

Vondriska Woodworks, George Vondriska

Rockler Dovetail Jig Tips and Tricks



Half-blind dovetails.

The tail board is always vertical. The pin and socket board is always horizontal. The boards are cut with the inside face of the drawer facing out and up.



Be very careful loading the material in the jig. Make certain the horizontal and vertical pieces meet, and that the end grain of the vertical piece is even with the top face of the horizontal. Double check that the edges of the pieces are against the stop.

Getting a good fit: The fit of the joint depends on the depth of cut of the router bit. Too loose, too deep, too loose, too shallow. If the fit of the joint is too loose, the bit is set too deep.

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Start with a scoring cut on the face of the vertical piece. This is a huge help in avoiding chipping and splintering on the tail board.

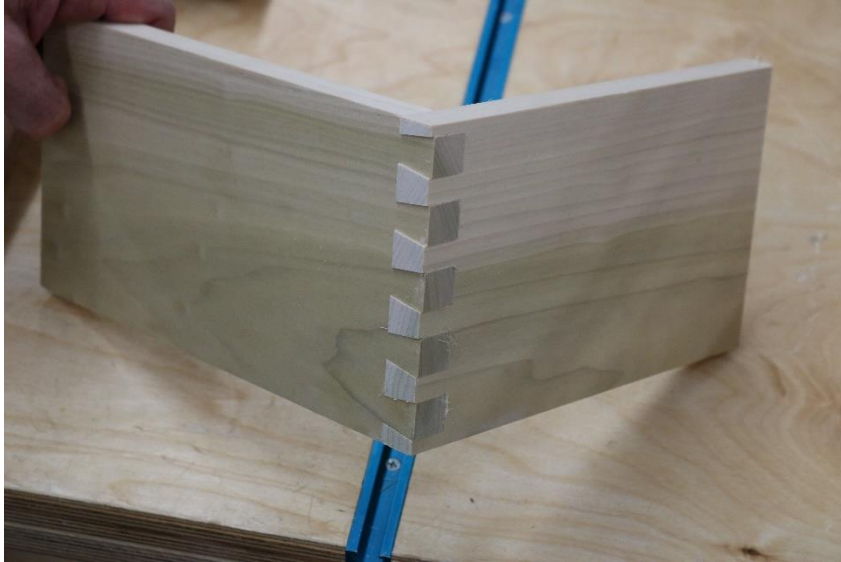


Before removing the boards from the jig, make certain there aren't any spots you missed with the router. It's nearly impossible to get the parts back in the jig in exactly the same position.

Common half-blind mistakes

- Starting the router before it's on the jig, or lifting it from the jig while it's still spinning. There are both great ways to ruin your jig.
- Misaligning the two boards
 - Not being against the stop
 - Having the overlap of the two boards wrong
 - Not having the two boards aligned with each other
- Flipping boards, instead of rotating them, when cutting the opposite end.
 - Label the inside faces of the drawer parts. You should always be able to see the marks.

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Through dovetails.

The boards are cut one at a time. Both boards go into the jig vertically, using two different templates.

Tails are always cut first.
Sockets are cut to fit the tails.



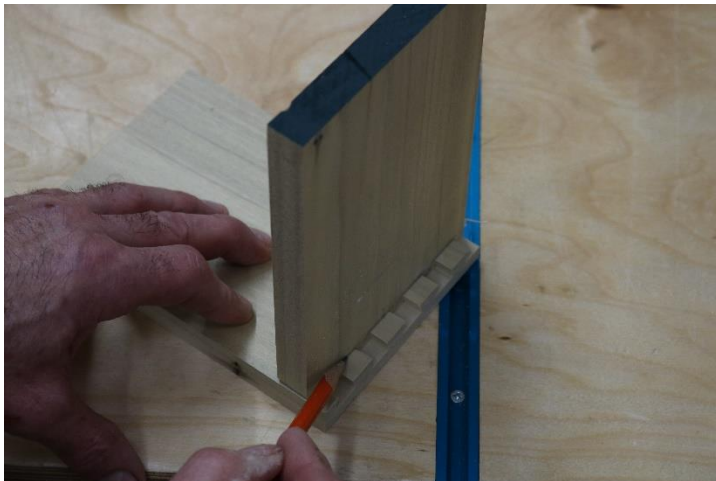
When cutting through sockets, the first pass should be very light, much like the scoring cut on half-blind dovetails, to minimize chip out.

Be sure the tails and pins are completely cut before removing your parts from the jig.



Rabbeted dovetails.

The procedure is very similar to half-blinds, but the Stop Bar must be set as deep as it can go.



Cut and assemble the joint. Trace the face of the tail board onto the sockets. This tells you where to cut the rabbet.



Rabbet the edges of the pin and socket board.

Sources

ISOTunes Pro hearing protection [Amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com)