

Charnwood Bench Mortiser

ON TEST



Sliding tables are usually a luxury enjoyed only by the pros but Charnwood aim to change all that... **Andy Standing** reports

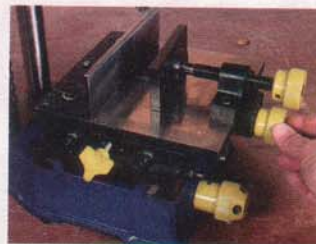
A good mortiser is easy to set up and produces accurate traditional-square edged mortises in minutes, that are ready to accept suitable tenons without needing any further work. The majority of bench top mortisers use a simple clamping system to secure the workpiece during machining, whereas the larger professional machines employ a travelling table that can be moved under the chisel to increase the speed and

Spec sheet	
Motor	375watts
Chisel capacity	1/4in to 1/2in
Max timber capacity	100mm by 100mm
Accessories supplied	3 chisels, drilling conversion kit
Weight	37kg

convenience of the machine. The W310 from Charnwood is a recent addition to their range and is supplied with a set of three chisels and a drilling conversion kit. It also has a small sliding table built into its base.

The 375W induction motor is mounted on a pair of steel columns with the left one housing the return spring, and the right one being part of the rack and pinion plunging mechanism. A plastic depth stop collar is fixed to the right hand column which is used to limit the downward travel of the head.

Charnwood's sliding table is mounted on the baseplate and is fully adjustable. It's made from cast iron and the maximum timber section that it can hold is 100mm square - enough for most home users. An adjustment knob on the front moves the table towards or away from the main



Adjustable sliding table

column and a removable lever is used to control the side-to-side movement. A large workpiece clamp is fitted to the top and the rear fence is also adjustable.

I found the machine a snap to set up and the motor



Depth stop

Complete machine with chisels and drilling attachment



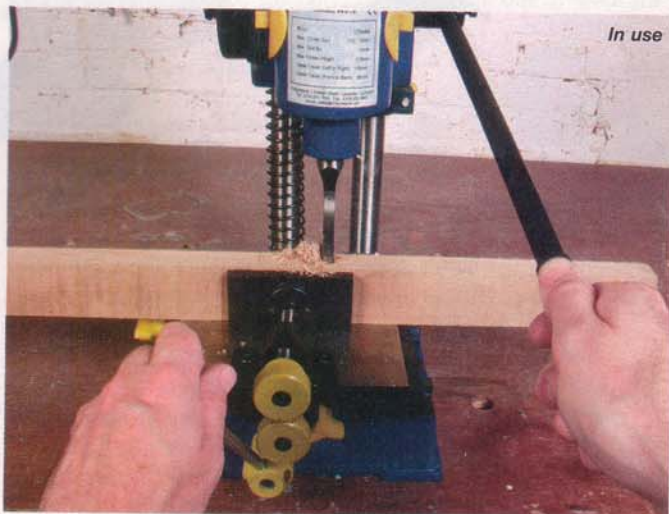
runs really sweetly. The sliding table is a definite bonus, and the movement is precise. There were a couple of problems, though. The depth stop tended to slip on the column, so it was easy to plunge too deeply. Also the supplied chisels are only average quality and didn't always cut cleanly.

Access to chuck



USEFUL INFORMATION

Price: £179
Charnwood
01530 516926
www.charnwood.net



In use

Ww verdict

Just because it has the sliding action doesn't mean this is a machine for trade use. However, it would make a great addition to the home workshop. Time spent sharpening or upgrading the chisels would really improve their performance, and the slipping depth stop could also be tackled fairly easily. The sliding table is the real plus point, greatly improving its ease of use, and the included drilling conversion kit further extends its versatility. Used carefully the W310 can produce accurate and consistent joints.

RATING	1	2	3	4	5
Value	[Progressive bar]				
Performance	[Progressive bar]				