

Charnwood w310

£139.00 ☎ **01530 516926**

www.charnwood.net Typical street price: £139

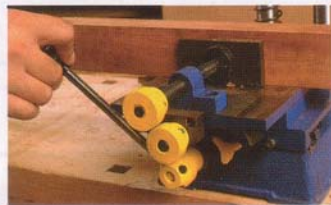
Charnwood's DIY-rated morticer is the only one with a timber clamp along with 'X Y' movement on the table, making it the easiest machine to use for chopping mortices. This cast iron table is fitted directly to the main base casting, with plastic knobs to lock positions once adjusted.

Knobs to set the clamp and forward/backwards travel are cramped, but they're not too difficult to operate. Maximum clamping width capacity is 100mm, though I found the fence a problem here. A piece of aluminium angle screwed to the cast table, as you apply pressure from the clamp, the fence deflects, pushing the work out of square to the plunge stroke. Lightly nipping the workpiece solves it to some degree, but this isn't strong enough to hold the timber firmly so can lift as the chisel is retracted. A better fence is needed to give you any real accuracy.

Sideways movement is controlled with a lever. I like

this as you can tweak it across and with heavier stock the leverage makes it easy to move. To prevent the lever bar fouling as it travels through, it's loose-fitted to enable it to be re-sited into holes around the centre boss as the table moves across. Maximum travel is 130mm, adequate for most jobs, though it's only a matter of repositioning the stock on wider or double mortices.

Take away the sliding table and the morticer is similar to the machines from SIP, Ferm, Draper and Perform. The head assembly is practically identical, with plastic bungs over the chuck access holes. It travels on twin steel bars, the right one with serrations for the rack and pinion movement. On the left is a steel spring to return the head after plunging. A collar around the right leg



limits plunge depth for stopped mortices.

The plunge arm is a fixed position so can't be adjusted to suit the stock depth, but this isn't too problematical.

Despite the basic set-up of the rest of the machine, the Charnwood's moving table speeds up morticing dramatically. With a better fence fitted this morticer would be fantastic value.

Supplied with an extra chuck for drill press work and a set of three budget chisels.

GW verdict

- ⊕ Travelling table. Chisels & chuck
- ⊖ Fence flexes when clamping

Value for money ●●●●○
Performance ●●●●○

