

Toolbox

New Bosch Sliding Compound-Miter Saw

by Richard Hark

As a custom stair builder, I value the versatility, capacity, and precision of a sliding compound-miter saw. Recently, I had a chance to check out Bosch's Model 4412 Sliding Compound-Miter Saw (877/267-2499, www.boschtools.com). This new saw has some nice features that distinguish it from other 12-inch sliders. Most notably, all of the miter and bevel controls are located on the front of the saw, so you don't have to reach around back to change settings or make adjustments.

Beveling

The top-mounted motor means the 4412 can bevel up to 47 degrees in both directions. Instead of a knob at the back of the saw, a front-mounted lever changes bevel settings. I liked the control's accessibility and simple operation. Lifting the lever unlocks the bevel setting; pushing it down locks it. A high-contrast metal plate shows bevel settings, and detents are included at 0, 33.9 (for cutting crown), and 45 degrees.



A front-mounted lever, located to the left of the miter control, allows the user to adjust bevel settings without reaching behind the saw. Although the saw can bevel up to 47 degrees, stops prevent going past 45 degrees for ordinary tasks (left). An override knob, located on the other side of the miter control, deactivates the stop for taking bevels past 45 degrees (right).



Mitering

Miter controls are also easy to use. The saw will miter 52 degrees left and 60 degrees right, allowing me to cut left and right stair skirts. Settings are adjusted with a half turn of the rubber-covered knob, and notched detents are included at 15, 22¹/₂, 31²/₃, 45, and 60 (right only) degrees. An override allows fine-tuning of common settings when necessary. At 45 degrees, the saw has an 8¹/₂-inch capacity; straight cuts can be as wide as 12 inches. Miter scales are easy to see and include roof pitches for cutting rake trim or rafters. Numbers are



cast into the base so they won't wear off.

Depth Adjustment

The intelligently designed depth adjustment is the best I've seen on a sliding saw. Relief cuts (kerfs) for a curved riser weren't a problem because the depth was very consistent (meaning the table is exactly parallel to the slide tubes). Unlike my experience with other saws, the blade never blew through the front of the riser. I'm sure it would work equally well for more typical applications, like dados.

Features

The rotating trigger handle is among the saw's most unusual features. The work I do commonly requires awkward hand positions to hold material, and the four-position handle better accommodates switching hands and contortionist positions.

I also liked the slide-out table extensions with an integral stop. The stop allows repeat cuts up to 20 inches long;



The depth stop on the 4412 adjusts quickly. A button disengages the threads for rough adjustments; releasing the button and turning allow fine-tuning. A sturdy, low-tech jam nut holds the proper setting.

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The four-position handle improves comfort and control for making difficult cuts. Unlocking a metal draw-catch frees the handle for adjustment. Although the handle seems sturdy, the manufacturer includes a secondary handle for transport.

optional extensions (part MS1222, \$15) increase capacity to 30 inches. The cam-type hold-down clamp is easy to use and can be mounted on either side of the blade. It effectively flattened cupped boards that would otherwise have interfered with the accuracy of a beveled cut.

The 4412's blade guard works well, retracting quickly while providing decent visibility. Little wheels prevent it from hanging up on taller stock, but the wheels got stuck in a 3/4-inch dado; I think slightly larger wheels would work better. The guard has a little handle at the top (located as far from the blade as possible) for retracting it manually.

Summing Up


The 4412 is a nice saw. At 60 pounds, it's not easily portable, but all of the 12-inch slide saws weigh about the same. This saw is well made, with thoughtfully designed controls that distinguish it from competitors. I particularly like the ability to override the 45-degree bevel stop quickly and without tools. The 4412 has a street price of \$700.

I do have a couple of minor complaints. Although the fence is cast from a single piece of aluminum instead of two, virtually eliminating the chance of misalignment, the



A try square highlights the discrepancy between the fence and the extension wing mounted on top. A steel shim between the fence and the extension wing helped, but the alignment was still off.

extension wings don't exactly align with the fence below. I'd also like to see bellows or an extra set of felt pads included to control dust buildup on the slide tubes.

But with its great controls, extra capacity, and sturdy design, I liked the tool enough to replace my current 10-inch slider. 

Richard Hark is the owner of Stairways in Harwich, Mass.