

The Weekend **W**  
**Woodworker**<sup>™</sup>  
By WOODWORKING FOR **MERE MORTALS**



**EQUIP YOUR  
WOODWORKING  
SHOP FOR LESS  
THAN \$1000**

*"Oh sure ... I could make that too if I had all those expensive tools."  
— YouTube commenter*

As someone who has been making things out of wood since I was about 12, it's exciting to see that more people are woodworking now than ever before. The craft has exploded in popularity – but there are still too many people who want to get into woodworking who think they can't because they need to buy a lot of expensive tools.

I'm not going to sugarcoat it: most likely you will need to spend some money to get started. It's just not as much as you probably think. In fact, I'm going to show you how you can get the basic tools you need to build almost any project for less than \$1000.

## **Don't make the same mistake most people do**

If you rush out on a spending spree to get tools, you will probably overspend and buy a bunch of stuff you don't really need. Be a smart consumer and don't let tool companies tell you what you need to be a "real" woodworker.

When I was becoming a passionate weekend woodworker, I thought making dovetail joints was critical if I was going to call myself a woodworker. I bought an expensive dovetail jig . . . and used it twice in five years. It was complicated and took a lot of time to set up and use. When I eventually gave it away, I began to develop a different way of thinking about woodworking that was frugal and practical, and I called it Woodworking for Mere Mortals.

Since then, I have gotten rid of more tools than I have purchased. Which ones do I keep? Only the ones I use on a regular basis. My goal is to have fun building useful projects, not try to impress other woodworkers with my tools.



*I've been using this "entry level" drill press for over 15 years. It ain't pretty, but it still gets the job done!  
(Drill press not required in The Weekend Woodworker Course)*



So if I could offer one general pearl of wisdom about tools, it's this:

*Only acquire a new tool if you need it to accomplish something that can't be done with your existing tool collection.*

Hang on, let me rephrase that:

*Only acquire a new tool if you need it to accomplish something that can't be done with your existing tools ~~collection~~.*

Avoid thinking of your tools as a "collection." Instead, think of them as tools. To accomplish jobs. They aren't rare comic books.

## Get the tools you need without breaking the bank

I want to share with you my list of recommended tools that you can use to make everything in my course, The Weekend Woodworker, from a coffee table to a curio cabinet. You can acquire all these tools for under \$1000. You might even already own some of the tools on my list, and only need to invest in a few tools to get started. Most of us have picked up a few tools over the years.

And don't forget that you have another option: to buy used tools. Unlike tech gear, power tools don't fundamentally change over the years and become obsolete. On my show, you've probably seen me use a lathe that my dad purchased over 60 years ago. It's quirky, doesn't have a digital readout, and takes longer to set up than a newer lathe. But the basic function is the same: it's a motor that spins something. This is the basic functionality of almost all power tools. My lathe is capable of producing the same results as a brand new \$2,000 unit. Plus it's pretty cool being able to use my dad's old tools.



Turning wood on my antique lathe (Lathe not required in The Weekend Woodworker Course).

A few sources for used tools are [Craigslist](#), BuyMyStuff, and [Facebook Marketplace](#). All of these connect you with local sellers, so there is no shipping needed. I have also found great buys at estate sales and garage sales. Sometimes these sellers are moving and highly motivated to get rid of great tools. I picked up some terrific clamps once at a garage sale for a buck a piece. Seriously, you can never have enough clamps!



*One of my amazing \$1 garage sale clamps.*



## Get some experience before you spend the big bucks

If you're buying new tools, start out with what I call "hobbyist grade" tools. These are affordable brands that cater to weekend woodworkers. Ryobi is a respected brand that sells tools for half of what other brands charge, and they're readily available at your local Home Depot. (I have been using my Ryobi drill press for over 15 years!) Harbor Freight is another retailer that specializes in inexpensive tools. They will all get the job done.



*This brand new 10" compound miter saw costs around \$120.*

Eventually, you may decide to upgrade a tool to one that's more powerful or has more features. But you won't know which additional features you need until you've spent a lot of time in the shop using that tool. So gain experience and knowledge with something affordable, and focus on making cool stuff!

With the tools on this list, you will be able to create impressive pieces that your family will be using for many years to come.

# The Weekend Woodworker Basic Tool List

## POWER TOOLS

- Table Saw
- 10" Miter Saw
- Random Orbit Sander
- Drill & Impact Driver
- Variable Speed Jigsaw
- Circular Saw
- Table saw upgrade option: [Ridgid\\*](#)

## SHOP ESSENTIALS

- Drill Bit & Driver Kit
- 12 Gallon Shop Vac
- 2, 24" BESSEY Bar Clamps
- 2, PONY 1/2-Inch Pipe Clamp Fixture for 1/2-Inch Black Pipe
- 2, 48" x 1/2" Black Pipe
- Strap Clamp
- 8-Inch Stacking Dado Blade Set
- Measuring Tape
- 16" Combination Square
- Framing Square

*\*This is very similar to the Porter-Cable Saw used in my YouTube videos for the past 10 years. If you choose this option, you will need a dado insert plate. Check out [this video](#) for a tutorial on how to make one.*

*\*\*If stacked dado blades aren't available where you live, you can buy single blades and use alternative methods, which are covered in my course, The Weekend Woodworker.*

*\*\*\*If you buy the first table saw on this list AND the dado blades, you will need to purchase a special insert plate for the saw. Check the manual for part number and purchasing info. You can also make a stand for this saw by following the steps in [this video](#).*

## SAFETY GEAR

- Safety Glasses
- Hearing Protection
- Respirator
- Dust Mask

Note: You will also need to keep your shop stocked with items such as wood glue, disposable dust masks, sandpaper, screws, masking tape, and stains, depending on the projects you're working on.

# The Weekend Woodworker

Following the list of tools, I'm excited to tell you about my first Woodworking Online Course.

The course is designed for people with limited space and selection of tools.

When I first came up with the idea for a course, I wanted to stress that basic woodworking is inexpensive. That's why I've put together this list. But I know it's not just the thought of an expensive tool list that's holding you back.

This course will include:

- My straight-forward approach to organizing your woodworking space and get the most out of every square inch
- Detailed and in-depth project videos so you exactly know what to do every step of the way of a project
- Skill training for the most important and useful woodworking techniques so you can master projects on your own (Never again watch the same five seconds of a YouTube video over and over again to figure out what happened in between)
- A simple guide to sell your finished projects online
- Simple techniques to re-work mistakes in projects (never feel stuck again or waste materials)
- Unique woodworking plans for practical projects that you can gift to friends or use at home (and save thousands of dollars)

Most importantly, the course will be designed in such a way that:

- You won't need any expensive tools or huge amounts of space (just what's on this list)
- All projects can be built with low-cost, affordable, easily accessible materials
- The projects of the course are designed to be finished in a weekend, so even if you have little time on your hands, you will gain the feeling of accomplishment and completion

**To find out more about the course, [click here](#).**

## One last thing...

I hope you found this guide useful. I really wanted to show you that getting the tools you need for your woodworking projects doesn't have to break the bank.

If you liked the guide, please share it with some people you think might like it too.

