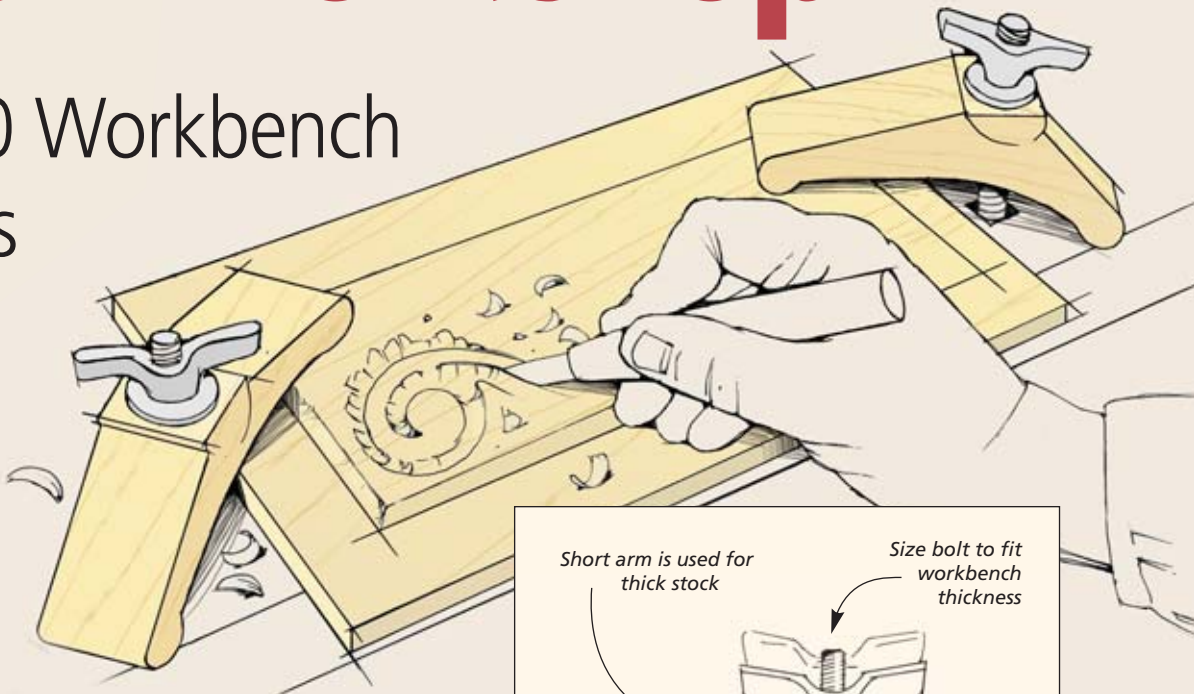


1-Hour Workshop

Our Top 10 Workbench Accessories

These simple, shop-built devices help you get the most out of your workbench.

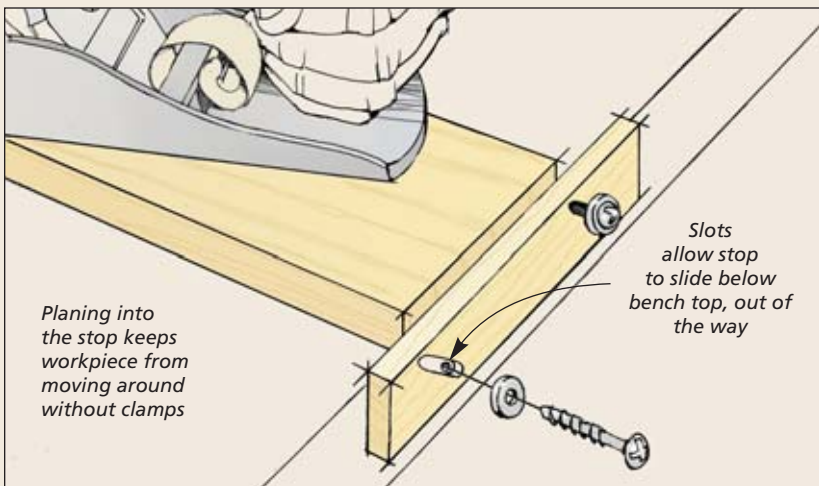


The workbench is the largest “tool” in my shop. And I use it for a lot of tasks. But even the best of tools can benefit from some practical accessories. The ten you see on these pages are the ones I use most often in my shop. Besides making tasks quicker, safer, and more accurate, these simple add-ons can be built with mostly scrap material and in less than one hour. That’s more than enough reason to add a few of these to your bench.

Hold-Down Clamp

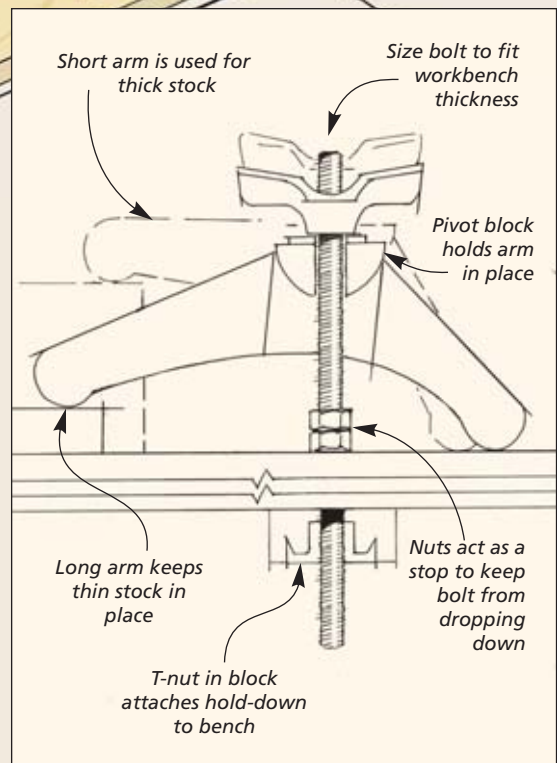
One of the keys to accurate hand work is making sure that your workpiece is held securely. That’s where the hold-downs you see in the drawings come into play. Since they’re

made from wood, they won’t mar your workpiece. And a large wing knob makes it a snap to tighten the clamp down or loosen it quickly to reposition the workpiece.



Planing into the stop keeps workpiece from moving around without clamps

Slots allow stop to slide below bench top, out of the way



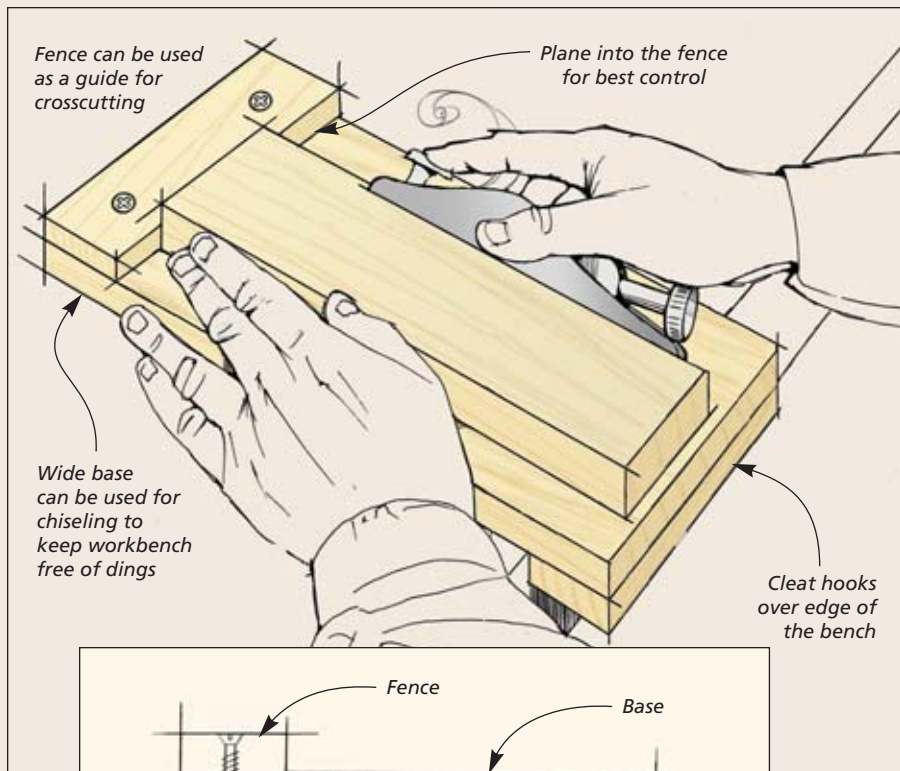
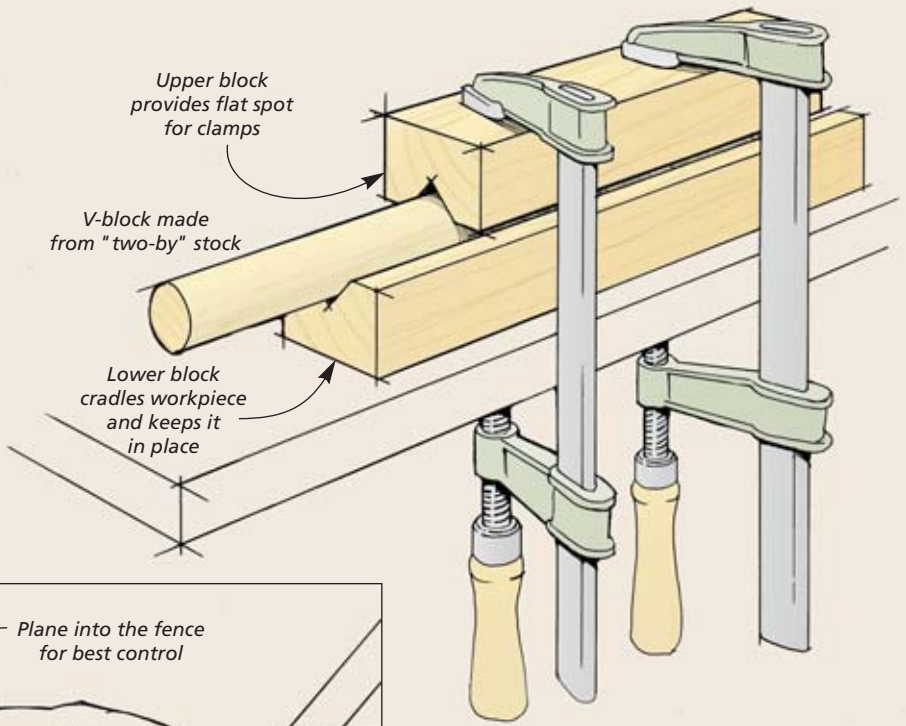
2 Planing Stop

Securing large panels to my workbench for planing or belt sanding was always a bit tricky. Clamps often get in the way of the tool and bench dogs are too narrow to keep the workpiece from shifting. To provide a solid stop for the workpiece, I attached this board to one end of the workbench. A pair of angled slots in the stop allow it to slide below the worksurface when it’s not needed. A couple of screws anchor it in place.

3 V-Block

The large, flat surface of my workbench is perfect for most of the work I do. But clamping a round or odd-shaped workpiece to the benchtop can seem more like trying to hold onto a wet bar of soap.

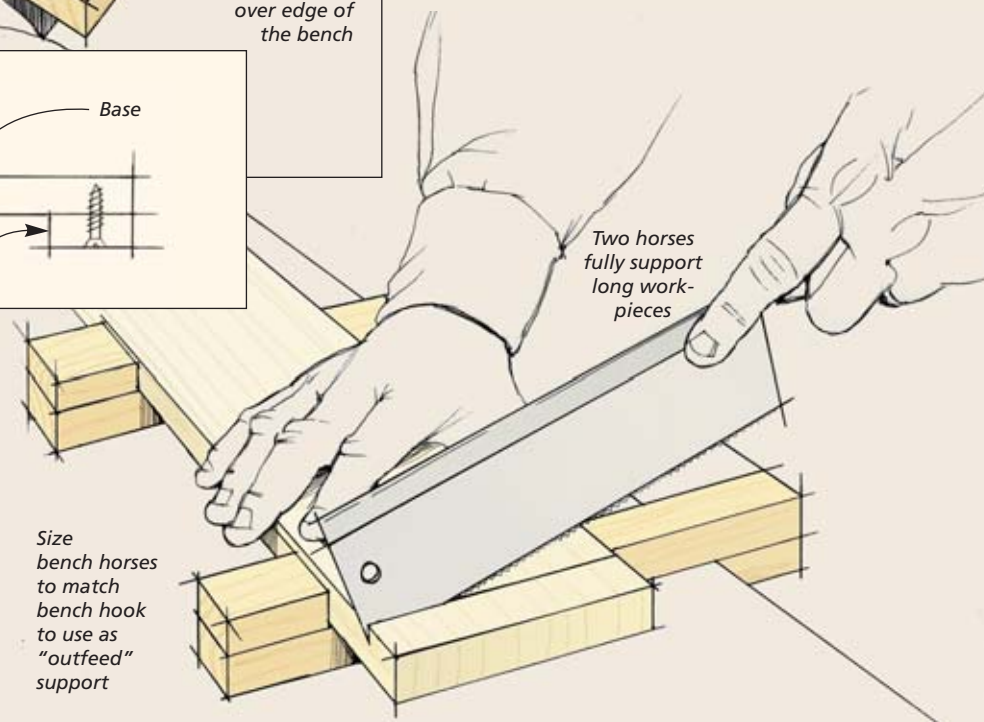
To make it easier to grab and hold these pieces, I turn to the simple, two-part V-block you see here. I made mine from a section of "two-by" stock. The base can be any length, but I found 12" to be about right. It provides a stable, wiggle-free platform for drilling, shaping, or smoothing. A shorter top piece gives the clamps a flat spot to lock the part in place without marring it.



4 Bench Hook

This is one bench accessory that I always keep close at hand. I can use it as a guide for quickly cutting parts to length or as a planing stop for small parts, as you can see in the drawing at left. The base also protects the bench from sharp chisels and carving tools.

The bench hook is made up of a wide plywood base with a thick hardwood fence at the back and a cleft along the front edge to catch on the edge of the workbench.



5 Bench Horse

I like to think of these narrow bench hooks as benchtop saw horses. They raise a workpiece high enough off the benchtop to crosscut the end without damaging my bench. I also use them for trimming tenons.

It's a good idea to make at least two so you can support long stock. I made mine the same depth as the full-size bench hook shown above. This way, they can serve as "outfeed" support so long workpieces won't sag.