



EVERYONE MAKES MISTAKES 2

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"My dumbest mistake was getting involved with woodworking. It takes most of my free time and is an excellent means of keeping my wallet empty."

"I drilled a counterbore hole for the collar of my bench vise on the wrong side of my freshly laminated hard Maple vise face. I should mention that the Maple required a 120-mile trip, and I had bought only the lumber needed."

"I'm building a computer workstation for my office. I measured the filing cabinets about 20 times, then cut and assembled one case. Dang. It was a fraction too tall. So, I tore it apart, cut off that fraction, then realized it was right the first time."

"On a guitar body, I needed to trim off some of the Maple back so I could join the two body pieces. I got one side cut and, in the process of cutting a second piece, left the tablesaw running. I reached across it to move/pick up the piece. The next thing I knew, the tip of my thumb, including the fingernail, was laying on the table of the saw. I'll never use a saw without a guard again, and I'll never use power tools when tired."

"I was face jointing a 4"x14"x1/2" board. I was about an inch into it when it kicked back. My fingers were into the cutterhead before the guard could close. I lost the tip of my right index finger to the first joint and have scars on the next two fingers. I'd never heard of push blocks, but thought I'd invented them after that incident!"

"Rule #1 in woodworking: Measure twice, cut once. Always happens. You think that you remember the dimension correctly or you didn't account for this thickness or that dado. I can't remember how many times that I've run back to the lumber yard to replace wood."

"My own variation is to measure and cut exactly what I wrote down ... which is not always correct. Stupid brain/hand communication."

"I was planing very short boards on my Delta portable planer. Since there was too much junk on the workbench, I placed the planer on the floor. I decided to run more than one piece at a time, side by side. One piece of wood was a bit thick and lifted the feed roller just enough for it to break contact with the second piece. The second piece took off and hit me straight on the base of the big toe. After doing the rain dance for 10 minutes and cussing enough to make me blush, I took measurements on the offending board. It had knife marks every four inches. Quick calculation put the speed of the kickback at 60 mph. Had the planer been on the bench, I would have been singing soprano."

"Just married, just out of school, and I knew it all. I took my bride to an old-style lumberyard to buy 2"x12"x12' clear Pine for shelves in our first apartment. When I heard the price of the lumber, I was shocked, but I held it in. Almost \$40 a board, and I needed nine of 'em. I also handed across the counter some handsome hand-wrought braces and was given another exorbitant price. Now certain that I was being taken advantage of, I asked the man for some nails. He asked if I wanted six-, eight- or ten-penny nails, and with that I exploded, "What the heck is going on here? That is

a lot of money for a damn nail!" The old hands in the place erupted in laughter. As I left, I was so unnerved that I pushed the last of the 2x12s up onto the metal dash and further, cracking the windshield on a borrowed station wagon."

"I was assembling a pen that I had turned. I took my thin CA glue out of the shop refrigerator and sat it down, not realizing the sun coming in through the window was shining on it. I had the parts to be glued in one hand and the glue bottle in the other, but the cap was still on the bottle. No problem, that's why God gave us teeth. So I crunched down a bit on the cap and gave 'er a twist. You got any idea how fast that stuff cures when mixed with saliva? I had tongue stuck to teeth, tongue stuck to lips, lips stuck to lips, and teeth stuck to teeth. I picked glue out of my mouth and teeth for days."

"After 25 years of woodworking, I've made so many mistakes. . . The other day, I was at a job site and had to drill a hole through a small block of wood while sitting on the floor. I didn't actually use my leg to support the block, but that drill bit came through the wood and made contact with my pants. By the time it stopped spinning, it had rolled up my blue jeans and a bit of my inner thigh. The mistake was thinking something as harmless as a drill can't be dangerous."

"I'm not sure which offends me more: your assumption that my woodworking career is nothing but a long series of dumb mistakes, or the idea that I have the time to catalog all those mistakes such that I can retrieve them from file drawers labelled 'Mistakes: Router, Freehand' or 'Mistakes: Ranked.' I've ruined my share of boards. Let me just state the file drawer with the least room remaining is dedicated to 'Mistakes: Mental, Not Paying Attention.'"

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at www.woodcentral.com**

News and Views from

WoodCentral.com

by Ellis Valentine

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Woodworker West

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