

## Weigh In!

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## Mobile DeWalt Jobsite Table Saws

BY JOSH DUNLAP

When *JLC* asked me to review DeWalt's new 10-inch model DWE7491RS jobsite table saw and rolling stand earlier this year, I quickly agreed. At the time, we were using a compact DeWalt DWE7480, a DeWalt DW744X with a scissor stand, and a Bosch 4000 mounted on Bosch's TS2000 rolling "Gravity-Rise" stand. We wanted to see if the new mobile DeWalt would be an upgrade.

After we had used the saw for several months, DeWalt rolled out the DWE7499GD, which has a "Guard Detect" warning switch but is otherwise identical to the DWE7491RS. So we also tried that model to see if the enhanced switch was worth the extra cost.

Out of the box, it took me roughly 20 minutes to assemble each stand and bolt down both saws. I quickly verified that the

blades were square to the table tops at 90 degrees and were parallel to the rip fences and miter-gauge slots. After I aligned the throat plates flush with the table tops using four adjustment screws, the saws were ready for action.

### QUICK TOUR

If you visit [dewalt.com/portable-jobsite-table-saw](http://dewalt.com/portable-jobsite-table-saw), you can view several videos that clearly demonstrate the key features of these saws. Built on a tubular-steel roll cage, the saws use DeWalt's signature rack-and-pinion fence-adjustment system, but the maximum rip capacity has been stretched to a class-leading 32½ inches. Our other table saws can rip 4-foot-wide panels in half, so we can already rip them to any dimension, but the extra support to the

right of the blade is occasionally helpful. A separate strip of extruded aluminum flips over the top of the fence from right to left to support the right-hand edge of your stock when you're making wide rips. With a quick adjustment, it can also serve as a low auxiliary fence to make narrow ripping safer and easier. A push stick is clipped to the back of the fence within easy reach.

The miter gauge is small and flimsy, with no positive stops. That matters to us because these table saws can crosscut and miter wider stock than our sliding-compound miter saws.

Like all of the latest jobsite table saws, the two DeWalts feature a modular tool-free safety system that is clearly not an afterthought. It includes a blade guard that's permanently attached to a splitter, separate anti-kickback pawls that quickly snap on, and a separate riving knife that can be used instead of the guard assembly. The guard assembly has a rear dust port that helps eject sawdust away from the table and can hook to a vacuum.

To install or remove the guard assembly or the riving knife, you simply raise the blade all the way up, pull the release lever at the left end of the saw table, and slip the splitter or riving knife in or out. We normally don't use blade guards with our jobsite table saws because they often get in the way, but this system is so well designed that we're all at least using the riving knives to prevent binding.

The unique Guard Detect on/off switch on the DWE7499GD works like a typical paddle switch when the blade guard is properly installed. If you try to switch on the saw without the guard installed, however, a flashing light warns that the blade is unguarded. You then have to turn the switch's bypass knob once to start the saw, and you have to repeat this two-stage actuation every time you turn on the unguarded saw. This procedure does remind us to work safely, but it currently adds \$150 or more to the cost of the saw.

The included accessories all stow beneath the saw table for transport and

storage. Unfortunately, you can't carry spare blades on the saw like you can on a couple of our other saws. We regularly use several blades for different applications, and onboard storage saves trips to the truck.

**ON THE JOB**

Folded up, the 90-pound rigs are easy to load into and out of our vans and pickups, though they won't quite fit under a tonneau cover. They also roll easily around our jobsites on two firm wheels that offer a satisfactory amount of cushion.

Setup is simple. First, with the stand resting upright, you unfold all four legs to-

ward you until they snap into the locked position. Foot pedals allow you to release and extend the two bottom legs without bending over. With the legs extended, you then pull the stand's top handle to tip the saw up onto them. Reversing the process is just as easy.

Equipped with the factory blade, the saw effortlessly ripped everything from 100-year-old reclaimed 1-by fir with rock-hard knots to 3-inch-thick Douglas fir. Working solo, I also ripped full siding and sheathing panels. The splayed legs gave the stands exceptional stability without creating a tripping hazard and held firm even

while I fed the sagging panels from well behind the saw. Overall, we think these rock-solid stands are a more important safety feature than the modular blade guards.

The saws efficiently eject most of the sawdust out the back and away from the saw with or without the blade guard installed. Dust collection was about average when we hooked a vacuum to the main dust port, and improved a bit when we hooked a second vacuum to the blade guard, though we still weren't dust-free. Mysteriously, DeWalt doesn't sell a Y-connector that would allow you to hook one vacuum to both ports, though woodcraft.com reportedly carries accessories that can do the job.

**THE BOTTOM LINE**

If we needed a new jobsite table saw, I'd definitely consider buying the DeWalt DWE7491RS. It's mobile, easy to set up, precise, powerful, and stable. If DeWalt would add onboard blade storage and a better miter gauge, the saw would be even better. The Guard Detect safety switch on the otherwise identical DWE7499GD works as advertised but costs a pretty penny. That added expense wouldn't make sense for us.

**DWE7491RS/DWE7499GD Specs**

- Blade: 10 inches; 5/8-inch arbor
- Amps: 15
- RPM: 4,800
- Cutting depth at 0 degrees: 3 1/8 inches
- Cutting depth at 45 degrees: 2 1/4 inches
- Maximum rip: 32 1/2 inches
- Maximum dado width: 13/16 inch
- Weight: 90 pounds
- Price: \$600/\$750
- Included with saw: blade, blade wrenches, blade-guard assembly, riving knife, rip fence, push stick, miter gauge, rolling stand
- Warranty: 3 years, 90-day money-back guarantee



**1.** The maximum rip capacity is a class-leading 32 1/2 inches to the right of the blade. **2.** A low auxiliary fence flips down next to the main rip fence to make narrow ripping safer and easier. **3.** To install the blade-guard assembly, simply pull the external release lever and slip the guard into position. **4.** The DWE7499GD adds a unique Guard Detect on/off paddle switch that warns you with a flashing light when the blade guard isn't properly installed. To work without the guard, you must turn the bypass knob each time you turn on the saw.

*Josh Dunlap is production manager of Consolidated Design & Construction Group, a residential design/build remodeling contractor in St. Louis.*

Photos: 4, Josh Dunlap



## Industrial-Grade Tool Totes

BY DOUG MAHONEY

The **Veto Cargo Tote** is basically a souped-up industrial-grade beach bag. The inside is one giant compartment, so while it's unlikely you'll use it to lug your wrenches, pliers, and nail sets, it's ideal for larger, bulkier items.

The bottom of the tote is a durable polypropylene shell. This not only protects the bag and its contents, but the hard rectangular shape holds the walls of the bag stiff and upright. The walls won't cave inward while you're loading and unloading; there's never any awkward grasping for the handles.

The walls of the bag are made of 1800 denier fabric. Denier is a measurement of the weight of the fiber used in the fabric; the higher the number, the more rugged the fabric. In my experience, 1800 denier fabric is nearly impossible to cut, rip, scuff, or wear in any way.

What these formidable bags can hold is entirely up to you. For me, the totes are perfect for the gear I need that's too big and bulky for my regular Veto Pro Pack. This includes extension cords, duct tape, caulking guns, framing square, 2-foot level, worm drive, clamps, work lights, and a framing gun. Items like these

usually end up on their own, bouncing around the back of the truck in a disorganized fashion. They're also the tools that create multiple awkward trips from the truck to the work area.

Another carpenter who saw the Veto Cargo Totes told me he would ditch his tool cases and use the totes to carry his cordless setup, saying the bag was perfect for a recip saw. I could also see it being good for tiling gear, plumbing equipment, or drywall tools—anything where containing the cargo is more important than keeping it organized.

The totes are available in two sizes; the CT-LC goes for \$85 and the larger CT-XL runs \$100. At first glance the pricing may seem high, but considering the bags' usefulness and probable longevity, it makes sense. For something that you're going to use every day that will likely last well past a decade, \$100 is a sound investment. Besides, there are plenty of high-quality lineman's bags in a similar price range.

*Doug Mahoney is a carpenter in Harvard, Mass., and a regular contributor to Tools of the Trade, where this review originally appeared.*

### MAX LEVERAGE PLIERS

Last week the FedEx guy showed up with an unexpected delivery: new Vise-Grip 8-inch Max Leverage Diagonal Cutting Pliers from Irwin and a locked technician's case. There was no combination for the cable lock; I was supposed to open the case using the diagonal cutting pliers, which use compound cutting action to reduce the force required for cutting. The pliers cut through the steel lock cable with no more effort than it takes to cut a 14-gauge copper ground wire with regular wire cutters.

I was impressed—until I tried to cut the same steel cable with regular diagonal cutting pliers and realized that the cable was not so tough. So I decided to try something harder and test the Irwin tool against other 8- and 7-inch cutters I had in the shop, none of which were compound cutters. First I cut 16d galvanized finish nails. The 8-inch tools cut them one-handed; the 7-inch tools required two hands. Next, I cut #8 gold drywall screws. Only the Vise-Grip Max Leverage Pliers cut them single-handed.

It was a simple but instructive test: compound cut pliers, such as Irwin's, are easier on your hand and muscles when making difficult cuts or making heavy cuts all day long.

*David Frane is editor-in-chief of Tools of the Trade, where a detailed review of these pliers originally appeared online.*

