

The best tool under \$20 ever!

The Incra Gauge

Forget the stackable brass bars, forget the digital gauges with batteries that always die at the wrong time, this little tool that has been around for over 20 years, runs circles around them all! I have two in my shop, and one in fact is at least 15 years old. Nothing to wear out, no batteries to die. I am still finding new ways to use them as well. Check it out [here](#).

The key to the gauge are the CNC milled interlocking “teeth” set exactly $1/32$ ” apart. Move the gauge to the desired distance as shown on the integral scale, and the two sides interlock at that position. Tighten the locking nut and you are ready to go.



Use it to set the height of the table saw blade. This is particularly useful when I am sawing off the lid of a box I am making. I want to saw all the way through the two long size, and then leave no more than a $1/32$ ” web on the two short sides, that I cut through at the bench. The Incra gauge with its milled accuracy to $1/32$ ” lets me get that level of precision.



Use it also to set the distance from the fence. I use the combination of this measurement along with setting the height as shown above, to cut a clean, accurate rabbet in two passes. I especially like that approach over using the router table with woods that like to chip and splinter when using a rabbeting cutting on the router.



Accurately locating the router table fence for a dado or other cut is also easy. In this photo I want a 3/4" dado 1/2" from the edge of the workpiece. I set the Incra Gauge to 1 1/4", move the fence in place and lock it there. The cut is right where I need it.



Of course, just like setting the table saw blade height, I use the Incra Gauge to set the bit height at the router table as well. (And no, I am not planning on making that deep a cut in a single pass. It was just easier to photograph the gauge in use by raising the bit that high).



The Incra Gauge is also a useful tool for locating from the edge of a work piece. It slides easily so one can mark along an edge, or, use it to position another piece, (such as the drawer pull shown in the photo below).

