



MARK CASS

THE BEAD'S KNEES?

Mark Cass takes a look at Trend's latest innovation in joint technology

PHOTOGRAPHS BY GREG MARK CASS



With the faceplate clamped onto the work, drill the first hole



Cut the required length of moulding



The result is almost as good as a real tenon



The finished job clamped up

I suspect I'm not the only one who is reluctant to make a dowel joint – it's usually the last option available – and without a morticing machine a decent mortice and tenon joint can be both tricky and time consuming to achieve. Fortunately Trend has come up with the Bead Lock system.

A simple enough device, nicely made, it could provide the solution to many a workshop's jointing dilemmas. I tried it out the other day and was very pleased with the results. Here's my guide to how I did it.

STEP BY STEP

Step 1 – Mark out the centre of your 'tenon' component. Offer up to the 'mortice' piece and draw the line across, similar to a biscuit mark-up.

Step 2 – Select the large or medium guide block, fit to face plate and offer up to work to determine how much (if any) packing is needed to centre the joint on the timber.

Step 3 – Clamp the bead lock unit to the component making sure to line your pencil mark up in the window of the face plate.

Step 4 – Drill the two outside holes to the required depth, slacken lock screws, slide block across and drill the centre hole.

Step 5 – Repeat for the other component.

Step 6 – Cut suitable length of beaded moulding and check for fit.

Step 7 – Glue and clamp up.

RESULTS

And there it was, almost as good as a real mortice and tenon joint. What's more, it's eminently achievable for anyone with a drill and a saw. With suitable timber and a sensible design, stools and chairs are no longer out of the question for the average



woodworker, especially if you want to make more than just the one.

What makes this system so superior to the humble dowel joint is the metal block which both ensures accuracy of placement and keeps the drill bit square to your work.

The kit comes with about half a metre of both sizes of pre-machined moulding, enough to get you started, and thereon is available to purchase at your local Trend stockist. You can also run your own lengths out using one of the cutters specially designed for the job, although you will need a heavy-duty router preferably used in a table for maximum efficiency and safety.

THE VERDICT

While the Trend Bead Lock isn't cheap it represents a genuine triumph in that it makes joint-making accessible to all. Coupled with its excellent build quality the £35 price tag seems entirely justified. An innovative and useful jig.

PRICE & CONTACT DETAILS

Complete Kit.....	£34.95 (inc VAT)
Extra mouldings (x3@250mm).....	£4.95 (inc VAT)
Moulding cutter (9.5 or 12mm).....	£39.95 (inc VAT)

For further information contact Trend on 01923 224657 or visit the company's website at www.trendmachinery.co.uk