ON TEST

PRICE: £560

RATING

Value 0 5

Performance 0 5

PROS

- Superb build quality and small footprint
- Easily moved with optional wheel kit
- Very accurate when set up correctly
- Five year warranty

CONS

- On/off switch awkward to get at
- Crown guard obscures line of cut
- Some small details overlooked

SPEC SHEET

Power		1500W
Blade diameter		250mm
No-load blade speed		4000rpm
Max depth of cut		
	at 90°	80mm
	at 45°	57mm
Max width (blade to fence)		600mm
Weight		91kg

RECORD TS200C table saw

BEN PLEWES

Space is at a premium in a small workshop, as Ben Plewes knows only too well. But he thinks he's found the ideal table saw

The new Record TS200C table saw seems to offer an awful lot of machine for the the £560 offer price (at the time of writing), which includes a wheel base and extension table. What sets it apart is increased capacity over the competition.

The TS200C has a 250mm blade which allows cuts to be made as deep as 80mm. Most table saws in the sub £600 market have 200mm blades with typical maximum depths of cut of around 55mm. This is an impressive feature in itself, but when you consider that the machine also boasts a solid cast iron table and the saw weighs in at 91kg, it becomes clear why Record is redefining the boundaries of what is available in a £600 saw.

Add to this a powerful yet relatively quiet 2hp induction motor and a high-quality sliding beam setup, and you have the potential for a winning formula. The sliding beam, which allows for accurate and safe crosscutting, is constructed from a section of aluminium extrusion which sits immediately left of the blade. The sliding beam can be locked in position via a locking lever at the front of the machine when ripping.

What about ripping?

Ripping timber and board material is catered for by the inclusion of a heavy-duty fence that's connected to a rail along the front of the saw table. The fence has two main components; a reversible aluminium extrusion which is fixed to a cast iron adjustment assembly with a built-in micro-adjustment mechanism. A measuring scale is also included which attaches to the front of the saw table. Adjusting the fence is easy, and the scale makes for fast and accurate cuts

Avoiding kickback

What really turns this fence into a winner is the ability to adjust how far past the blade the fence sits. This is another feature that is usually seen on industrial table saws. By pulling the rip fence back to a point just past the cutting area of the blade, material can be pushed free with a push stick as soon as it has been cut.

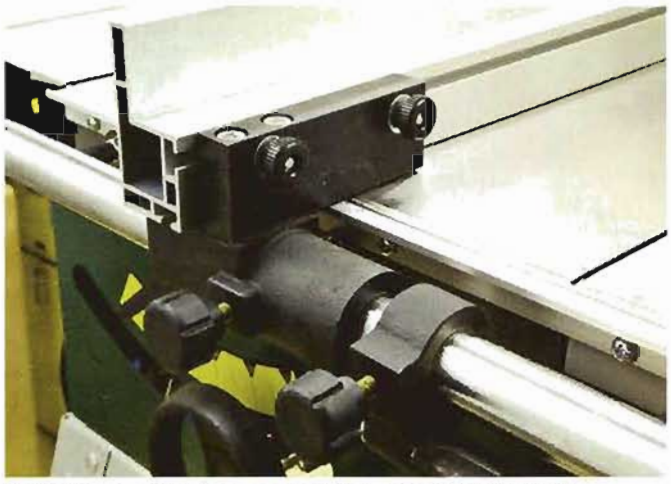
Without this feature, there's a risk of the blade binding with the material and throwing it back towards the operator.

Basic assembly

As with most machinery, setting up takes a while. I never rely on the factory settings in a situation like this. I prefer to reset all the components myself so that when it doesn't cut square I understand why, and can remedy the problem.

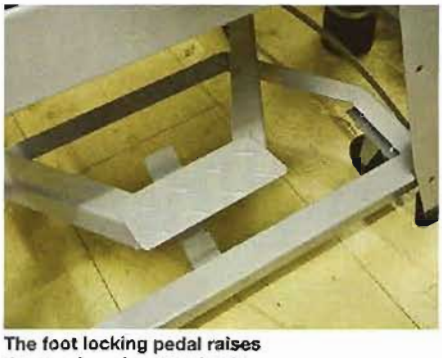
The first job is to assemble the stand and secure the saw to it. The second job is to align the cast iron table with the blade. This is done by loosening the cast iron table, then ensuring the table's edge is set at the same distance

The saw body is of fabricated steel

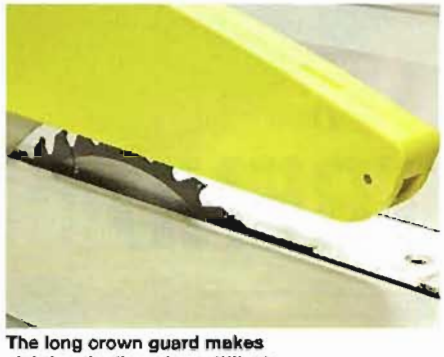


The rip fence assembly is connected to a solid steel rail at the front

The crosscutting assembly is attached to the sliding beam



The foot locking pedal raises the saw bench onto wheels



The long crown guard makes sighting the line of cut difficult

from the blade at its in-feed and out-feed points.

Fitting the rip fence

Next comes fitting the rip fence assembly, which requires some tweaking so that the fence lies perfectly parallel to the blade. The measuring scale is added at this point too. Surprisingly, there is virtually no lateral movement built into the measuring scale, which is an aluminium extrusion with measuring tape stuck to it. As a result, the measurement readings are about 0.5mm out on my saw... that is, until I get a file on the job to turn those non-adjustable holes into adjustable slots!

Setting the sliding beam

The last major job is to fit and set the sliding beam. Record has come up with a clever way of adjusting the beam, which runs on four rubber-wheeled bearings. The two inner wheels are height-adjustable and locked in place with a simple locking nut. The two outer wheels have a built-in cam action which, as well as being height-adjustable, can be turned to take up any play in the running assembly. It is quite fiddly to adjust and set up initially, but time spent here will be time well spent.

Crosscutting assembly

The crosscutting assembly that fits into the sliding beam is a little disappointing. Two fiddly klp fasteners are supplied, one of which is supposed to lock the angle while the other is to lock the position along the sliding beam. In reality they both lock the position on the sliding beam, which makes it impossible to move without changing the angle of cut, albeit by a fraction. This is annoying, especially after spending time setting up a precise crosscut angle. But it's another feature that can be fixed with a bit of time.

The saw in use

Using the machine is a joy. The rip fence is solid and easy to adjust. The sheer weight of the machine reduces vibration and gives the saw a very solid feel while cutting. The 2hp induction motor creates more noise than other similarly priced induction-driven machines, but it's still relatively easy on the ears and offers superior performance. The blade is quick to stop when switched off. The rise-and-fall wheel works well, as does the tilt arbor mechanism with its handle located on the right side of the table saw housing.

Four gripes

I do have a few gripes, however. Firstly, the position of the on/off switch, which is located on the left side of the saw housing, can be awkward to get to when cutting sheet material.

Secondly, the crosscut fence feels a bit flimsy and can't be removed without adjusting the angle of cut. There is a stop to provide a constant angle, but generally these are ineffective if you're trying to achieve very accurate cuts. I'd rather set the fence up once and then leave it locked.

My next gripe is the crown guard, which protrudes a good way in front of the blade and makes sighting a line of cut difficult.

Last gripe: the wheel base would be more versatile in tight spaces if all four castors rotated instead of just two, which makes manoeuvring in really tight spots tricky.

FURTHER INFO

Record Power
08707 701777
www.recordpower.co.uk

WW VERDICT

Record have got the fundamentals of this machine just right. What's lacking in the details can be made up for with a bit of time and ingenuity. I've come to this saw from a Kity 419, which is about a quarter of the weight and has an 8in blade and a smaller motor. While the Kity is quieter, that's where its advantage over the Record stops. The Record is streets ahead in virtually all other areas, it has a smaller footprint and actually costs less!