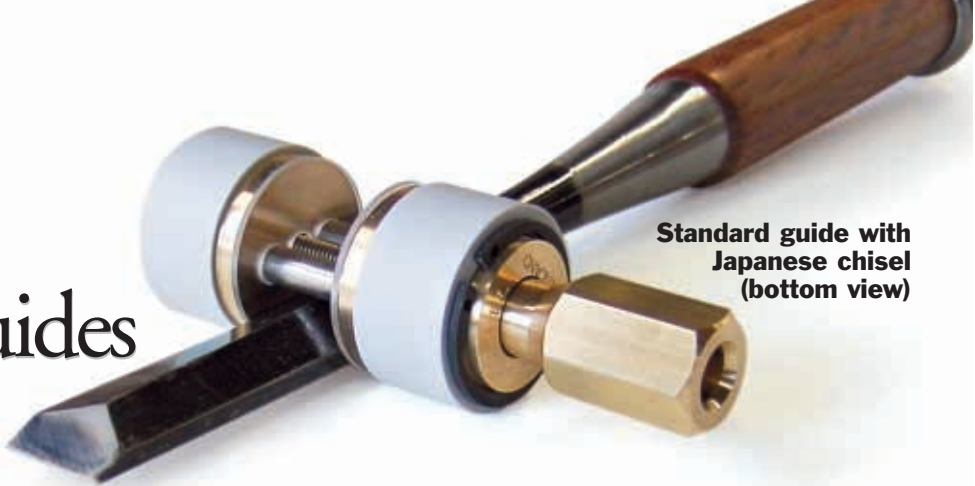


## Kell Specialty Honing Guides



Standard guide with Japanese chisel (bottom view)

**W**e all know how important it is to keep plane blades and chisels in tip-top condition; sharp tools make for safer, easier, more accurate, and more enjoyable woodworking. Lapping the backs of new blades and chisels, and grinding the correct bevel angle is best done with a tool like the Veritas Mk.II Sharpening System (see CWM, Vol 7, No, 4). Once you have sharpened your blade, smoothing the surface of the bevel and putting on an ultra keen cutting edge is easily accomplished with a good quality honing guide.

While you only have to re-sharpen a chisel when the cutting bevel becomes altered through successive honing, or when it gets nicked, you will find that honing should be a 'regular maintenance' item in your shop. It only takes a few minutes, and makes a big difference in the cutting quality of your tools. I always hone my tools before the start of every new project, and often several times during the project.

All the honing guides that I have seen are designed primarily for straight-edged and Western style tools. In general they do a mediocre job with skewed blades, Japanese chisels, and very narrow or short

bodied chisels. Fortunately, European Hand Tools have announced two new specialty honing guides that fill the gap. Both are made by the well known British tool maker Richard Kell. The Kell Standard Honing Guide and the Kell Skew Honing Guide are superbly manufactured from solid brass and stainless steel (for the body and guide pins), and Ertalite, a super durable low friction composite (for the rollers).

### Standard Guide

This is an exceptionally useful guide for all cutting tools up to 1 1/4" wide. Unlike other honing guides that exert pressure on the top and bottom of the blade, the Standard Guide applies pressure on the sides of the tool. This is ideal for narrow chisels, like the Two Cherries 2 mm chisel shown in the photo below, which are often slightly rounded on the bottom. It was also the only guide that easily handles my Japanese chisels, which have rather short blades and an angled top. The Standard Guide is very simple and quick to use, and also exceptionally well balanced. The length of the blade projection from the end of the guide determines the bevel angle; you measure from the side of the stainless steel rod to the cutting edge of your blade. Bear in mind that you don't need to apply a lot of force when tightening the hexagonal nut, and that you should dry the stainless steel rod after use, else it may rust. I found that the replaceable Ertalite wheels didn't wear my waterstones as much as the brass wheels found on other guides. At only 1" x 3 1/2" overall, this guide fits neatly in an apron pocket. A very cool tool!

### Skew Guide

Skew blades are a challenge to hone, but this guide makes easy work of it. Measuring about 5" x 2 1/2", it takes skew blades up to 2" wide and straight blades up to 2 5/8" wide. The guide won't hold chisels.

There are two locator pins that hold a Lie-Nielsen #140 (or comparable)

blade at the correct angle. You use the supplied wedge to hold the blade in place. The locator spring pin on the bottom of the guide is the location pin for the Lie-Nielsen #140 skew plane iron. The spring allows it to flatten down out of the way when putting in straight blades. Adjusting the wedge and blade can be a bit finicky; you will want to take it slow doing this. For other skew angles you may need to make a side wedge, approximately 1/4" to 1/2" thick, 2" long and 1 1/4" wide.

As with the Standard Guide, it is quite easy to set the bevel angle. Simply measure from the end of the guide to the tip of the blade.

Because the rollers are 2 1/8" apart, and most water stones are narrower, you will need some kind of outrigger board. I cut mine from melamine and put four adjustment screws underneath. It works wonderfully.

The Skew Guide sells for \$125.99, with the Standard Guide priced at \$68.99. For more information or to purchase the Skew Guide, visit: [www.europeanhandtools.ca](http://www.europeanhandtools.ca) or call 1-888-222-8331. You can purchase the Standard Guide from the Rosewood Studios, [www.rosewoodstudio.com](http://www.rosewoodstudio.com) or 1-866-704-7778. -CWM



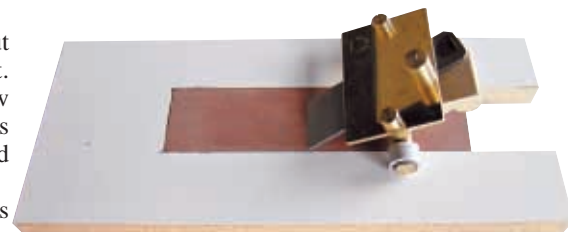
Standard guide with 1 1/4" blade (top view)



Standard guide with 2mm chisel (bottom view)



Skew guide



Guide on outrigger board