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IN THE SHED

DIY

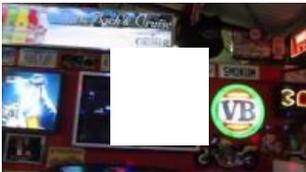
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The adaptable workbench

By [Stuart Lees](#)



Do you have the perfect workshop? Does your shed or garage give you all the space you want?

Even substantial sheds can have factors that prevent you from achieving a good working space. If these are the problems you face, then perhaps a portable work station could provide you with the flexibility you need.

The Walko workbench is an adaptable and portable work structure that can be configured in all sorts of ways, while remaining a solid work platform.

The basis for the Walko is the frame, which can be configured as an A Frame or opened up in stages to become completely flat. There are stubby feet attached which keeps the unit off the ground when fully opened. On the upper surface are plastic 'fins' that can be cut when breaking down large sheets. They are consumable (and replaceable), and are estimated to provide one and a half to two years of regular use by contractors. The frame can also be left open up and hung on a wall, particularly if space is tight.

The versatility and large variety of configurations of the bench is one of its real strengths. In the A Frame orientation, it looks like a pretty normal workbench with a gap down the middle. This gap is ideal when handling larger sheets as you can run a circular saw through the board, down the middle of that gap, without cutting into the tops. Each worktop can be removed and repositioned to any desired height. You can use them on either side of the A Frame, or have one above the other allowing work on the edge of a board, or as a tool platform below the working surface.

The tops are also consumable, although I'd be unlikely to go down that route – at least not deliberately. The bamboo tops are laminated, and have a significant level of water resistance (maximum of 24 hours). There is also a matrix of dog holes drilled in the tops for a variety of clamping setups; most particularly the rather clever low-profile Walko surface clamps.

These low-profile clamps have two parts – a stationary dogged side (and in some cases that is all you need) and an extendable side that uses a cam to tighten the clamp on the workpiece. These clamp onto the sides of the project, so the tool can pass over the top without needing



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the clamp repositioned partway through an operation. This is especially useful when using a hand plane, belt sander and other surfacing tools. You can also use F Clamps to really hold items to the surface, with the fixed jaw inserted through a dog hole.

There are other optional accessories, including extra brackets for making different tops (or custom jigs), the wall-mounting kit and workstruts which can be positioned where needed, and can also fold away when not. These may be used low to support the workpiece, or higher for supplies, temporary wood rack or other.

Whether you are a hobbyist, or a professional, work with large tools or small, the Walko workbench is a very flexible system that can be both a semi-permanent workshop fixture or easily transported and set up on site. The old multifunction work bench has come a very long way.

You can see just some of the adaptable features on this video: <http://youtu.be/3Ka0i5qckj0>



To comment.

