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Small Woodworking Shops (New Best Of Fine Woodworking)



Synopsis

"Small Woodworking Shops contains years of "Fine Woodworking authors' knowledge and expertise on how to make the best of a small space, often with materials woodworkers already have at their disposal. Projects for modifying garages, basements, or specially built shops to fit various needs are included.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This book has its positive points, but encouraging someone who wants to create a small workshop is not one of them. Instead it tends to make you feel bad about not having 1000+ sq. ft. of space to allocate to a wood shop. They've reprinted six articles that describe wood shops, but only one fits my definition of "small." The rest describe spaces 600, 720, 1296, and two at 2400 sq. ft. I guess if you are making a "small" commercial shop, 2400 sq. ft. is not out of the question, but if woodworking is just a hobby, 200-400 sq. ft. is a more common limitation. It also has two (related, overlapping in content) articles on dust collection; one of the articles is useful, but another seems redundant. Seems like the editors were looking for filler articles. I would have given this book more stars--3 or 4--if it hadn't claimed to be about "small" shops. However I wouldn't have purchased it in that case, because I already have general woodshop design books--and in fact almost all the information in this one I've seen in my other books. And it really is just a collection of articles rather than a coherent whole. In particular, I find How to Design and Build Your Ideal Woodshop (Popular

Woodworking) to be much more appropriate. It talks about how to design a small workshop in much greater detail. I also have an earlier edition of *Setting Up Shop, Completely Revised and Updated: A Practical Guide to Designing and Building Your Dream Shop*, which is quite good.

This is the best concise shop design book out now in my opinion. It covers quite a few areas in detail like lighting, adding a wood floor on top of concrete, dust collection issues, various layouts, essential tools, and more that make it an essential book. Aim high in making your shop as good as any tool you have or project you make. This book encourages that and helps you make wise, cost-effective decisions.

When the first couple reviews for a book are all 5 stars, I tend to wonder whether the author's friends and relatives are doing their part to pump up sales. I'm writing this review in case you're like me in that regard. Fear not, I've got no connection whatsoever with anyone involved with this book. As a new woodworking hobbyist, I found this book informative and helpful. The writing was clear and readable, the photos and graphics well-done. More importantly, for me the breadth and depth of information was just right. Example: there was a simple, informative piece on the best power tools to start off with -- and then there was another to offer a different perspective. Some goes with coverage of dust control, with several different angles presented. This book doesn't try to be all things to all people. I doubt anyone with serious woodworking experience would find this book worth buying. On the other hand, if finances or space limit your tool choices to a circular saw and a drill, look elsewhere -- this book really is for folks setting up a shop with the tools to go with it. Its also more oriented towards power tools than hand tools. I think the ideal reader would be someone with a garage to fill and a \$5000 budget to spend. That's not me on either count, and I do wish the book had focused more on small hobbyist starter shops and less on professional, two-car garage shops with every tool. But I still got a lot out of it, and I'd buy it again without hesitating. However, I don't own any of the other books on setting up a shop, so can't compare their relative merits.---

Coming back to this review a month later, I think I was wrong to give it only 4 stars. This has been the one book I've turned to the most as I continue setting up my shop, and I get something useful out of it every time. doesn't seem to let you change your star rating after the fact, but now I'd give it 5 stars without hesitation.

This book is nice, but I feel it focuses too much on starter production shops geared toward power tools. It would be nice if they incorporated more information on truly small shops. It seems the

smallest this one covers is a two car garage. I'd love to know what tips they'd offer for an 8x10 hand tool shop.

Like many of Taunton's books in the woodworking arena, this one consists mostly of reprints of Fine Woodworking magazine (FWW) articles. That's not bad in itself, of course, as FWW is a fine magazine, and one to which I subscribe. It does mean that even though the articles are all small shop themed, there isn't a logical flow from beginning to end or article to article. Each stands on its own merits, is written by a different author, and has its own emphasis and style. Approach this book and these titles as idea and tips generators. This book is most appropriate to those who are not already FWW subscribers. If you are a long-term subscriber, you will have already read the articles. You can also get at most or all of this content by subscribing to FWW's online site.

I have a small woodshop which has begun overflowing. This book suggested great solutions to storage and tool layouts that conserve floor space. Unbelievable number of illustrations inspire solutions to problems in your own shop. Suggests practical things like ways to separate finishing from tool areas and practical ways to handle dust collection (vital to avoiding lung damage). Also includes suggestions on which tools to get first based on what you are going to build. Makes you want to construct a special building.

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