

## Tip #1

A “must do” with any new portable table saw (when you’re not using a leg set) is to attach a 3/4-in. plywood base with a hole cut in the center. This simple base allows you to clamp or screw the table saw to sawhorses, which provide a wide foundation for added stability. This also raises the saw off the ground to a comfortable working height. The hole in the bottom lets the sawdust fall through and helps keep the saw running cool. But that’s not all the base has to offer. Drill a couple of 1/2-in. holes on one side so you can hang the saw from hooks fastened to the workshop or garage wall when you’re finished using it.

### #1 Extra-Stable Plywood Base



Cut the plywood base a few inches wider and longer than the base of your saw, and then cut a 1-sq.-ft. hole in the center. Center your saw on the plywood and mark the mounting holes. Drill a 1/8-in. hole through the plywood at each mark. Flip the piece over and drill 1-in. dia. holes about 1/4 in. deep to recess the carriage bolt heads. Next, drill 5/16-in. holes in the center of the recesses. Pound in the carriage bolts, slip the saw over the bolts (use spacers if they come with the saw) and fasten the saw to the base with washers and nuts.

**CAUTION:** Every table saw user has horror stories about near misses and not-so-near misses. No doubt about it: Table saws can be dangerous. Always approach them with respect. Use your blade guard whenever possible and always wear safety glasses and hearing protection. Read your owner’s manual and make sure your saw is properly adjusted.

## Tip #2

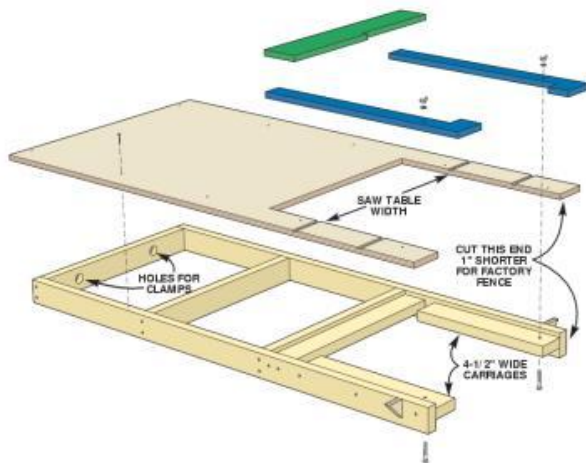
## #2 Combination Ripping and Crosscut Table



Click image to enlarge.

This nifty homemade plywood and 2x4 jig is designed to handle both ripping and crosscutting. You'll have to customize it to fit your saw's table. Portable saws are light enough to suspend from the jig. Just lift and turn the saw in the jig to change it from one operation to the other. Notice the plywood inserts (blue and green pieces) that help position the saw for each operation. See Fig. A for details.

FIG. A



Click image to enlarge.

Build the jig from pieces of 2x4, 2x6 and 3/4-in. cabinet-grade plywood for about \$50 and three hours of your time. Cut the opening width and depth of the plywood cutout to the same dimension as the widest part of the saw table. You may need to remove 1 in. from the right end so you can move the fence fully to the right side of the table when you're using it for ripping long pieces. Be sure you have adequate saw table support when you have it in the side position as shown in "Crosscut Position". The saw table must sit on the support carriage at least 1 in. on each side. We cut our carriage supports 4-1/2 in. wide from pieces of 2x6. Note: Before using this cutting jig, be sure to clamp it to each sawhorse and then weight the far horse with a sandbag or a full pail for added stability as shown.

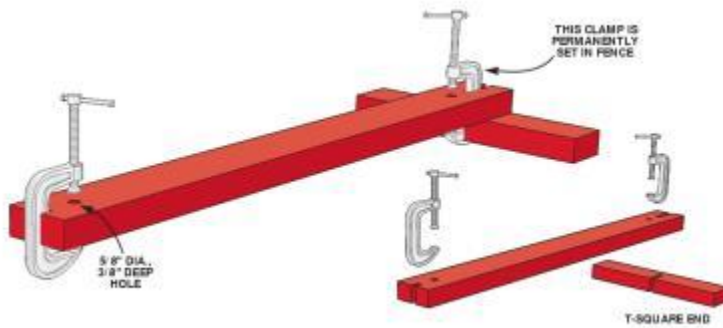
## Rip Position



[Click image to enlarge.](#)

Rip long pieces safely and comfortably. Be sure to clamp the jig to the sawhorses and weight the rear sawhorse for added balance and stability. Follow the basic plan shown and adapt the jig to fit your saw.

FIG. B



[Click image to enlarge.](#)

Build this fence from 2x4 lumber and two 3-in. C-clamps. Just cut the slots as shown and drill a 5/8-in. hole 3/8 in. deep to keep the clamp from drifting as you tighten it to the table. Note: Insert the clamp before gluing and screwing the T-square end of the fence.



Click image to enlarge.

Cut wide panels such as cabinet doors or shelving with full support. For really large pieces (deeper than 3 ft.), have a helper support the pieces after you cut them or use an outfeed jig. Notice that the fence clamps to the tabletop and adjusts to more than 4 ft. from the blade. Be sure to make your fence parallel to the blade and check it before each cut to ensure that your workpiece won't bind as you cut it.

### Tips #3 and #4

#### #3 Cut-Off Block for Duplicate Lengths

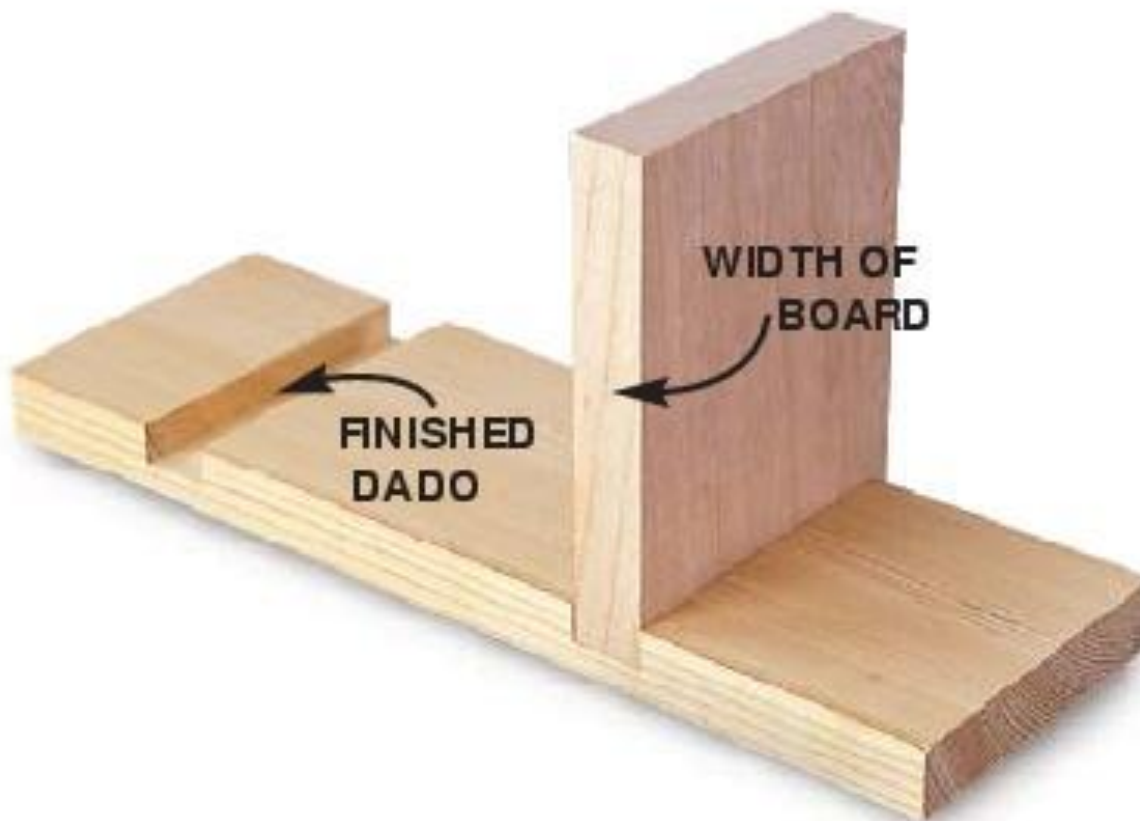


Dangerous kickback can occur when you crosscut directly against a rip fence. Kickback

happens when the part of the board between the fence and the blade gets pinched, and the blade, spinning toward you, catches it and hurls it back at you.

You can prevent this hazard with a simple block. Cut and clamp a block to the side of your rip fence and then position the fence the correct distance from the blade (the length of cut plus the thickness of the safety block). Clamp the block so that as the workpiece enters the blade, it's no longer in contact with the safety block. This crosscutting method prevents the workpiece from binding between the fence and the spinning blade. Never make a cut that binds against the blade in any way. Think through all your cut setups before you start!

#### #4 Dado Guide Using Standard Blade



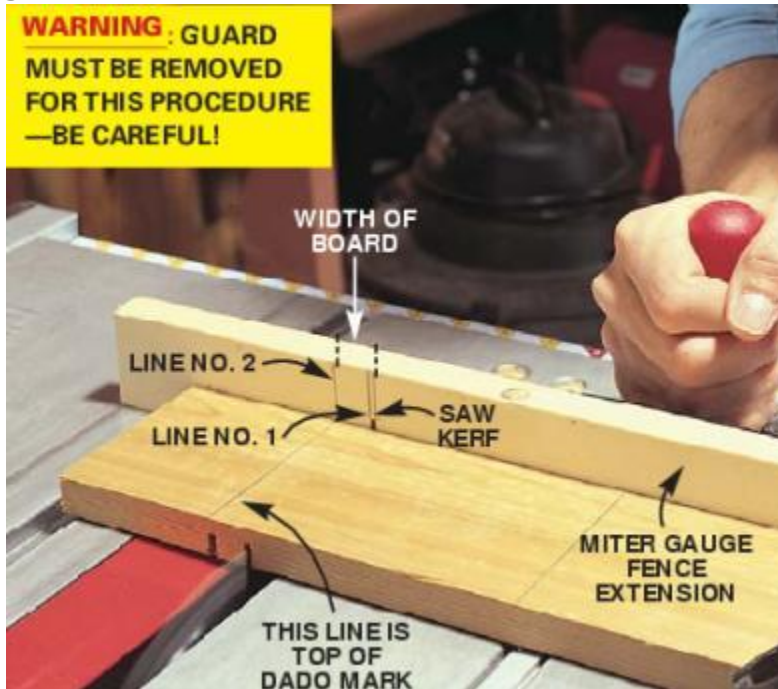
Cut accurate dados without a dado blade by making successive passes over the blade. The tough part here is to get a tight fit. Screw a 1x3 fence extension to your miter gauge and make a saw kerf in it. For a tight fit, trace the width of the board onto the homemade miter gauge fence extension (see Step 1 photo). Then follow the Step 1 and 2 photos. Try this method on a test piece to get the hang of it.

### STEP 1.



Make your first cut by aligning the top dado mark with line no. 1 drawn on the miter gauge fence. This cut establishes the top of the dado. The line takes into account the thickness of your blade.

### STEP 2.



Make your second cut by aligning the same dado mark with Line No. 2 on the fence shown in Step 2. This cut establishes the bottom of the dado. To finish the dado, just make several

passes to cut away the area between your initial cuts. Make slight adjustments if the fit is too tight or too loose.

## Tip #5

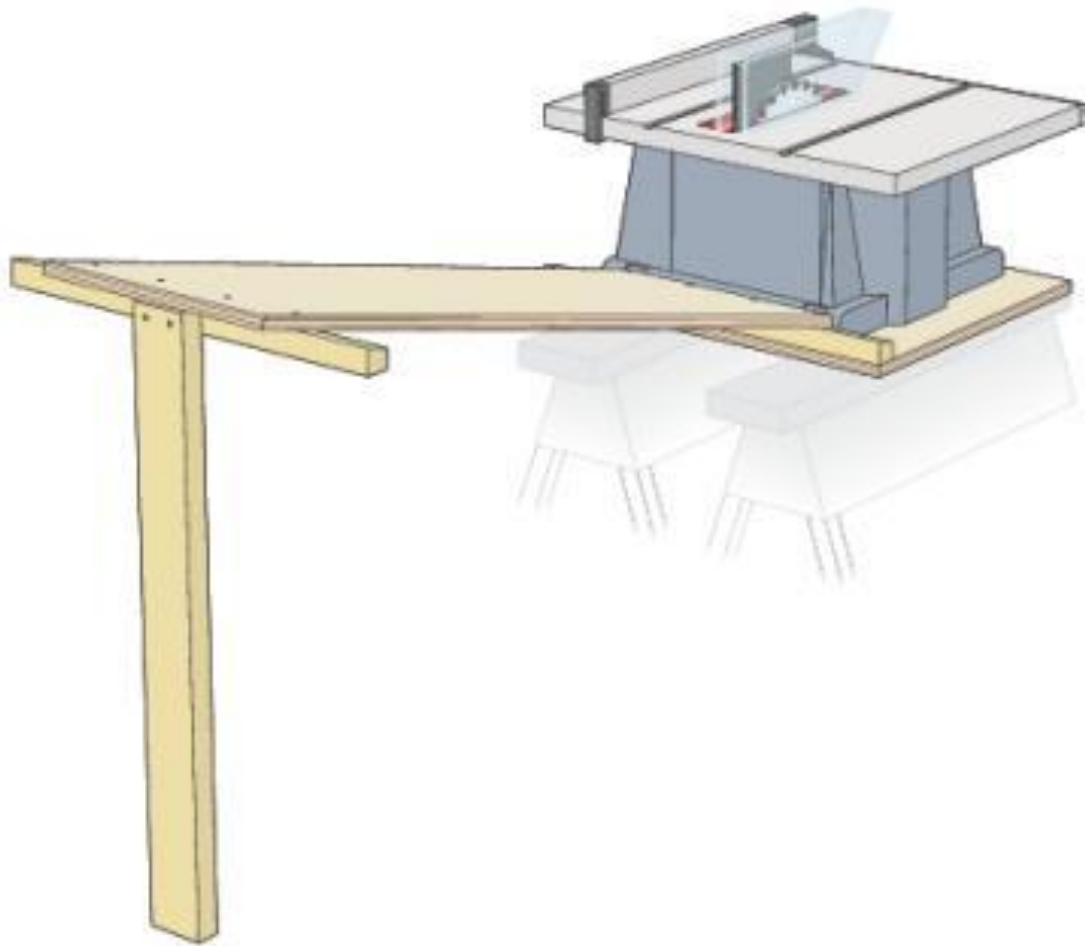
### #5 A Simple Outfeed Jig Supports Those Long, Dangly Boards



Click image to enlarge.

Cut long pieces confidently with an easy-to-make outfeed jig screwed to your plywood base. Be sure to have the highest point of the jig even with the saw table. The gradual incline of the jig (about 12 degrees) helps guide sagging pieces and slowly bring them up as you push your board through the saw. Ordinary rollerstyle outfeed supports don't work well for long boards because they have a tendency to tip over when the board sags and hits the stand beneath the roller. This jig works especially well for long, thin pieces such as siding, which tends to sag and separate as you cut.

FIG. C



Build this simple outfeed jig from ordinary 3/4-in. plywood and 2x4 scraps. Be sure to screw the jig to the plywood base of the saw for stability (your saw base must be screwed or clamped to the sawhorses as well). You won't need anything other than a single 2x4 for the far leg support.