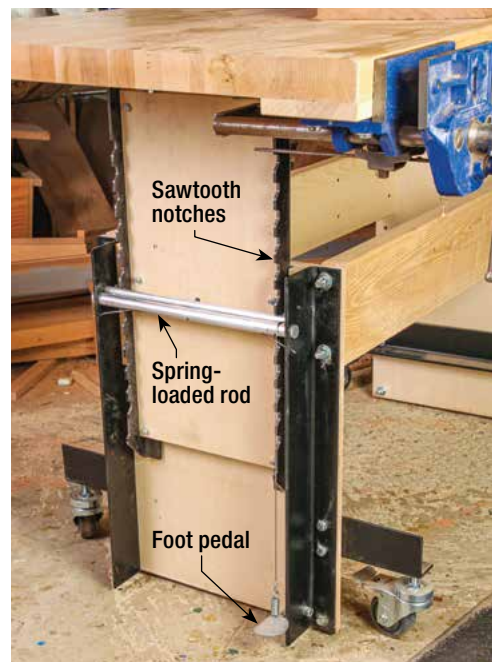


Take your woodworking to a new level

Noden Adjust-A-Bench Craftsman Hardware Package



**Noden Adjust-A-Bench
Craftsman Package** \$299 + \$50 S&H
Caster Package \$160 + \$35 S&H

Since using fellow editor Paul Anthony's Adjust-A-Bench some years ago, I've suffered a bit of bench envy. So I jumped at the opportunity to test Adjust-A-Bench inventor Geoff Noden's new Craftsman Hardware Package. I recently built the bench shown here just in time to make the party trays on page 23. And I'm glad I did because this workbench's core feature came in handy for the myriad layout and routing tasks required of the tray build.

Noden developed the Craftsman package to be a lower-cost alternative to the original Adjust-A-Bench. The original features steel U-channels that form the nesting legs or "trays" that allow adjustment. With this new package, you provide plywood panels and bolt them

to the supplied pieces of steel angle to form similar trays. The well-conceived package comes with all the necessary hardware for assembly.

At the heart of this hardware set are four lengths of $\frac{3}{16}$ "-thick steel angle milled with a series of saw-tooth-like notches. These, coupled with two spring-loaded steel rods, allow the bench to ratchet upward in $1\frac{1}{2}$ " increments when you lift an end. After lifting the other end to match, you're ready to work—it's that simple. Lowering the bench is just as easy. After lifting one end slightly, depress the kit's foot pedal to retract the spring-loaded rod and lower the top to the desired height, repeating at the other end. My new bench can raise from 27" up to 44" (with its $1\frac{3}{4}$ "-thick top).

With the legs completed, I bought a top, and lumber for the rails. The only trouble I had was finding 48" long lengths of threaded rod to connect the rails to the legs. But rather than ordering them and postponing the build, I improvised by using couplers to join shorter pieces of threaded rod.

I also tested Noden's Caster Package. It came with high-quality, lockable casters providing excellent mobility. The kit's wide stance adds to the bench's stability, but even with the casters locked, the bench rocked slightly. However, when I need a rock-solid bench, the casters retract with only a couple of turns of each mounting bolt, allowing the legs to sit directly on the floor.

My only complaint lies with the directions. Rather than

Overview

- Heavy-gauge steel components
- Adjustable from 27"-44" (with a $1\frac{3}{4}$ " thick top)
- $1\frac{1}{2}$ " adjustment increments
- Locking, retractable casters allow excellent mobility or solid footing
- Customizable for nearly any size benchtop

supplying comprehensive written instructions, Noden provides a link to online videos. While the videos are informative, I would prefer a set of written directions.

Using the bench is a joy, although the up-and-down mechanism isn't as smooth as Paul's heavier duty Adjust-A-Bench leg set. I suspect that parts of my bench are binding. I'll have to track down the culprits. That said, being able to raise the bench to a comfortable height for laying out the trays and then lowering the bench to do the routing made the job easier. If you need a new bench or even an extra one, I'd seriously consider Adjust-A-Bench. ■

—Tester, Ken Burton