

# Tormek T-3 wetstone grinder

*The Tormek brand has long been associated with good-quality water-cooled grinding equipment for woodworkers, and the T-3 aims to continue this reputation for another generation of Tormek machines. The T-3 is the smaller sibling of the flagship T-7 model, which features a larger 250mm diameter wheel*



The T-3 has been designed along the same principles as the well-established T-7, but has some notable differences. The most obvious is the price – almost half that of the T-7. So what compromises have Tormek made in order to produce a machine that does the same job as their flagship model, but at a fraction of the cost?

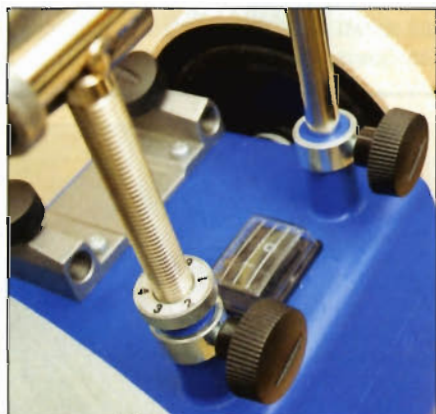
### A smaller wheel

The first downgrade is the wheel. It's 200mm in diameter, as opposed to 250mm on the T-7. This smaller wheel size creates a more obvious grinding curve on edge tools, which isn't necessarily a bad thing. There's nothing wrong with having a concave ground surface. In fact many woodworkers actually prefer it, because when a blade is being honed on a sharpening stone after grinding, there are two definite points of contact; one at the sharp edge and the other at the top of the grind, with nothing in between. This tends to be an advantage if you like to hone your tools without the use of a honing guide, because the tool can be rocked back until the second contact point touches the stone, and then lifted slightly for final honing.

£220

### Plastic housing

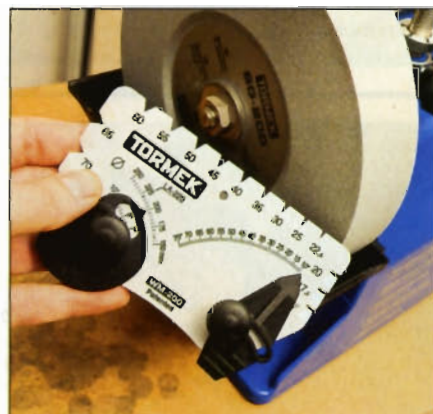
The next most notable difference is that the machine housing is made of plastic instead of steel. I found this to be a disadvantage



The T-3 shares the same fine adjustment system as the larger T-7



The supplied hone jig for chisels and plane irons



The T-3 comes with the standard AngleMaster for easy setting up



TESTED BY BEN PLEWES

for two reasons. Firstly the magnetized AngleMaster (which is supplied with the T-3 and allows you to effectively measure the grinding angle of your edge tools) doesn't stick to the casing of the grinder because it's not steel like the T-7. This isn't a major problem, but when you're used to the convenience of being able to stick the AngleMaster to the front of the larger metal-bodied machine, it's a noticeable downgrade.

The second problem with the plastic casing is more serious: it's nowhere near as rigid. I found that the machine would occasionally start to vibrate to such an extent that pressure would have to be released from the tool being ground, and then reapplied. Sometimes I'd have to do this several times before the T-3 would run smoothly. I'm sure there's a knack to avoiding this, but it's not nearly as good as the more rigid bodied T-7 which never seems to suffer from vibration problems.

However, there is one definite advantage with an all-in-one moulded plastic casing. When you overflow the water trough, the overspill is caught in the moulded area below the trough, which is really easy to clean up. This has always been a problem with the larger metal-bodied machines, which don't have this catchment area. It's a small but useful gain!

### Ideal hone exhibition

The leather honing wheel performs very well using the honing paste supplied with the machine. It's capable of producing extremely fine edges on most tools, and works really well in conjunction with a good-quality sharpening stone. Simply hone and flatten the back of your edge tool with a sharpening stone of your choice, then go back to the leather wheel for final polishing and a superb edge.

### Summing up

So is the T-3 worth the money? I would have to say, definitely yes. I'm sure others will disagree, but there's no doubt in my mind that the Tormek system is the best on the market for small to medium-sized workshops. While there are some niggling problems with the T-3, it does perform very well and doesn't take up much in the way of real estate either. It's also a lot cheaper than the superb T-7, which is out of the reach of many woodworkers on a modest budget. It also comes with a very impressive 7-year guarantee!

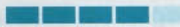

## SPECIFICATION

POWER	120W
WHEEL DIAMETER	200mm
WHEEL WIDTH	40mm
OVERALL SIZE	230 x 200 x 260mm
WEIGHT	7.4kg
ACCESSORIES	SE-76 square-edge jig, WM-200 AngleMaster, PA-70 honing compound, handbook and instructional DVD

## VERDICT

The T-3 offers an affordable route into Tormek's superb sharpening system with its extensive range of jigs and accessories, and is the ideal choice for the small workshop.

- PROS**
- Good cutting and polishing performance
  - Water spills are contained
  - The price
- CONS**
- Plastic machine housing
  - No lifting handle

VALUE FOR MONEY   
PERFORMANCE 

## FURTHER INFORMATION

- Brimarc
- 0845 604 0064
- www.brimarc.com



An empty wine bottle is just the right shape to fill the water trough



The water catchment area is easy to clean up



The T-3 doing what it does best: sharpening