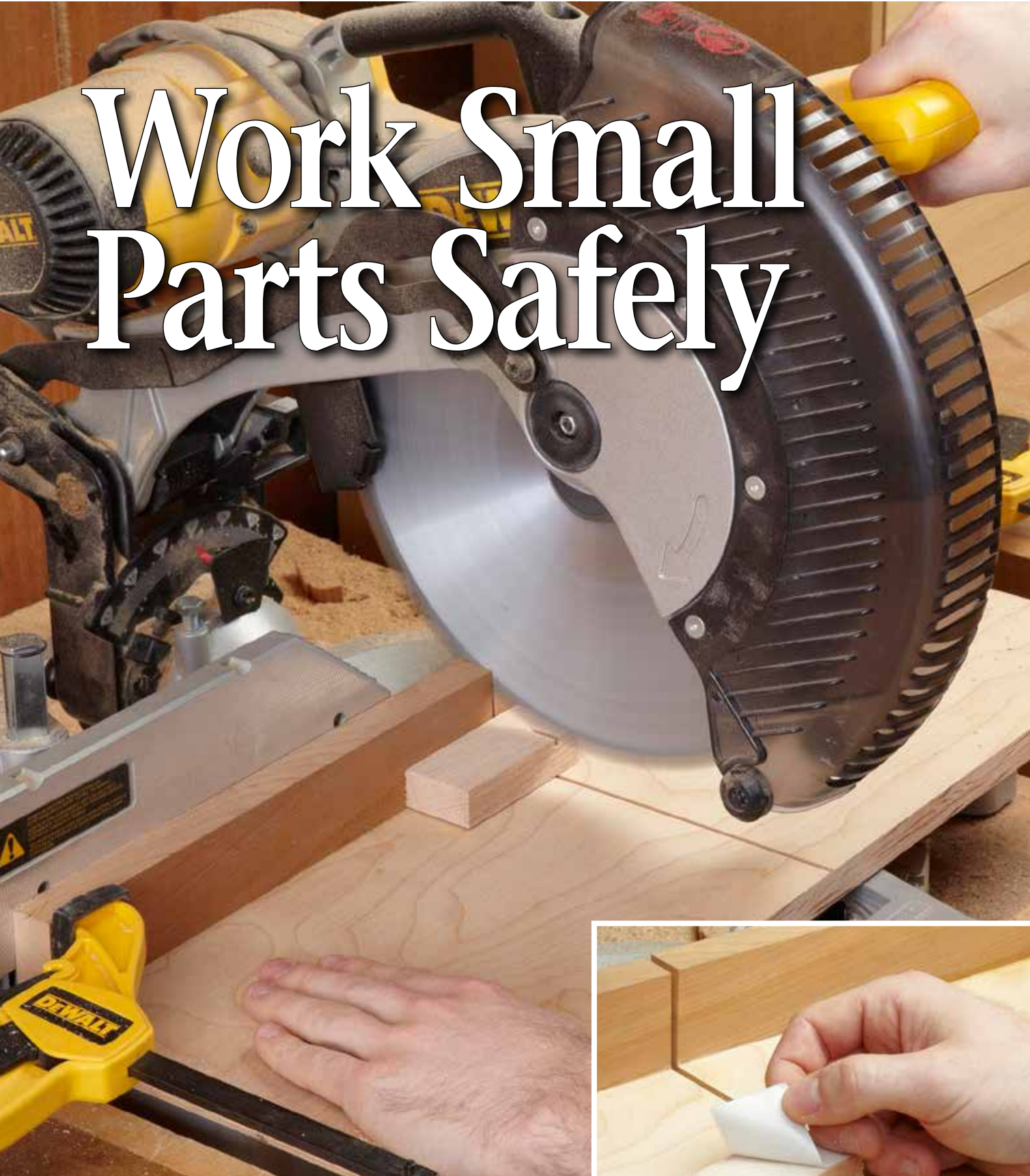


# Work Small Parts Safely

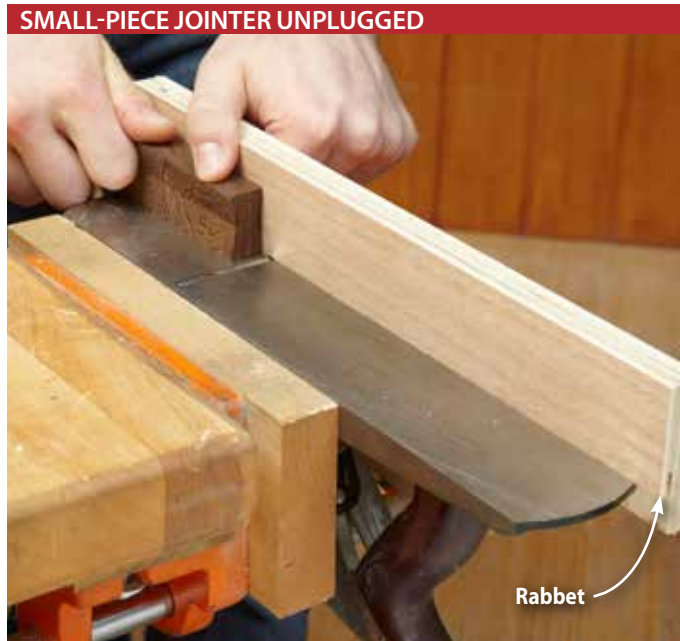


**W**hen cutting and shaping petite pieces, regardless of what tool you use, one universal rule applies: Keep your fingers a safe distance from the machine's cutting edges. Not only will your digits thank you, you'll also improve accuracy by better controlling your workpiece during the cut. Here's how.

This zero-clearance miter saw table supports small parts during crosscuts. Double-faced tape holds your workpiece in place.

## Complete close cuts

The force a big blade applies to a small part can make the workpiece difficult to control. Regain command by adding accessories that grip the workpiece firmly—such as the zero-clearance mitersaw table *on the previous page*—while your hands remain a safe distance from the blade. By gluing a

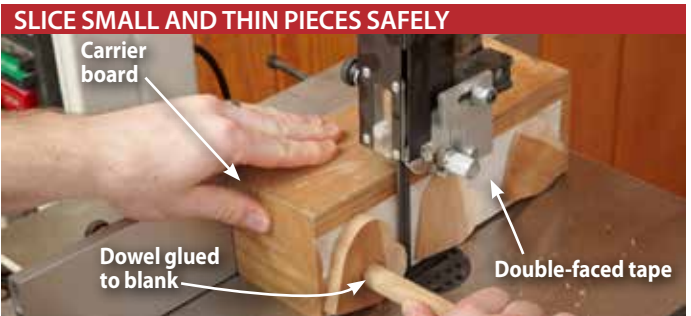


Clamp a hand plane and a rabbeted scrapwood fence into your bench vise to square up a tiny piece or remove a thin layer of material.

## Drill even diminutive parts

The drill press may not be as intimidating as a tablesaw or router, but can still be dangerous if the workpiece isn't properly secured. If the force securing the piece isn't as strong as

hardwood scrap to a piece of plywood, you create a platform that closes the gaps in both the fence and the table, preventing a workpiece or offcut from falling into them. Here are some other solutions for cutting narrow, short, and thin stock safely.



Cut multiple thin pieces without stopping to reset using this setup. Stick the blank to the carrier in front of the blade after each cut.



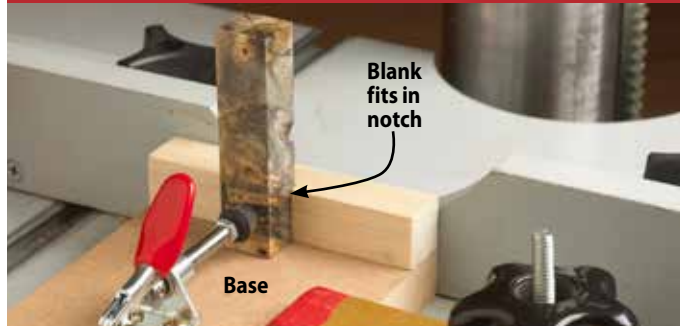
Build this carrier with the 2x4 extending just past the blade; then, run it through to cut it flush and provide a reference edge for aligning cutlines on the dowel.

## "FLATTEN" ROUNDED KNOBS WITH A STICKY NICHE



In scrap, drill a shallow hole, cover it with double-faced tape *above left*, and press the knob into the hole. Clamp the scrap beneath the bit and drill slowly.

## NOTCHED JIG CAPTURES NARROW PARTS



Notch a scrap to fit your workpiece, glue the scrap to a base, and mount an in-line clamp to hold the workpiece tightly in place.

## "V" IS FOR "VICTORY" WHEN DRILLING



A V-shaped notch bandsawn into one jaw of a handscrew captures a dowel, keeping it from spinning during drilling.

## Rout the runts

When adding an edge treatment to a small workpiece, keep it from being flung across the shop with these simple tricks.

### ROUT FIRST, AND THEN RIP



To make narrow moldings, rout a profile on a wide and stable blank; then, rip away the molding. For multiples, rout both edges before ripping.

### HANDSCREW PROTECTS YOUR HANDS



Clamp square or rectangular parts into a handscrew, flat against the router table's top. The handscrew's wood jaws won't cause damage if they touch the bit.

### EMPLOY A TEMP TO GET A GRIP



For thin workpieces, an extra layer of wood adds thickness to reach the router bit's bearing. Tape on a jobber stick to help control the workpiece.



When routing narrow or irregular-shaped pieces, hot-glue on a scrapwood extension, and, after routing, cut it away.

### TAKE THIS PART AND STICK IT



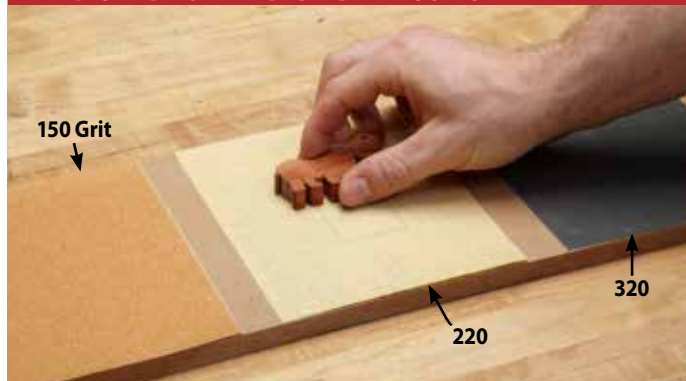
Don't have a router table? Tape the workpiece to a benchtop before routing. A trim router provides better visibility and control when working small pieces.

## Sand on a small scale

Most power sanders have broad abrasive surfaces better suited to working with large workpieces, so using these tools to sand small parts safely presents a challenge. Try these easy-to-build

scrapwood jigs and sanding tricks better suited for use with small workpieces to keep edges crisp and parts intact without risk to your fingertips. 🌿

### HAND-SAND FOR PREDICTABLE RESULTS



Spray adhere sheets of sandpaper—of progressively finer grits—to a scrap of flat sheet goods. Hand-sand the workpiece through the grit sequence.

### PUT YOUR SMALL PIECE INTO ORBIT



For faster stock removal, adhere the workpiece to a random-orbit sander pad with double-faced tape. A touch on each grit sands it to finish-ready.

### SAND EVENLY WITH A SCRAP CARRIER



To keep the edges of your small parts square, tape the workpiece to a carrier with scraps of equal thickness on either side and place it on your belt sander.

### A FAIR IDEA: WORKPIECE ON A STICK



A thin piece of scrap flexes enough to apply pressure to the taped-on workpiece while keeping your hand a safe distance from the abrasive.

### DRILL AND DROP FOR MORE CONTROL



To keep small parts from flying off your belt sander, drill a hole the size of your workpiece in  $\frac{1}{4}$ " scrap. Rest the sled against the sander's fence during use.

## More Resources

- ▶ Double-check your shop safety with the small-shop safety checklist at [woodmagazine.com/shopsafety](http://woodmagazine.com/shopsafety).
- ▶ Learn a slick trick for ripping thin strips at [woodmagazine.com/thinstrips](http://woodmagazine.com/thinstrips).

