

# This Stand Really Delivers

Adjustable work support is a versatile, sturdy shop helper

BY MICHAEL FORTUNE

## THE FOUR TOPS

Including the roller stand at right, Fortune made four handy attachments, allowing the stand to be used with a variety of machine setups.

**Ball bearings for curves.** An auxiliary top with two sets of eyeball rollers supports the work for curved cuts on the bandsaw and router table.



**Carpet top for finished parts.** This attachment supports long workpieces that have already been surface-prepped or pre-finished, like this tall cabinet side.



**Extension for tall tasks.** The stand will extend as high as a bandsaw table. To support long pieces at his drill press, which is taller, Fortune clamps on a rectangular frame.



## SIMPLE JOINERY, SMOOTH ACTION

Any scrap hardwood will do for the parts. Assembled with dados, screws, and biscuits, this stand has a broad, stable base and an adjustable column that slides easily and locks solidly. Other than the base, all parts are  $\frac{7}{8}$  in. thick.

I made this support stand many years ago, and it has proved to be a very helpful friend. The top can be quickly and precisely adjusted from 44 in. high—tall enough for my bandsaw—down to 31 in., so it stores under my tablesaw's outfeed table.

Compared to store-bought stands, this one is more stable and easier to level. Adjustable feet accommodate uneven floors, teaming up with a broad base and a strong sliding column to keep the stand from budging under heavy work.

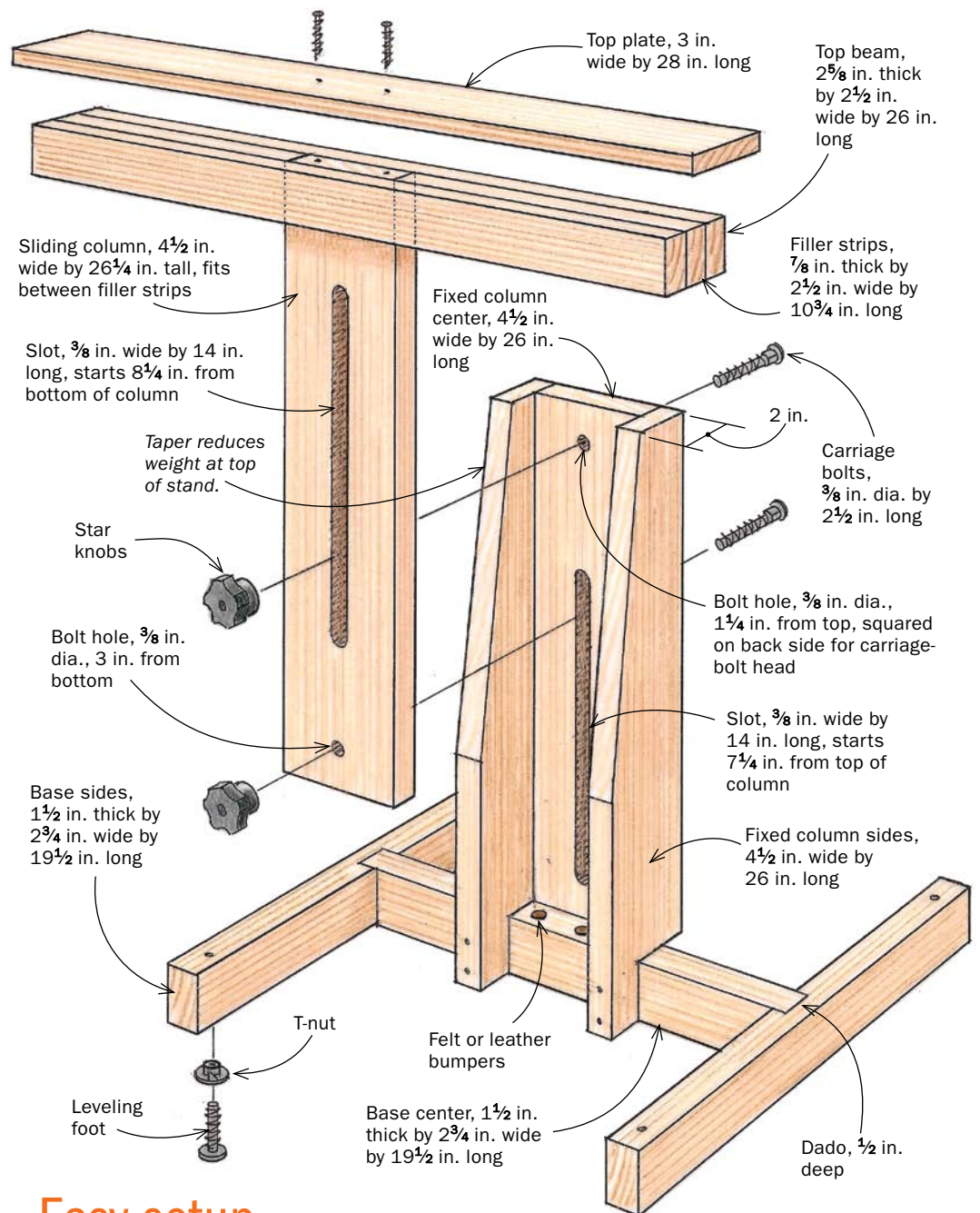
With a stable platform like this, it wasn't long before I was adding various rollers and other attachments, making the stand indispensable.

### Sure-footed base keeps it stable

The base is broad and strong, yet the joinery is simple: just shallow dados and screws, with some glue for insurance. I found the heavy-duty, adjustable feet sold as appliance levelers at a hardware store, but similar products are available online, often called leveling feet. Avoid the ones with nylon feet, which will slide across the shop floor. Mine have  $\frac{5}{16}$ -in.-dia. threaded posts that screw into T-nuts in the base.

Just above the base is a two-piece column. The fixed column has sides that guide the sliding column, which is screwed to the top. If I relied only on the bolts and slots to keep the sliding section aligned, the slots would wear out and the action would get sloppy. I use two large star knobs to lock the column, with one slot in the fixed part and one slot in the sliding portion.

I attached the sides of the fixed column with biscuits. The sides are notched at the bottom, teaming up with the center section to create a



## Easy setup



To purchase expanded plans and a complete outlist for this stand and other projects, go to [FineWoodworking.com/PlanStore](http://FineWoodworking.com/PlanStore).

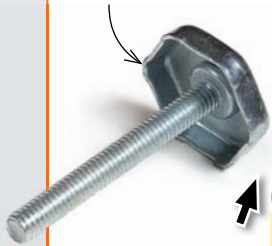


**Adjust the height and level the base.** Use a stick to bring the stand level with the work surface (left). Set the roller attachments a little higher, so they bear the weight of the workpiece and will keep it moving. Then adjust the feet (right) to level the top with the table and correct any rocking.

## Build the base first

**Feet first.** To install T-nuts for the leveling feet, Fortune drills stepped holes in the base parts. Then he threads one of the carriage bolts into each T-nut to tap it into place.

Fortune used appliance levelers, bought from a local hardware store, to level the stand. Similar products are available online.



### Online Extra

Hot-rod your leveling feet for easier adjustment. Go to [FineWoodworking.com/extras](http://FineWoodworking.com/extras).



**Build the base.** The base pieces are joined with shallow dadoes, long screws, and glue.



**Route the slots.** The fixed and sliding columns have  $\frac{3}{8}$ -in. bolt holes and  $\frac{3}{8}$ -in. slots, which must line up precisely. Drill the holes first, and then use them to set up the router for the long slots.



**Fixed column is biscuited.** After notching the outside pieces to fit tightly onto the base, attach them to the center piece.



**Glue and screws anchor the column.** Screw in from the front and back to attach the fixed column to the base.

# Attach the top beam and plate

**Column and top are one piece.** The pieces for the top beam are assembled around the sliding column. Put a clamp across the center pieces to make sure they are tight to the column, and make sure the column is square to the beam before the glue sets up.



strong bridle joint at the base. That joint is also glued and screwed.

The top plate on the stand is wide and strong, thanks to a thick support beam made of three layers of hardwood. Filler strips in the middle fit around the sliding column to create a bombproof joint.

## Specialized tops are especially handy

The top plate works well as a basic support, but I've made a few auxiliary tops that are essential. All have cleats on the underside that fit around the top plate, with simple toggles that hold them on.

One of my favorite tops has a couple of sets of ball-bearing rollers attached to it. These let stock move in any direction, ideal for cutting curves on big, heavy pieces on the bandsaw or passing a long

**Knobs finish the job.** One of the bolt holes needs a square recess chiseled into it for the square section under the bolt head. The other bolt head fits neatly into one of the long slots.



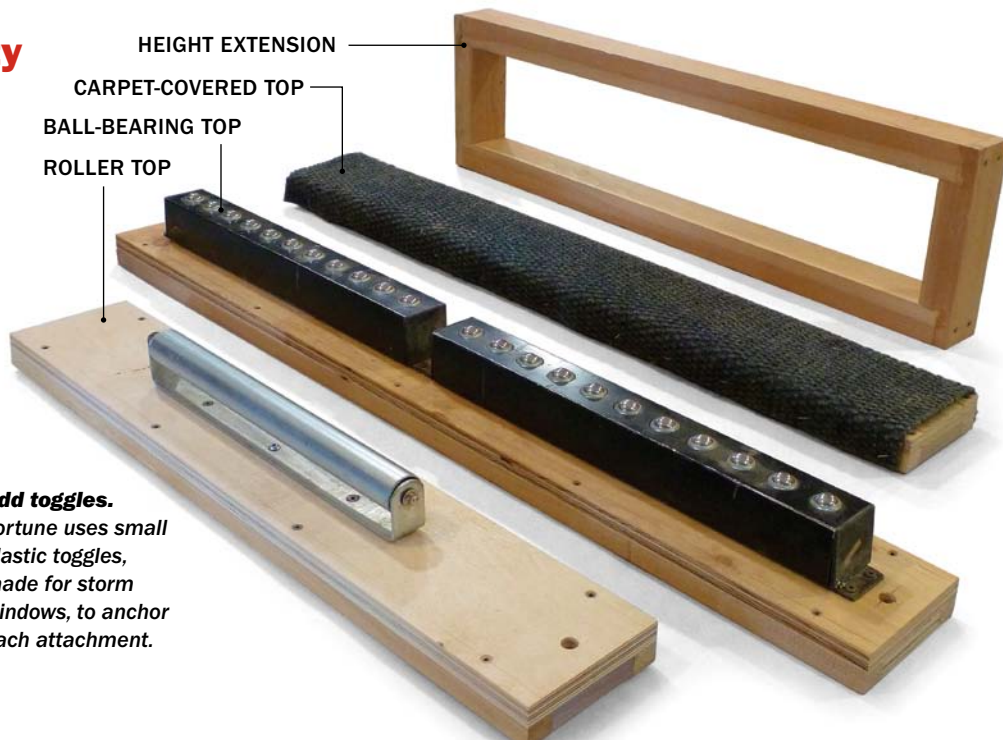
curve over the router table. For straight ripping on the bandsaw, I found an old hard-rubber washing-machine roller and made a wooden holder for it. You can buy similar metal rollers from Rockler. For sanding and finishing large projects, I also made a carpet-covered top that attaches the same way as the others.

One of my drill presses is mounted on a tall stand, and I bring its adjustable table close to eye level for precise work. To support long pieces there, I made an extension frame that attaches to the top of the stand. □

*Michael Fortune is a contributing editor.*

## Auxiliary tops add versatility

The cleats on the bottom of each attachment are the same thickness as the stand's top plate, and fit snugly around it.



**Add toggles.** Fortune uses small plastic toggles, made for storm windows, to anchor each attachment.