

Grip-All Jaws

Innovative system allows you to safely clamp carvings of any shape

By Shawn Cipa

The Grip-All Jaws system sports a unique and original clamping design for holding irregularly shaped projects tightly. Using a combination of rubber-coated grip pins and composite-based pivot arms inserted into bench vise or bench dog holes, the system grips carvings almost like a human hand with outstretched fingers.

RP Myers incorporates the Grip-All Jaws in three clamping systems: the original Bench Vise, designed for use with an existing bench vise; the self-contained Tilt-Top Portable bench; and the smaller yet easy-to-position Orbital Holding System. I tested the latter two in my shop.

Tilt-Top Portable bench

The self-contained Tilt-Top Portable bench collapses for easy transport, weighs 30 pounds, and comes with its own bench vise and the Grip-All Jaws system. The system mounts on any tabletop using clamps attached to the feet, and it can hold carvings in a variety of angles using the adjustable support arms. This set-up allows me to clamp projects at a comfortable angle and height—I don't have to hunker over a project and strain my lower back.

To test the vise, I chose a witch carving nearly impossible to clamp in a traditional vise without damaging it. The holes in the vise's pivot arms allowed me to position the gripping pins where I needed them. When tightened, the pivot arms positioned themselves so the flexible pins held the carving firmly without damaging the project. As I tightened the vise, the pins flexed and tightened on the project enough to use a mallet and chisel without damaging the project.

To really test the system, I clamped a large heavy log in the Tilt-Top Portable bench to carve a wood spirit. After I tightened the clamps holding the system to the bench,



The Tilt-Top Portable bench mounts onto any table and secures carvings in a variety of angles.



The Orbital Holding System has a 360° rotation and a 90° tilt, and can handle projects up to 20 pounds in weight.

it gripped the larger blank even better than it had the smaller witch carving. Remember, the system is only as stable as the table you attach it to.

The Tilt-Top bench also comes with a set of shallow grip pins to secure thinner relief and bas-relief projects.

Orbital Holding System

The Orbital Holding System comprises a slightly smaller version of the Grip-All Jaws assembly attached to a Panavise swiveling base system. It opens up to 14" and can handle projects that weigh up to 20 pounds. The swiveling base can be attached to the supplied Baltic birch plywood clamping board (to make it somewhat portable) or attached directly to your workbench. This system allows you to rotate a project 360° and tilt the project up to 90° combined with the clamping ability of the Grip-All Jaws.

The Orbital Holding System acts as a third hand and allows me to carve details without worrying about cutting myself. I secured the witch in the system and tightened the base enough that it wouldn't move on its own but still moved freely with hand pressure as I carved the details into the piece with a knife, moving and rotating the piece as needed. I left the witch clamped in the system as I painted because the vise gave me access to most areas without holding the piece in my hand.

Overall, both systems are usable and have quickly become invaluable pieces of equipment in my shop. The Grip-All Jaws system is what I call "creatively unique" because its usefulness is only limited by your imagination. The original Grip-All Jaws is available for \$95, the Tilt-Top Portable bench is available for \$285, and the Orbital Holding System is available for \$195. Contact Grip-All Jaws at 360-708-4677, or visit them online at www.gripalljaws.com.