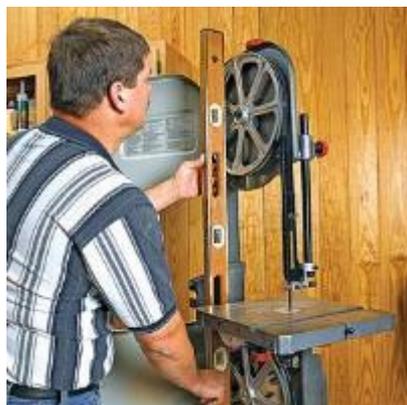
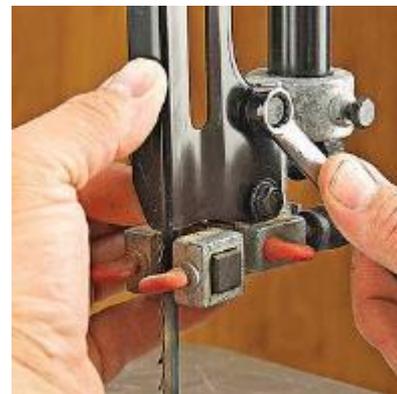
Next come the blade guides

Blade guides come in a variety of styles, but most reattach easily to their new guide post. Simply slide the upper blade guides onto the new post, and then tighten the unit in place. On this model, a single bolt does the job.



You'll need longer blades

Install the longer blade, then finish the job by adding the new front blade guard. Again, it's a one-wrench procedure.

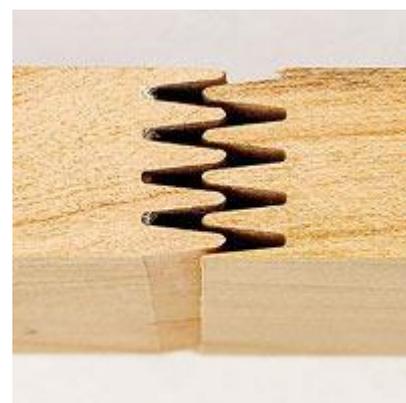


Check for proper alignment

Lay a long straightedge across both wheels, and check to make sure it touches the rims at all four possible contact points. If so, the wheels are in the same plane, or "coplanar." To eliminate any gaps, turn the adjustment knob to tilt the top wheel.

6 ways to make end-to-end joints that hold

Any joint that butts end grain to end grain will be weak because you're gluing wood fibers at their porous ends instead of along their sides. (Picture trying to glue two drinking straws together at their ends instead of along their sides.) Fortunately, you can strengthen end-to-end joints for those rare occasions when they're necessary, such as connecting two pieces of crown molding on a long wall, or making the most of pieces that are too short for your project but too long to scrap. Boiled down to basics, you must either add reinforcements, such as plates, dowels, or screws, or cut the joint in a way that creates mechanical strength and exposes more face or edge grain for a stronger bond, such as the finger joint, shown at *right*. Check out these eight solutions, from basic to beautiful.

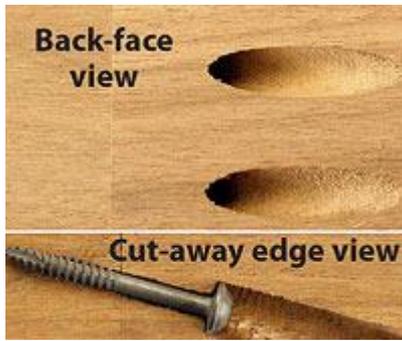


Plain, practical straps

Eight #8x1/2" flathead wood screws plus glue hold this end-to-end crown molding joint tightly together.

Use simple metal or plywood straps to reinforce butt joints where they can be hidden or where appearance isn't important, such as on the back side of a wide crown molding where you can't afford any waste. Making your own custom-sized straps from 1/4" plywood saves you money and provides a strong gluing surface.

To install a wooden strap, cut it as wide as the workpiece allows. If you're joining pieces with a profile on the opposite face, such as molding, locate the screw holes over the thickest profile points -- at the peak of a ridge or curve, for example. To make the joint, glue and screw one side of the strap to a workpiece. After the glue dries, glue the other half of the strap, and clamp the assembly to a flat surface. For a tight joint, raise the other workpiece about 1/4" at 3' from the end being jointed. Then press the pieces together as you add the mounting screws, as shown right. Lay both pieces flat and allow the glue to dry before handling the joint.



Pocket-hole screws

Pocket holes drilled into the back face (top) are invisible from the front. The screw then pulls the pieces together (bottom).

Here's another easy method to fasten butt joints in a hurry. To install pocket-hole screws, drill an angled hole through one workpiece and into another. A screw inserted into the hole pulls the pieces together, as shown at *right*. Workpieces should be at least 1/2" thick (using 1" screws), and you can attach parts 1 1/2" or thicker using 2 5/8" screws. To learn more about making pocket-hole joinery, go to woodmagazine.com/pocket-holes.

Splines provide inner strength



This spline measures a third the thickness of the pieces to be joined, with the grain running perpendicular to the spline length. Round over the spline corners for a tight fit in the slot, but cut the splines 1/32" narrower than the combined depths of the slots.

A push pad holds this test scrap firmly against the router fence. Add a high auxiliary fence to keep long workpieces from tilting.

Splines create a face-to-face glue surface that resists flexing. Use through splines for an easy-to-make connection with visible splines. Mark each joint on its top face and set the saw blade 3/4" high -- Half the length of the splines. Orient the top faces of each piece against your rip fence for consistent groove positions between pieces. To keep extra-long pieces steady, add an auxiliary fence. Using a backer block to stop tear-out, cut kerfs on the ends to form a groove as wide as one-third the thickness of your stock. Next, plane and saw the spline blank stock to match the width and combined depth of the grooves. You can make splines from plywood or solid stock. If you choose solid stock, as shown *right*, orient the spline grain with the workpiece grain. Insert the spline; then glue and clamp the pieces.

For not much more work, create a concealed spline, like the one shown in *middle photo* that disappears after you assemble the joint. We made this joint using a 1/4" straight bit on a table-mounted router. Set the bit height to just more than half the width of your splines. Then adjust your router table fence to center the bit on the thickness of the workpiece ends.

Next, build a simple jig to guide your workpieces. From scrap slightly thicker than your workpieces, cut two stopblocks. Space them a distance apart that's twice the width of your workpiece minus mortise insets from both edges. Then attach a crosspiece that's 1/2" wider than the bit height for added safety and control. Clamp the connected stopblocks of the finished jig to the router table fence so they're equal distances from the bit, as shown *bottom right*.

To keep minor fence adjustment errors from creating an uneven joint, mark the top faces of your workpieces and have them facing you while routing the slots. Using a pushpad, press the workpiece against the router fence and down the edge of the right stop block to the router table. Slide the workpiece to the left stop block, as shown *bottom right*, and raise it clear of the bit.



Drill and dowel

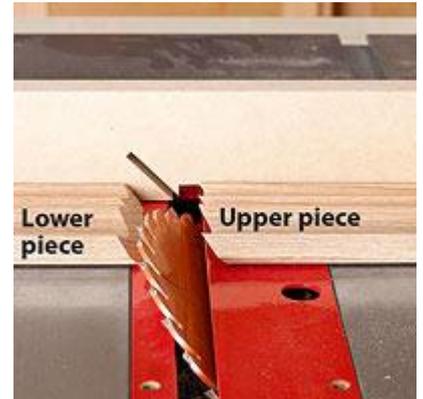
A dowel joint, shown at *right*, provides another invisible connection. Butt the pieces to be joined and mark dowel positions on both faces. Position a doweling jig over the marks, and drill holes 1/16" deeper than half the dowel length. On one piece, spread glue within the holes, insert the dowels, and clamp it to a flat surface. On the other piece, glue the end grain and holes, force the pieces together, and clamp until dry

Bevel-cut scarf joints

Cut crown-molding ends on opposite sides of the blade for a tight end-to-end joint.

By cutting ends at an angle before joining them, you expose more long grain for a better bond. The sharper the angle, the larger and better the gluing surface. For example, a 45° bevel increases the gluing surface by about 40 percent and helps conceal the joint line on a profiled surface. To match the angles, cut one end on one side of the saw blade and the mating end on the opposite side, as shown at right. Even if your blade bevel angle varies slightly from 45°, the pieces will mate.

To join the halves, clamp the lower one against a flat surface. Then clamp the upper piece down and against the bevel on the lower piece. Align the pieces with a straightedge, if necessary.



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