

# Shop-Built Roller Extension Table

*Roller balls and vertical adjustability help this unit handle sheet goods with ease*

by Bob Gabor

## Roller extension table

A shop-built extension table makes cutting large panels on the tablesaw a safer, easier operation.

Space so roller balls are flush with saw top when roller assemblies are in the lowered position.

### Roller assemblies

Spacer block

Support,  $\frac{1}{2} \times 3 \times 24$

Roller balls, 1 in. dia., evenly spaced

Carriage bolts,  $\frac{3}{8} \times 2$

Cross braces,  $\frac{7}{8} \times 2 \times 25$

Leg width, 2 in.

Roller support top,  $\frac{3}{4} \times 2\frac{1}{4} \times 28$

Baltic-birch plywood,  $\frac{1}{2} \times 1\frac{3}{4} \times 25$

Flat-head machine screws,  $\frac{5}{16}$ -18

Dado,  $\frac{1}{2}$  in. wide by  $\frac{1}{4}$  in. deep

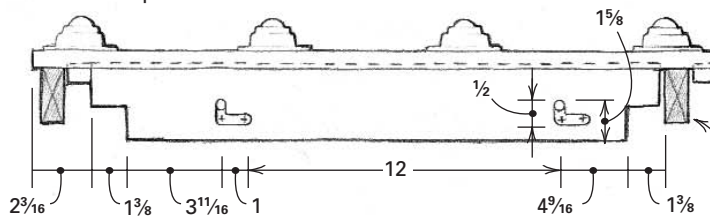
File groove to accept hinge pin.

Hole,  $\frac{7}{16}$  in. dia.

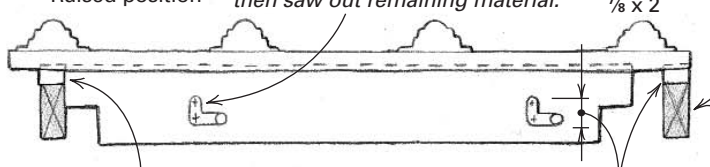
Hinge

### Roller assembly detail

Lowered position



Raised position



Spacer block is  $\frac{3}{4}$  in. high for a crosscut box with a  $\frac{1}{2}$ -in.-thick base.

Adjust spacer block and height of L-slot according to crosscut box base thickness.

I was tired of wrestling big sheets of plywood across the top of my tablesaw. I already had an outfeed table on the back of the saw, but what I really needed was a side extension table to support the heavy panels going into the saw. I didn't want to give up too much valuable floor space to an accessory that I wouldn't be using most of the time.

My solution was a fold-away extension table that uses rows of roller balls to support the workpiece. I chose roller balls instead of long, tube rollers because the balls won't pull stock off-line as it is fed through the saw. Normally, the roller balls are even with the saw's tabletop, but they also can be raised to support long panels that overhang the end of my crosscut box. This straightforward shop fixture is easy to build and use. It sets up and drops back out of the way in a matter of seconds, and it makes cutting plywood on the tablesaw safer and more manageable.

### Utility and economy in a shop tool

I'd rather make furniture than shop tools, so I designed the extension table to be as simple as possible. The top frame and the leg assemblies, as shown in the drawing on the facing page, are inexpensive and easy to assemble with a biscuit joiner. Yet they're light and strong. The length of the top-frame assembly and the leg assembly is determined by the distance between the floor and the top of the saw.

The top frame needs to be sized to just clear the floor in the folded position. The legs must be long enough to make the roller balls level with the saw top when the frame is in the raised position.

The extension table also supports long stock in my sliding crosscut box because the rollers are adjustable by the thickness of the crosscut box's bottom. Mounting the rollers on T-shaped assemblies, which adjust easily after loosening a few knobs, was a simple and reliable solution.

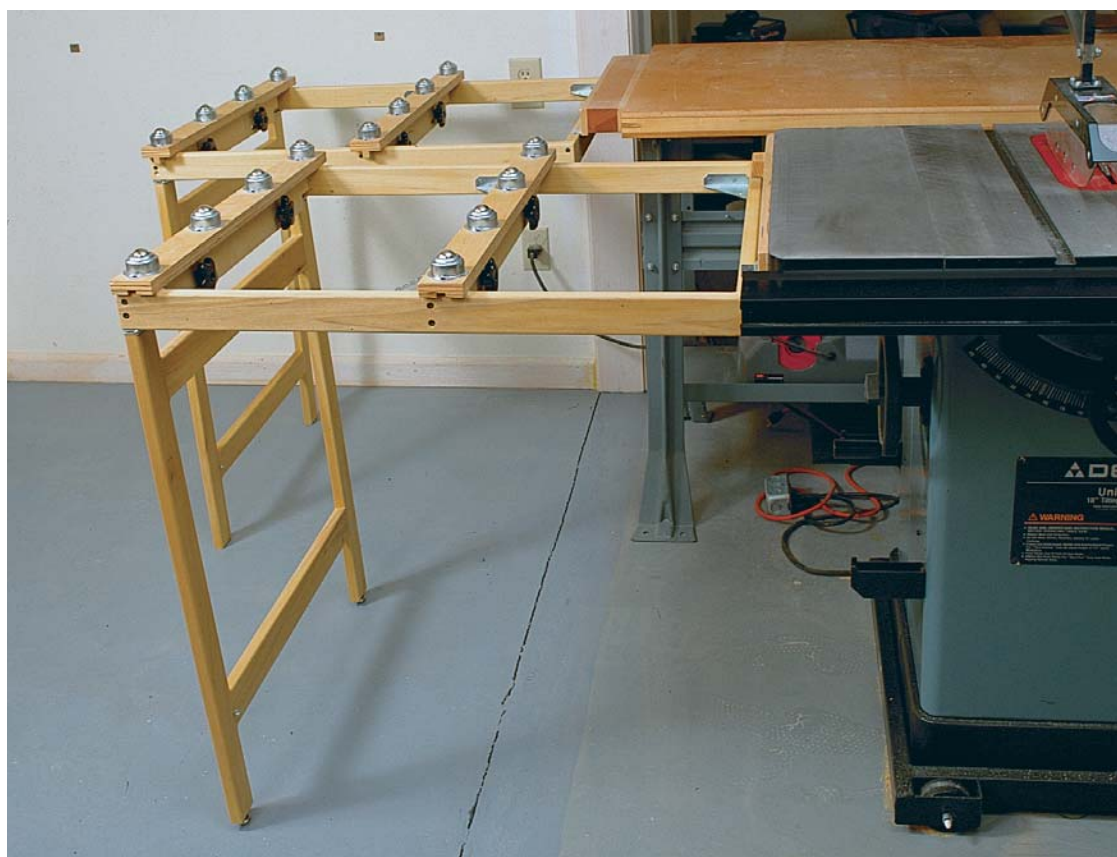
To fold the unit for storage (see the top photo), I hinged the legs to the top frame and also hinged the top frame to the tablesaw top. When folded down, the table doesn't take up much room in my shop. By adding adjustable levelers to the leg assemblies, I made it easy to fine-tune the height.

Finally, I added a piece of lightweight chain to limit the leg travel and a screen-door hook to keep the leg assembly folded for storage. I've been so pleased with the roller extension table that I've built another and attached it to the side of my outfeed table. □

*Bob Gabor is an amateur woodworker in Pittsboro, N.C., and a member of the Triangle Woodworkers Association.*



**The extension table drops into its stored position in seconds and takes up no floor space. Adjustable roller assemblies can be raised so that the table also works with a sliding crosscut box.**



**A roller-ball extension table makes cutting large panels safer and easier. Unlike long tube rollers, roller balls won't pull stock out of line as it goes through the saw.**