

Quick Tips

Creating Efficient Work Stations

One of the most important factors in creating an efficient work environment is establishing standardized work stations. To have production areas run smoothly and quickly, the key is to have proper preparation of these work stations. The fitting tables are a prime example of why efficiency counts most.

Interestingly enough, a lot can be learned from the McDonald's corporation. Go into any McDonald's in the world and you will find the food preparation stations are exactly alike. The ketchup, mayonnaise, pickles, and other condiments as well as the burgers, chicken nuggets, and french fries, are all kept in exactly the same spot in every store. This offers the luxury of training employees once. They can also be transferred from one store to another and already know where everything is. Framers and manufacturers can learn a lot from that.

In the framing workplace, fitters often customize their stations to reflect the way they like to work. However, this can cause a problem if Fitter A has to borrow Fitter B's tools or even sit at his or her station. The best thing to do is to create fitting tables with exactly the same set up. Tools and drawers should be color coded. Decide the frequency of use of tools and design the station to reflect that. Ergonomically, tables should be comfortable, with frequently used tools within reach.

As a result, production is quick and fewer mistakes are made. Manuals can be designed that show just where the hammer, screwdriver, and awl go. If an employee has to replace the ATG tape, it's easy; it's in the same spot at every table. Training can take place once.

Depending upon the layout and what type of items are being produced, tilt bins are often recommended instead of drawers. Remember, each company needs its own customized work station. What works for one company may not work for another.

By creating customized work stations for your manufacturing needs, profits and efficiency are sure to increase. And, don't you deserve a break today?

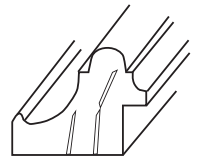
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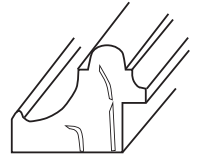
Use the Correct V-Nail®

Many custom and production framing shops are now using underpinners to assemble picture frames. If your shop is V-nailing it is very important to make sure the right V-Nail is used to achieve the tightest assembly results. V-shaped nails come in several designs, widths, heights, and sharpnesses. All companies that manufacture underpinners will offer specific V-shaped nails to match the performance of the joiner. Some manufacturers even have special patented V-Nails. Always use the recommend fastener from the manufacturers.

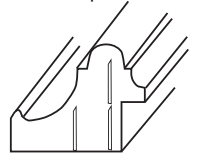
Below are three side profiles of a moulding. Figure 1 shows V-shaped nails that curve toward the rabbet of the moulding. This illustrates that the nail is too dull. It will also cause the top of the moulding to spread open, making a poor corner. The nail is actually crushing the fibrous product, leaving a weak joint. To correct this problem, use a sharper nail or one designed for "softwood." Figure 2 illustrates V-nails that curl or curve toward the back of the moulding. This is caused by a sharp nail "deflecting." An aged growth ring from "hardwood" is the main culprit of this problem. Using a blunt or hardwood nail will correct this problem. The blunt nail will "crush" through instead of "deflect" off the hard growth ring. Figure 3 depicts the proper way V-shaped nails should look when the correct nail is used in the material it was designed for. The nails should stack straight, and there should be no displacement of material where the nail was inserted.



Too Dull



Too Sharp



Correct

Lastly, the nails should cover approximately 80 percent of the height of the moulding. Using the factory recommended fastener, sharpness, and size will ensure the strongest assembly process when joining a frame.

	SOFTWOOD	HARDWOOD
TYPE OF MOULDING	Banak, Bass, Cedar, Cellular Polystyrene, White Pine, Obeche, Poplar, Soft MDF (Medium Density Fiberboard)	Ash, Cherry, Hickory, Maple, Pecan, Ramin, Red Oak, White Oak, Plastic
SHARPNESS OF FASTENER	Sharp Grind	Blunt Grind

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Contributors to this column are industry members who have experience in the operation of a production framing facility. If you have a tip of your own, please send it to Production Tips, PFM Production, P.O. Box 102, Morganville, NJ 07751.