

Lee Valley Mk.II Honing Guide is Near Perfect

Allow me to skip to the bottom line here and say that the Veritas Mk.II Honing Guide is the most thoughtful, accurate and well-made honing guide for sharpening chisels and straight plane irons I've ever used. If you like honing guides, you'll be thrilled by this one. If you don't like them, this one might convert you.

Its true genius lies in the fact that you have complete control over the exact angle you're sharpening at. The registration jig, which hitches to the front of the guide while you're setting the blade, allows you to set sharpening angles anywhere from 10° (for back-bevels) all the way up to 54° (for wild-grained woods). And the jig measures off the unbeveled face of the chisel or plane iron. Other jigs register off the beveled face, which complicates setting your angles with thick plane blades in particular. The Veritas nullifies this problem and makes sharpening to any angle a repeatable process.

Another advantage of the registration jig is that it also squares the tool in the honing guide, and it does this quite well. I found that the jig could easily secure and sharpen almost

any tool, from narrow triangular chisels to scraper plane irons.

Other nice features include the fact that you can raise the roller up 1° or 2° to add a quick micro-bevel to an edge. And the honing guide is comfortable to hold.

At first glance, the whole rig looks quite complex, but I actually found it intuitive to use and went right to work without even reading the guide's manual (I did read the manual eventually; it's short and sweet).

My only wish is that the guide could be used to sharpen a camber on plane irons using finger-point pressure. The roller is just too wide and always creates a straight edge. There are ways around this (wrapping a narrow piece of tape around the roller's midsection; placing a 1/2"-wide piece of cardboard on the stone), though you might want to keep your cheap side-clamp honing guide for touching up smoothing plane irons. Otherwise, this guide is just what I've always wanted a sharpening jig to be.

— Christopher Schwarz

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SPECIFICATIONS

Veritas Mk.II Honing Guide

Street price: \$48.50 (#05M09.01)

Max blade size: 1⁵/₃₂" thick, 2⁷/₈" wide

Roller width: 2"

Performance: ●●●●●

Price range: \$\$\$\$

Lee Valley Tools: 800-871-8158 or
leevalley.com