# Metabo HPT MultiVolt Plunge Router

BY TIM UHLER

**Life in the trades** has gotten so much easier over the last few years thanks to the growing number of cordless tool options and the fact that they perform so well. A good example of this trend is the Metabo HPT 36-volt cordless plunge router (M3612DA). Our crew has been using a pair of cordless trim routers (from Milwaukee and DeWalt) on our jobsites for the last two years or so, giving us a good perspective on the capabilities of Metabo HPT's new offering.

**Router for framing?** I began using a router to cut out door and window openings, trim the top edges of rake walls, and perform a number of other sheathing-related tasks back in 2001. In order to quickly plow through 7/16-inch sheathing, I fitted my workhorse corded 3 1/4-inch HP router with a big flush-cutting bit with a 1/2-inch-diameter shaft. This was a heavy setup, but it did the job and supported its own weight.

For a long time, I didn't think a router could be the type of tool that could go cordless, but both Milwaukee and DeWalt managed to make it happen with their smaller trim routers, with good results. I've posted a number of videos on Instagram over the last couple of years showing how well these little cordless routers work on our framing jobs. Quite a few naysayers have since bought them after seeing that the routers don't burn up but keep on going.

**First cordless plunge router.** Unlike the DeWalt and Milwaukee routers, however, Metabo HPT's 36-volt router is a full-featured plunge router that comes with collets for both 1/4-inch and 1/2-inch bits. It has a tool-less depth adjustment that works like that on any other plunge router, a variable speed control from 11,000 to 25,000 rpm, and a handy LED work light. In addition, it's compatible with Metabo's adapter (sold separately) that allows HPT tools on the MultiVolt 36V battery platform to be plugged in to a standard AC outlet and used as a corded tool.

I use a spiral cutting 1/4-inch bit to rout sheathing, and that bit is fast. This router is very fast, too, but if you push it too hard, a protective circuit will cut off power, and it'll stop. So we've learned to back off and let the bit do the work.

What I especially like about this tool is the two handles, making it more comfortable than a smaller cordless trim router for a framer to use. For shop work, the kit includes a template guide set, straight guide, and a dust collector; I won't use these accessories often, but they are in the bag for when I need them. A charger and one 2.5-Ah MultiVolt battery are also included. I found that I ran this battery down more quickly than the larger-capacity batteries I use on my Milwaukee and DeWalt trim routers, but I still managed to get through a full day of framing without the battery dying.

**Good value.** At $400, the kit is expensive, but is it worth it? I can't make that decision for you, but here's how I look at it: For a framer, a router is a must-have tool that saves a lot of time, improves quality, and increases productivity. There doesn't seem to be a bare-tool option, which would save some money if you already own other Metabo HPT MultiVolt tools, but I believe that the labor savings using a router will make up for the cost over time. Of the three cordless routers I've used, this is my favorite. However, all are a huge upgrade over their corded counterparts, so pick the one you can afford that best fits your needs and buy it. You won't be sorry. metabo-hpt.com

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A router fitted with a flush-cutting bit makes quick work of cutting out door and window openings in a sheathed wall (above). Metabo HPT's MultiVolt plunge router comes with collets for both 1/2-inch- and 1/4-inch-diameter bits. It can be powered by its 36-volt battery or be used with an adapter and plugged into an AC outlet (left).

Photos: Tim Uhler

# Wet Saw Work Station

BY TIM HEALEY

**One of the great things** about the JLC Live trade show is the opportunity to meet tradespeople who had an idea for a time- or labor-saving tool or product (haven't we all?) and, unlike most of us, followed through to create it and bring it to market. At last year's JLC Live show in Providence, R.I., I visited with Jesse Gionta, a longtime contractor who grew tired of going outside in cold Northeast weather to cut tile using his wet saw. His idea for a secondary containment system became the Wet Saw Work Station, a tile-saw enclosure that allows users to make clean tile cuts right inside the room being tiled. Gionta says the work station is made in the USA of low-density polyethylene (LDPE) plastic, with a high-density poly (HDPE) shelf. The 32-inch-high base is designed to collect and contain spray from the wet saw, with the assistance of the three side panels and top panel. The overall height of the work station is about 65 inches, and the panels can be assembled in a few minutes without tools. It's available for $390 directly from the manufacturer, with free shipping. wetsawworkstation.com

The Wet Saw Work Station's plastic panels snap together without tools to create a secondary containment system for a wet saw, allowing it to be used close to where tile is being installed instead of outside.

# Wood's PowR-Grip Hand-held Vacuum Cup

**Moving a big, heavy window** around on a jobsite and jockeying it safely into position in a window opening is a chore, even when plenty of strong arms are available to carry the weight. There's just no good place to grab onto the window without bending over and risking back injury. To solve this problem, installers of commercial glass have long used vacuum cups that can be clamped pretty much anywhere onto the fixed panels to create a handy carrying handle and help manage the load.

On a recent project covered in *JLC*, the crew used hand-held vacuum cups on loan from the glass supplier to help them install large, fixed-panel windows (see photo, below left, and "Building a High-Performance Window Wall," by Nate Hayward, Mar/21). This inspired one member of the crew, *JLC* contributor Kevin Lovejoy, to purchase his own pair of 8-inch-diameter Wood's Powr-Grip vacuum cups for installing the high-performance triple-glazed windows typically used on Passive House projects. He reports that the cups have made it much easier to handle these heavy windows.

Vacuum cups are available in different sizes and load capacities and from a number of manufacturers. The 8-inch Powr-Grip N4950 cups purchased by Lovejoy are rated at 125 pounds lifting capacity and have a red-line indicator to warn the user of any significant vacuum loss. I found them online for about $85 each. wpg.com —*T.H.*

Transporting and installing a large, heavy window is safer and easier with vacuum cups, which clamp onto the glass (far left). Wood's Powr-Grip N4950 8-inch-diameter vacuum cups (left) are rated for 125 pounds and have a red-line indicator that signals a loss of vacuum pressure. They come with a carrying case.

Photos: Top, courtesy Jionta Products; bottom left, Tim Healey