

# A new trend in dovetailing

**RIGHT:** Fence has built-in fine adjustment

**BELOW RIGHT:** All this and a metal case too - no you haven't seen it before, you just think you have

**BELOW:** All manufacturers please note - this is where the switch goes on a router

The company that makes everything for router users, except routers, launches a router and jig – **Paul Richardson and Anthony Bailey** test the Trend T5 router and DJ300 dovetail jig

## TREND T5 ROUTER

UNTIL RECENTLY, most people who went in for serious routing owned an Elu MOF 96; a well-made, reliable tool that provided an ideal basis for adding accessories. So while MOF 96s were around, there was no need for anyone to do more than make their accessories to fit it.

And they did – fences, tables, brackets, and jigs. The only snag is that you can't buy the \*\*\*\* thing any more, and even MOF 96s wear out – I'm about half-way through my third one.

## In action

So when I opened the smart metal case to take a look at Trend's prototype T5, I wasn't at all surprised that it looked a little familiar.

In fact, delivered power felt slightly higher than my MOF 96; I cut some fairly hefty mouldings in oak and ash without the motor flinching, and maximum-depth grooves in the same material with my largest two-flute straight cutter were just as easy.

Fitting cutters is straightforward, using the external spindle-lock, and the collet grips and releases with a nicely progressive action. Likewise the plunge action is smooth, although I noticed a slight tendency for the router to stick at the very top of its 50mm stroke – but this is a prototype.

Two depth-setting options are supplied – a flag-on-a-stick type for general use, and a fine depth-adjuster. Both work with the usual three-way turret stop.

The plunge lock operates by a twist of the right-hand knob, and the slide switch is just where it should be, above the left-hand thumb.

## Accessories

I tried most of my existing accessories for fit on the baseplate, and confirmed that spacings, threads and positions are all totally standard. Interestingly, a threaded hole is provided for the Elu-type fine adjuster for side fences and so on, even though the T5's fence has fine adjustment built in.

This fence is the only real departure from the familiar – it has a stop bar connected to a lead screw which acts against the fence itself.

## Conclusion

So there you are – an uncluttered, well-balanced router from a company with vast experience, and it will fit all existing bits and pieces.

It is supplied in a metal case with 1/2in and 8mm collets, dust-extraction adapter, trammel point, fine depth-adjuster and a 30mm guide bush.

Price £217 inc VAT

## DJ300 DOVETAIL JIG

THE DJ300 DOVETAIL JIG is capable of holding components up to 300mm (11 1/2in) wide to produce standard 1/2in through or lapped dovetails. Additional templates DJ300/01 and DJ300/02 allow the production of 1/2in lapped and rebated dovetails, and comb joints.

The jig is made of rigid pressed steel and is intended to be screwed to the edge of a bench or a board for clamping into a Workmate.

Workpieces are held by two sprung-pressed steel bars, each with clamping knobs. Adjustable edge guides allow the position of the dovetails to be pre-set, so that the dovetails can be accurately centred. These stops are interchangeable for different joint types.

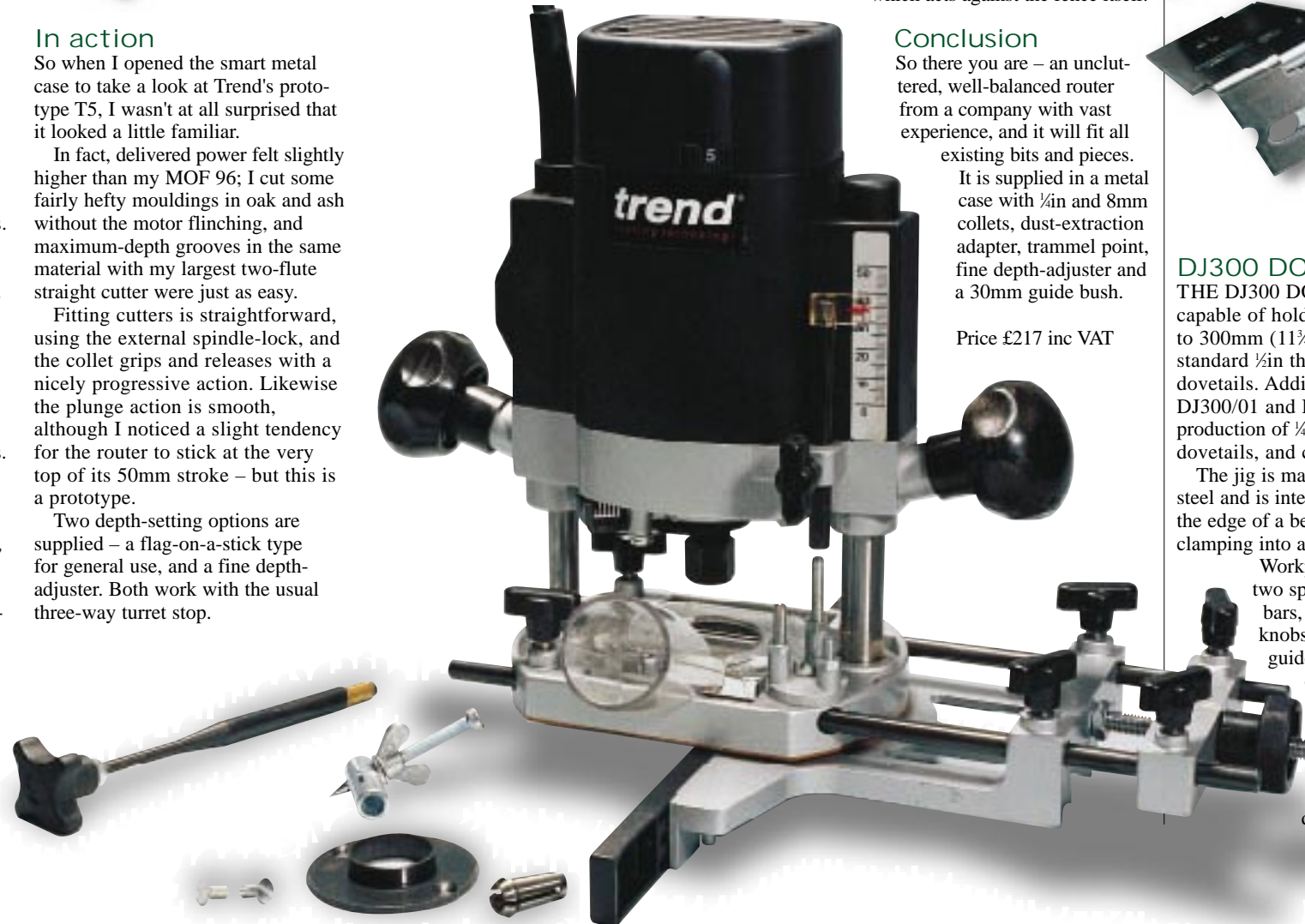
## Setting up

Assemble all the parts of the jig according to the clear diagram. Adjust the locknuts to position the precision-machined aluminium template 8mm (5/8in) away from the jig. Attach the guide bush to the base of your router, fit a fine height adjuster and install the jig's dovetail bit.

Prepare stock accurately – noting that drawer backs and fronts must be the same thickness. The manual shows ideal timber widths providing full pins and tails at each end – OK if they fit your furniture.

Provided the correct edge guides for the correct cutter are used, they have a built-in offset that ensures perfect alignment once the joint is assembled. A setting block can be made to reset the jig from one joint type to another without using measurements.

**ABOVE:** The Trend DJ dovetail jig



RIGHT: Guide bush and jig set-up

The workpieces are mounted in the jig in pairs, inside faces out, with the socket part upright and the pins horizontal. For an even number of pins and tails push the workpieces against the left-hand edge guide, uneven against the right-hand one.

The template is slid on and locked down on top of the workpiece.

### Test

Switch on, push the router into the first recess and pull outwards following the curved edge of the jig. Continue into the next recess until the joint is complete.

To avoid damaging template or workpiece, always slide the router in from the front of the jig and withdraw it in the same way. The dovetail cutter 'undercuts' a mite aggressively, so keep firm control at all times.

Repeat the operation to ensure that the tails are properly rounded for a good fit. To adjust the joint, raise the cutter to tighten it or lower it for a looser fit. Repeat on new test pieces until the joint is just right.

The manual gives clear information on setting up the other template and cutter variants. I tried the square-edged combing jig. This is cut, using No. 2 edge guides, with the Trend straight bit, which has both a long cutting edge and shank. Placing a scrap piece under the horizontal workpiece prevents the cutter from damaging the jig on the last pass. I found that deep passes were too aggressive, a series of finer cuts producing a good result.

RIGHT: The finished dovetail joint ready for assembly



“I found that deep passes were too aggressive, a series of finer cuts producing a good result”

### Conclusion

The manual ensures that this jig is extremely easy to use, and

demonstrates how to make small but important adjustments to the joint fit. ■

### FACTS AND FIGURES

Basic jig, cutter, guidebush and template	£117.38 inc VAT
Optional lap dovetail template	£35.13 inc VAT
6mm cutter to suit	£23.44 inc VAT
Box comb joint template	£35.13 inc VAT
12.7mm cutter to suit	£22.26 inc VAT