

OLD STREET TOOL, Inc.

104 Jordan Drive
Eureka Springs, Arkansas 72632
Larry: (479) 981-1313
Don: (479) 981-3688
(<http://www.planemaker.com>)

The care, use and tuning of your moving fillister plane

Sharpening

The iron supplied with your moving fillister plane is sharp and ready for use. We suggest that you accustom yourself to using it as supplied before sharpening or making changes to its edge.

The bit, or working end, of the iron of your plane is designed to be slightly proud of the cheek of the plane when installed resting against the blind side of the escapement and wedge mortise. This allows the plane body to sink into the rabbet being produced by the iron. This is facilitated by maintaining a slight relief angle on the right side of the iron.

When sharpening your moving fillister plane iron, it is essential to maintain a straight cutting edge without any rounding of the corners. This allows the plane to take uniform and manageable shavings and also helps keep the floor of the rabbet flat/horizontal.

We suggest you learn to hone without resorting to guides, especially since they will be superfluous when it comes to sharpening the skew iron in your moving fillister plane. Once you can feel a fine, uniform, wire edge while stoning the honing bevel, it and any wear bevel on the face of the iron can be removed by honing the face on your oilstones. If you keep your oilstones flat and fresh using a diamond stone, you can attain the same pattern of abrasive signatures from stone to stone and help maintain your irons in a way which expedites future sharpening.

If the honing bevel becomes too wide or if the cutting edge is damaged or needs to be altered to better correspond to the sole of the plane, it will be time to grind your iron. Using layout dye on the face of the iron, install the iron in your plane with the left side of the bit and tang resting against the blind side of the escapement, advance it to expose the edge, then scribe off the sole of the plane. This is particularly helpful with the skew iron in your moving fillister plane. Then, grind, or hone, at right angles to define the new cutting edge to the scribe line. Finally, using a freshly dressed grinding wheel and a light touch, grind the new bevel until the flat at the edge is a uniform hairline. This can readily be eliminated when re-establishing the honing bevel on your sharpening stones.

The nicker, or spur, has been tempered so that it can be sharpened with a tapered triangular file such as those used in saw sharpening. Sharpen by filing on the “inside” beveled surface, as it is important to leave the nicker full width.

Setting

Your plane will arrive with the iron retracted up into the body. Check to see that the tang and bit rests against the blind side of the escapement and wedge mortise, then advance the iron by tapping on the heel of the tang with a small brass or plastic mallet. When the cutting edge projects enough to take the desired shaving, re-set the wedge with a wood or plastic mallet. When you need to remove the iron for sharpening, move the fence over far enough to clear the iron, then simply tap it down as already described and it will release due to being tapered. Similarly, if you need to set the iron for a lighter cut, it is best to drive it down to release it, then set it in a retracted position and advance in the manner already described.

When you are using your moving fillister plane along the length of the material, you may wish to retract the nicker and position it flush with the cheek of the plane. It is configured, though, so that it can project laterally just farther than the edge of the iron and can be set slightly lower than the cutting edge when working cross grain.

Use

Since moving fillister planes are equipped with a movable fence and depth stop to limit the width and depth of the rabbet being produced, they are generally perceived as the “precision” tool among the planes which can be used to produce rabbets. Experience and research has shown, however, that the nature of their utility likely varies according to the type of work one is doing.

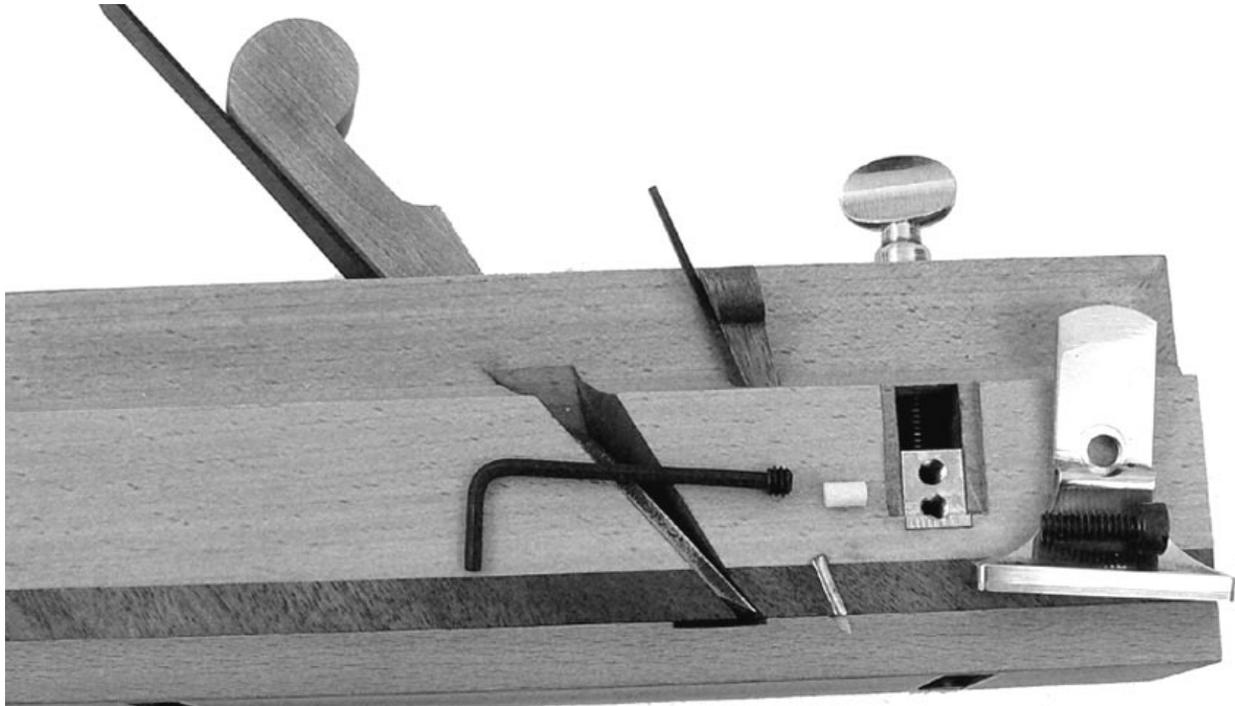
If one is doing a lot of repetitive work, such as joiners' type of tasks, then it may well pay to take the time to carefully set up the moving fillister plane to the desired final dimensions of the rabbets being produced. In line with this, late 19th century literature indicates that these planes were primarily considered joiners' tools.

On the other hand, if one is not doing repetitive work, such as one-off cabinet work, then it may make more sense to use the moving fillister as a “roughing” plane when creating rabbets for joinery or as part of the process of sticking custom mouldings. In other words, quickly set the movable fence and depth stop so that the plane cuts a rabbet a little shy of both the shoulder and floor gage lines, then finish the rabbet by taking finer cuts with a rabbet plane bringing everything just to those gage lines. Peter Nicholson, in his Mechanic's Companion, © 1831, describes using the moving fillister plane in just this fashion. Even though his discussion is in the context of joiner's work, we suspect it may actually reflect his training in the cabinet trade.

Tuning

Changes in seasons and/or environmental conditions in your shop may cause the body of your plane to change shape to some extent. If these changes become significant enough to affect the functioning of your plane, the sole may need flattened carefully with some sandpaper on a flat surface. While doing this, be careful to keep it square to the escapement-side cheek of the plane. If you have any questions or concerns along these lines, don't hesitate to contact us before you proceed.

One other aspect of your moving fillister plane which may need tuning has to do with the depth stop mechanism. We're including a photo showing this mechanism partially disassembled in order to help clarify this feature:



The lead screw has a left-hand thread as that is more intuitive when raising or lowering the depth stop. The “carriage block,” which can be seen in the opening in the side of the plane, rides up and down on this lead screw. The upper hole in this block takes the screw which attaches the depth stop foot to the carriage block. The lower hole takes a short piece of teflon rod, which is then held in place, and creates some tension on the lead screw, by a hex screw. You can adjust the amount of tension by changing the position of this hex screw with the allen wrench we provide with the plane. This arrangement helps keep the depth stop from shifting out of adjustment during use. The smaller allen wrench we provide is needed if complete disassembly of the depth stop mechanism is ever required.

Maintenance

The finish on your plane is Min-wax “Antique Oil Finish” applied as a wiping varnish. It should be compatible with other high quality finishing oils. It is a good idea to add fresh coats to any worn areas, from time to time, as well as to the sole after it has been tuned.. After applying finish we suggest buffing with fine steel wool and waxing with a high quality product such as Tre-Wax.