

Toolbox

Bosch Gravity-Rise Table-Saw Stand

When I started out as a carpenter, my meager wages meant living in one of Pittsburgh's least-desirable neighborhoods; leaving tools in my truck overnight wasn't an option if I ever wanted to see them again. As a result, I made it a point to buy tools that could be easily dragged into the house at the end of the workday. Old habits die hard — today I still prefer tools that can be moved around easily.

Which is why I decided to test Bosch's TS2000 Gravity-Rise Table-Saw Stand (877/267-2499, www.boschtools.com): It's perfect for carpenters who want the capacity, features, and stability of a modern 50- or 60-pound job-site table saw in an easily transportable form. Although the stand was designed to accommodate Bosch's Model 4000 10-inch job-site table saw, it fits just about any pro-duty saw, including models from DeWalt, Makita, Hitachi, and Ridgid.

Specs

As the name suggests, the Gravity-Rise stand uses its own weight — along with that of the saw — to raise itself from its collapsed storage and transport position. With the saw on the stand, the whole rig weighs about 113 pounds, so this mechanical advantage is welcome. It moves and handles much like a conventional two-wheel dolly and fits through a 32-inch door. Air-filled tires cushion the ride.

Erect, the stand is sturdy and puts the saw at a comfortable 36-inch working height.

Setup and Takedown

Here's how you ready the stand for cutting: First, you take a little weight off the wheels by rocking the unit forward onto the frame. Then you rotate the red handle about one-quarter turn and use your toe to pull the wheel axle toward you. Once you've given the axle a little tug, the legs begin taking on the weight of the saw and spreading. The saw rises, and before you know it the red handle has locked the table into the raised position and the tool is ready for use.

To break the unit down, you lift the frame slightly and turn the red handle. The frame collapses and the tool is ready for transport.



Stable Support

I used the stand both indoors and out and found it very stable, even when I was cutting down full sheets of plywood by myself. The model I tested came with an optional outfeed support (part no. TS1002) and a left-side support (part no. TS1003), both of which I strongly recommend. They're definitely better than improvised solutions — they're always with the saw, they don't add significantly to the size or weight of the rig, and they make ripping large pieces of plywood easier and safer.

The stand's front feet are adjustable for uneven surfaces and have rubber pads that prevent sliding. I knocked the pads off several times rolling over obstacles, but a blob of construction adhesive solved that problem.

The Verdict

I used the Gravity-Rise stand with the Model 4000 table saw for almost a year and found that both units performed flawlessly. The saw is smooth-running, quiet,

Toolbox | Bosch Gravity-Rise Table-Saw Stand

Setting up and breaking down the Gravity-Rise stand is easy. Rotating the red handle (below) one-quarter turn unlocks the unit for use and transport. Since you attach the saw permanently to the stand, it doesn't take much more than a trip to the tool trailer to be ready for cutting.



and accurate; it has a great fence, a soft-start motor, and an expanding table with a 25-inch rip capacity.

The stand shines too. It provides a sturdy platform for the saw and saves setup time. I was able to put the whole 113-pound rig in the bed of my pickup and drag it up steps by myself.

I do have a couple of small complaints. For one, larger tires would be nice. The 8-inch wheels have trouble going over anything larger than a 2x4.

Also, it would be helpful if more assembly were done at the factory. The thing comes in too many pieces for a busy contractor to deal with. (On the other hand, putting it together would be a good test for any potential employee.)

I found the Bosch Model 4000 table saw on the Web for about \$490 and the Gravity-Rise stand for \$135. You can buy both as a package deal for \$525. —

Patrick McCombe



Ridgid Pro Pack Vac

by Kreg McMahon

As the owner of a handyman and custom-carpentry service, I use a compact vacuum to clean up small messes every day. Since I do such a wide variety of tasks, the machine needs to pick up everything from plaster crumbs to bent finish nails — and it needs to be small and portable, because I'm constantly on the move.

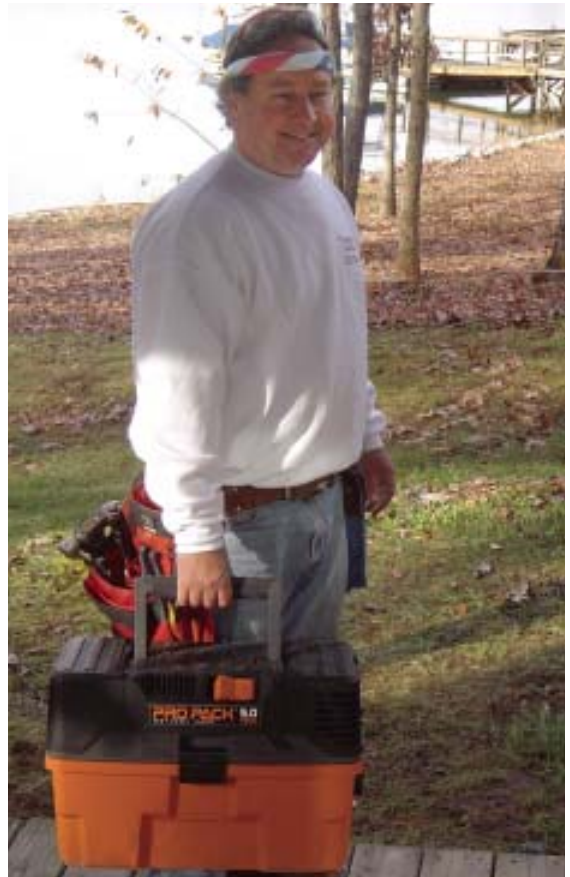
When I first saw the Ridgid Pro Pack wet/dry vacuum at my local home center, I wasn't sure if it was a toolbox or a vacuum. It looked different from any other compact vac I'd seen. Nevertheless, it seemed to fit my needs, so I bought it.

What's Different

I was tired of how the cord and hose on my other vacuums kept getting stuck under all the stuff in my van, so I really appreciate how the Pro Pack stores the cord and hose in neat little hinged compartments on top of the housing. There's even a spot for the three attachments. Since everything rides on board, I don't need to search my truck for missing attachments, or make a second trip because I forgot the hose. And because the Pro Pack is small and shaped like a toolbox, it takes up less space in my crowded van than a typical canister-type shop vac.

My new vacuum's first real test came at the end of a job installing an attic ladder. Despite a well-positioned drop cloth, there was a scattering of errant nails, screws, small pieces of drywall, and attic insulation on the carpet. It took 30 seconds to vacuum up the debris with the Pro Pack. The machine picked up everything except a few larger chunks of drywall. And once I was done, I had the whole thing packed up again just as fast.

The Pro Pack is lightweight and has a nice padded



The Pro Pack's hose, attachments, and cord tuck away into hinged compartments, a feature that keeps everything in one place and makes transport and storage easier.

Pro Pack Wet/Dry Vacuum Specs

Capacity: 4.5 gallons
Peak horsepower: 5.0
Weight: 15.5 pounds

Ridge Tool Co.
866/539-1710
www.ridgid.com

handle, so it's easy to carry. It can also serve as a dust blower, and I often use it to clean off my customers' driveways when I'm done cutting.

Specs

According to Ridgid, the Pro Pack contains a 5-hp motor. Claims like this are notoriously unreliable — but I found that the vac has enough power to suck up almost anything I need it to.

It also has a large, easy-to-find on-and-off switch and a 4½ gallon tank that's plenty big for my needs. One of my favorite features is the exhaust port; it's located under the lid, so it doesn't blow dust all over the place. Very nice.

Thanks to the vac's 20-foot power cord and 7-foot hose, I can usually perform

a quick cleanup without an extension cord.

The Upshot

This vacuum works great. I especially like how the hose, cord, and attachments ride on board. If you don't need a huge shop vac — just a simple and quick way to clean up after each job — then the Pro Pack is worth a look. After all, the job isn't done until you clean up your mess; only then can you go get your check!

Kreg McMahon is the owner of Honey-Do Handyman & Carpentry Service in Huntersville, N.C.



The 4½-gallon-capacity vacuum captures small particles with a pleated paper filter. The maker recommends removing the filter for wet pickup.

Smooth Saw. With its industrial-quality 1½-hp motor and water-cooled bearings, the *TP1020* is designed for long life and smooth operation. It can cut 20-inch tiles straight and 14-inch tiles on the diagonal. Other features include a removable water pan, a hinged aluminum blade guard, a high-flow submersible pump, a sturdy stand, and a “premium” 10-inch blade. The saw lists at \$890.

Multiquip, 800/421-1244, www.multiquip.com. **Circle #17**



Spray Booth. Trekking outside every time you need to use a tile saw can get a little old, especially in the winter. On the other hand, making cuts indoors means figuring out a way to manage a fog of tile slurry and piles of razor-sharp fragments. With the *WetTent*, you can contain that mess. Setup is easy, says the maker, and the tent transports in its own bag. Choose from three different models for various saw sizes, with retail prices ranging from \$240 to \$270.

WetTent, 888/350-8368, www.wettent.com. **Circle #18**

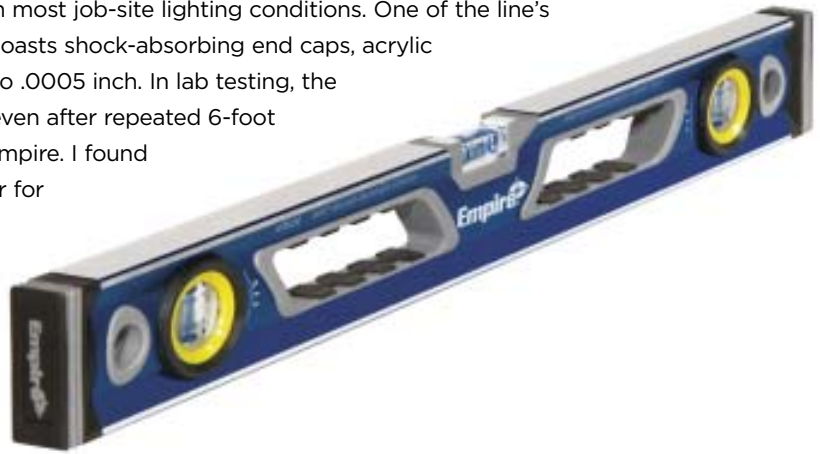


Out With the Grout. Frankly, I think I prefer undergoing major dental work to removing grout from installed tile. If you share my frustration with grout saws and other time-consuming methods, check out the new *Grout Removal Attachment* (RZ-GRK) from RotoZip, which promises to make the removal of grout from corners, walls, and floors quick and easy. The plastic base — which attaches to all RotoZip spiral saws — uses a steel pin to guide the bit through grout lines as small as 1/16 inch wide and up to 1/2 inch deep. It costs about \$30.

RotoZip, 877/768-6947, www.rototip.com. **Circle #19**

Sight Work. Having trouble seeing the vials in your spirit level? Empire says the blue vials in its True Blue levels are easy to see in most job-site lighting conditions. One of the line's newest offerings, the box-beam e70, boasts shock-absorbing end caps, acrylic block vials, and accuracy guaranteed to .0005 inch. In lab testing, the level maintained its original accuracy even after repeated 6-foot to 10-foot drops onto concrete, says Empire. I found the 2-foot version for \$45, the 4-footer for \$55, and the 6-footer for \$75.

Empire, 800/558-0722, www.empirelevel.com. **Circle #20**



Good Value. With Irwin's *Strait-Line Box Beam Levels*, you get what I consider to be a really good deal. The sturdy aluminum frames — available in lengths up to 8 feet — have some nifty features, including adjustable vials and keyed slots that accept accessories like rafter hooks and wood tacks. (Wood tacks allow you to attach the level to a framing member or use it as a saw guide.) Prices range from about \$40 for a 2-footer to \$150 for an 8-footer.

Irwin, 800/464-7946, www.irwin.com. **Circle #21**



Fine Woodwork. There's just something cool about a good-looking wood level. Take the *Big Johnson*. Wrapped with 16-gauge stainless-steel bindings, the walnut-and-maple laminated frame bears yellow vials with tempered-glass lenses and rubberized end caps. An engravable stainless-steel nameplate makes the tool suitable for gift-giving. I found the 2-foot B1024 for \$100 and the 4-foot B1048 for \$130 on the Web.

Johnson Level, 262/242-1161, www.johnsonlevel.com. **Circle #22**

