



Small saw, big attitude

Anthony Bailey tests the smallest of Metabo's new range of mitre saws, the KGS216 Plus

Metabo don't rest on their laurels having been hard at work producing a bevy of compound mitre saws to cater for all requirements and budgets. On test here we have the KGS 216 Plus, which is the smallest of the group. This saw is very design led, being stylish and with a lot of artful touches that at first glance may cause you to raise an eyebrow as it doesn't have the chunky look you might expect. Having said that it is no lightweight or in any way under-built.

Key features

There are a number of key points on the KGS216 and, if ever there was a machine that required a study of the manual to fully understand some of the functions, this is it. They include

long, smooth guide rails, neat safety trigger switching, a quiet motor, laser cut guidance, pullout work supports, wind-in trenching stop, a cunning blade change device and twin extraction ports. That isn't all by the way, but some of the most vital aspects of this well-engineered saw.

The stand it is matched to is a universal Metabo stand which I found a little annoying to put together correctly. It is however, sturdy when complete though oddly there wasn't a pre-set, four-hole mounting position for this model. I therefore chose to fix the front and not the back because as you no doubt know, this kind of saw is push-cut for safety and not pull, although that will give a cleaner edge admittedly.



Metabo KGS 216 Plus compound mitre saw



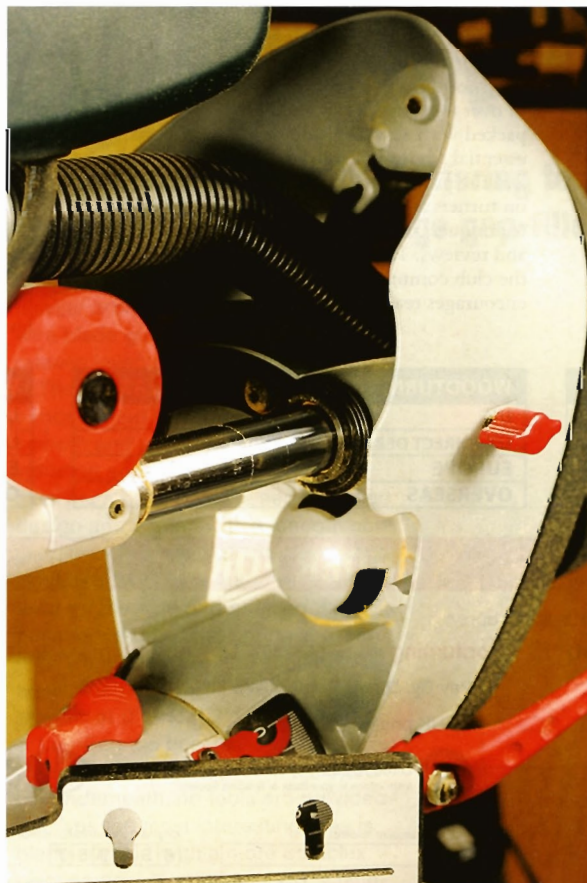
The toolless blade lock is unique so new users would benefit from a demonstration

Effective dust collection

The big shroud shape at the back of the saw was unexplained until I discovered that it had twin ports for extraction. The top part of the shroud is where a flexi hose extends towards the main blade casing to gather dust from the blade. The lower section is linked and funnels dust from behind the fence where the blade exits the cut. A single hose attached to a vacuum or similar device is required to achieve a very respectable rate of clearance. Mitre and crosscut saws are the worst villains for ejecting dust so this is very good news.

The motor is reassuringly quiet and features a slow start with a belt drive, not grating gears, to prolong motor life. Surprisingly this has nothing to do with induction motors, which are a feature of the larger mitre saws in the Metabo range, namely the KGS254i. The quality brush motor used in this machine takes a lot of the unpleasantness out of using a mitre saw for the user and anyone else in the immediate vicinity.

The KGS216 Plus benefits from Metabo's Vario Constamatic system, whereby blade rotation speed can be selected and maintained electronically to cope with cutting materials other than timber. Maybe it's just me but, the sliding fence sections seem as if they could be vulnerable if someone set a bevel cut and didn't move them out of the way first. The trenching stop winds in nicely when you need it, next to which is located the function for zeroing the unusual blade change toolless clamping module.



More than a design feature, the shroud is very effective at collecting waste

All the setting devices are easy to use once you understand them. An easily overlooked feature are little black levers at the back that allow the bevel cut to be set past 45°, but you need to check they are reset afterwards. *F&C*

F&C verdict

I feel it's now got to the point where I wouldn't want someone else using my piece of kit if it was built to this standard and with some less than obvious features. The primary example in this case is the toolless clamping module that has to be set correctly for safety, but which doesn't seem to offer any advantage over the standard arbor nut. These types of machine are designed to be moved around so that you can get machine 'shop accuracy on site. The stand definitely helps but one could tire of assembling the two items every time you wanted to pack up and move on.

The perpendicular cut was spot on from -47° to 55° in the other direction on the turntable. Bevel cuts remained constant and although slightly more tricky to set up the job could be done without having to venture behind the machine. The 48-tooth blade will handle nonferrous metals. Extraction was certainly better than the norm but not total.

With larger machines just released from Metabo I would definitely recommend seeing this and its bigger brothers demonstrated properly by your local dealer. I think you'll like it.

Pros

- Good extraction
- Quiet motor
- Easy trenching
- Laser guidance
- Electronic speed control

Cons

- Not cheap
- Small knobs could be easily lost

The numbers

Power input 1.6kW
No load speed 3,800 - 4,800rpm
Blade 216 x 30 48-tooth
Max workpiece 305 x 70mm at 90°, 214 x 41mm at compound 45°
Turntable settings Left 47°/right 55°
Blade setting Left 46°/right 46°

Weight 21kg (saw unit only)

Price £359.99 inc. VAT (stand extra £79.99 inc. VAT)
From www.metabo.co.uk