

Grizzly's 'Ultimate Band Saw'

This do-it-all band saw has all the power and finesse you'll need.

Grizzly calls its model G0636X the 17" Ultimate Band Saw. With "ultimate" defined as last, final or definitive, I would agree. This could be the last band saw you ever buy.

This saw, with a steel-reinforced frame, arrives sporting a 1"-wide x 0.025"-thick blade with six teeth per inch. It is set up as a machine for resawing lumber. If that is your sole purpose for this tool, so be it. But there's no reason not to make this band saw your everyday saw as well. Slip a different blade over the wheels and go for it.

A 5-horsepower, single-phase, 220-volt motor powers this machine. There's enough drive to run up to a 1 3/8"-wide blade to slice paper-thin veneer, yet this saw has the finesse to cut tight curves in band-sawn boxes using a blade as narrow as 1/8". At 160" in length, however, finding a replacement blade at a local store is not easily done.

Blade changeover is simple due to easily adjusted blade tension and ball bearing blade guides. Side-to-side movement is controlled with two twin sets of eccentric bearings at both the upper and lower guide assemblies. There's also a single bearing per assembly for backward pressure. All guide assemblies are adjusted with a single wrench.

The upper assembly is easy to reach, but the lower assembly is a bit more difficult to access due to its location behind the lower door and near a dust collection port – one of two 4" dust ports on the machine. That port location reduces the amount of dust that collects on the bearings.

A couple slick features on this saw are the table tilt mechanism and a fence system that consists of a cast iron fence with a two-



17" 'Ultimate Band Saw'

Grizzly Industrial ■ 800-523-4777
or grizzly.com

Street price ■ \$2,150

For more information, go to pwffreeinfo.com.

position aluminum resaw fence added. To tilt the table you slide a lock lever to loosen it, then turn a handwheel that controls a micro-adjustable rack-and-pinion setup. It's smooth and easy to control. When you stop turning, the table stays at whatever angle it's set. (Forget holding the table with one hand while you tighten the lock knobs with the other.) Slide the lever back to tighten the table and you're good to go. The table angles from 45° to the right, or pull the stop bolt to gain 5° to the left.

On most band saws the fence is wasted metal due to problems with aligning the fence for blade drift. It's not simple to posi-



Two fine features. The table tilt mechanism is easy to adjust, and the foot-activated pedal is both a stop switch and blade brake.

tion the blade to run exactly at the crown of the rubber-tired wheels. Most times the blade is slightly skewed to one side of dead center and if you set your fence square to the table and try to rip veneer or make straight cuts, the result is less than satisfactory.

On this saw, after you get the blade to track close to center, you can set your fence to match the blade's drift angle. Find the drift angle, then loosen the three cap screws that hold the bar that joins the fence rail to the saw, then align the fence with that angle.

Additional features on this machine are beefy cast iron trunnions and wheels – you would expect nothing less – and a foot-activated pedal that is a stop switch and blade brake. A quick-release blade-tension lever, a 16 1/2" cutting height and a 16" throat capacity also add to the saw's appeal.

But, if you currently work with a 14" band saw, it's an adjustment to get used to the 35 1/2" table height. Also, it pains me to purchase an electric plug and, in this case, a length of 12/3 cord before I can power-up my machine – but that's standard operating procedure for Grizzly.

— Glen D. Huey