

Safer Job-Site Table Saw

DW745 Type II
10-Inch Compact Job-Site Table
Saw With Riving Knife
DeWalt Industrial Tool Co.
800/433-9258
dewalt.com
Street price: \$400

by Chris Blackstock

For over ten years, my crew and I have used portable table saws for building decks and remodeling. We've ripped, mitered, dadoed, and shaped all kinds of wood, and somehow through it all — without ever using a splitter, a kickback pawl, or a blade guard — none of us has had a table-saw-related injury (knock on wood). But as the owner, I'm always pulled between forcing the guys to use all possible safety equipment, regardless of how impractical and time-consuming, and — in the other direction — tossing the safety stuff in the name of "get-r-done."

The appeal of the DW745 Type II is that in addition to being compact, lightweight, and affordable, it's equipped with safety features that are convenient to use: a riving knife that rises and falls with the blade and a snap-on, snap-off blade guard.

Most kickbacks occur when wood that's being ripped pinches around the back of the blade, causing the

blade to throw the wood up and toward the operator. However, with a riving knife — a curved metal piece the thickness of a saw blade located just behind the blade — the wood behind the blade can't pinch any more than the thickness of the riving knife, which eliminates kickback. Less binding also means less stress on the motor and less overload to circuit breakers.

The DW745's riving knife can be set for through cuts or dado cuts and when in storage or transportation mode, can be neatly lowered below the table surface. The most important merit of this simple feature is that the operator is not forced to choose between safety and efficiency. Second, the saw can be easily transported free of encumbrances. Anyone who has ever moved a portable saw on a daily basis won't miss fighting with a blade guard on top of the table. Instead, the blade guard is stowed neatly below and on the side of the saw's body.

Overall, the DW745 is a solid tool well-suited for any remodeling, decking, railing, or trim contractor. It's definitely an improvement over the other small saws I've tried, though it won't replace a shop table saw. It's well thought out and, based on my track record with its predecessor, the DW744, likely to be durable. The riving knife is a valuable feature; I just wonder why it has taken so long to land in the U.S. market. It should save some



Visible directly behind the blade, the DeWalt DW745's riving knife minimizes the chance of kickback. The blade guard is easily removable for transport and stores on the side of the saw.



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front teeth and popped breakers, if nothing else.

The only caution I'd advise is to thoroughly check the saw's factory settings out of the box. It took a while to correctly set up the sample saw I used, and I found the set-up instructions more tedious than any I'd seen before. Once it was adjusted properly, the saw operated with respectable accuracy.

Chris Blackstock is a remodeler and deck builder in Thornton, Colo.

Editor's note: Astute readers will remember that we reviewed the DeWalt DW475 in the September/October 2008 issue. Ordinarily, the magazine would not cover the same tool twice, and certainly not within 6 months. However, the Type II version of this saw has a riving knife, one of the simplest and most effective table-saw safety devices going, which the original tool lacked. It was important enough to justify a second review.

Kevlar Gloves

Cut Protection Gloves

Ansell Healthcare

800/800-0444

ansellpro.com

Street price: \$18

Cut Protection Gloves are made with a blended Kevlar fabric said to provide three times the cut protection of leather in an ANSI test. Though I took Ansell's word on that feature, I can say from experience that these gloves offered the closest thing to a bare-handed feel of any work glove I've ever worn. I could easily manipulate a handful of nails or feed staples into a stapler, and they actually made it easier to turn the pages of my morning newspaper. — *Andy Engel* ❖

