

Over the years I've used several 305mm (12in) saws of this type and they do have their place for heavy work, although they're cumbersome and take up a lot of space in the workshop. This 255mm (10in) model is smaller than its big cousins, and at first glance it looks quite promising...

Evolution Rage 3-DB sliding mitre saw

£289.98



The sliding compound mitre saw (SCMS), of which this is an example, is usually more at home on the building site. However, the home woodworker has taken the concept on board, and the SCMS has now all but replaced the radial arm saw and standard mitre saw in one package. This machine is in the middle of the range as far as size goes.

Although at first glance it looks ideal for the job, its accuracy lets it down. For rough cutting and general work it will be fine, but don't expect it to be accurate enough for fine woodworking. There is just too much slop in the running gear.

Out of the box

On opening the box you'll find a few parts wrapped in plastic, ready for fitting. These are mainly add-ons such as extension supports. The saw is, for the most part fully assembled. The addition of a proper lifting handle at the back end makes it easy to lift the machine out.

The first thing I noticed was the quality of the build. This isn't up to the standard of the big names, but for less than half of the price you can't expect more. Thumbscrews don't have the finesse of threads tapered off at the ends, and the moulded plastic knobs look a bit suspect. Some of the casting looks a bit rough around the edges too.

As soon as it was on the bench for inspection, it slid around! The feet are made from a hard plastic and afford no grip whatsoever on my varnished bench top. Not making these out of soft rubber or something similar is a big mistake.

Fitting the accessories highlighted a few more compromises.

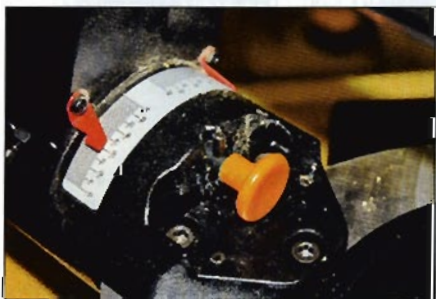
For example, the hold-down clamp has no quick release on the adjustment and the rather fine thread takes ages to rise and fall, making it very tempting not to bother with it. The side table



An awkwardly-shaped machine needs a huge box!



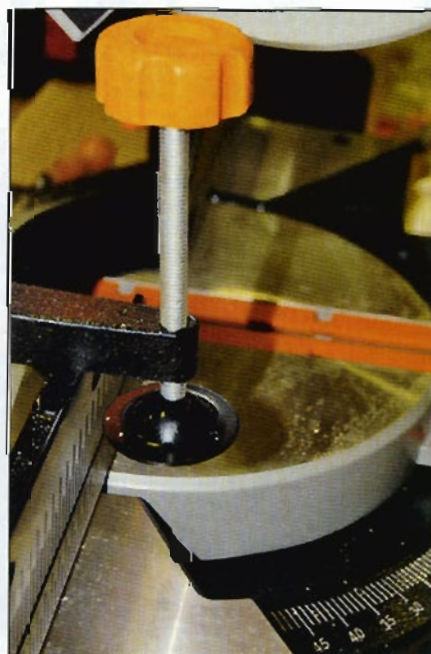
The handle at the back is useful for lifting the saw out.



Crude bevel indicators are open to parallax error...



...as is the mitre indicator, shown here set to 45°



The hold-down clamp has no quick adjuster



TESTED BY RALPH LAUGHTON

extensions fit reasonably well, and there's a rather crude but effective width stop that can be fitted onto either of the table extensions. The machine is fitted with the now-obligatory laser line.

One really irritating thing was trying to remove the stickers on the table. They peeled off easily enough, but the glue didn't. So it was out with the white spirit and a cloth to remove the sticky residue.

Ready to roll

Firing the saw up was quite an experience. The soft start is a bit like the calm before the storm and for me, the time lag was far too long. But the real drawback is the noise. This saw is noisy, very noisy! The brushed motor is loud enough, but the blade whines and screams not only as it cuts but for what seems an age afterwards.

There is no solidity about the machine, and the whole motor/blade assembly can be wobbled from side to side. It's fitted with a trenching stop that can be adjusted to stop the blade cutting all the way through the timber. This feature is not that accurate on the better saws, and it's even worse on this one. To be fair it would be fine for first fixings or cutting halving joints in sawn 3x2s, but it's not intended for cutting neat housings for bookshelves...

Wonder blade

Much is made of the blade. It does just what it says; it will cut metal as well as wood, but how many times is that going to be necessary? I reckon the only time this feature would be useful to me is when rough-cutting recovered timber that may have nails buried in it.

Summing up

With a street price of around £200, this saw would be ideal for use outdoors and for rough-sizing stock prior to bringing it into the workshop – a situation where that laser line might just come in handy! In this situation you can forgive its slight imperfections, but this is a prime example of getting what you pay for.

SPECIFICATION


POWER	2000W	
SPEED	2500rpm	
BLADE DIAMETER	255mm	
MAX DEPTH OF CUT	90° mitre	320mm
	45° mitre	225mm
	90° bevel	80mm
	45° bevel	40mm
WEIGHT	18.25kg	

VERDICT

This machine will disappoint if you're looking for a general-purpose saw for workshop use, but to be fair that's not what it's built for. It's a budget-price site saw and as such will perform admirably.

- PROS**
- Versatile
 - Convenient size
 - Good blade

- CONS**
- Lots of plastic bits
 - Very noisy in a confined space

VALUE FOR MONEY 

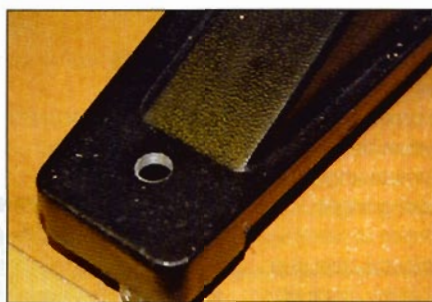
PERFORMANCE 

FURTHER INFORMATION

- Evolution Power Tools
- 0114 251 1022
- www.evolutionpowertools.co.uk



The thumbscrews aren't elegant but they work



Drilled-out fixing holes look like an afterthought



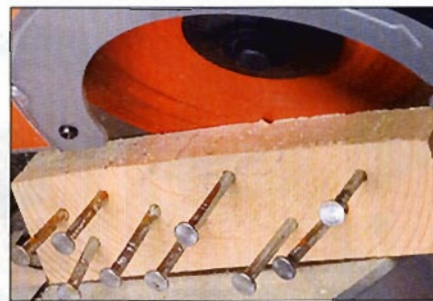
The now-obligatory laser line works well enough



Lots of plastic parts may not pass the test of time



The unusual profile of the cut-anything blade...



...had no problem slicing through these nails