

Elektra Beckum DH330

£668.58 ☎ **023 80732000**

www.elektra-beckum.co.uk Typical price: £425

Capacity: 330x155mm Knives: Two
Motor: 1800W Feed speed: 7.5m/min
Weight: 35kg

The portable thicknesser can be invaluable, both in the workshop and on site, but at 35kg, this new Elektra Beckum version may be pushing the portability factor a little too far. Although about the same weight as other thicknessers, I wouldn't fancy carting it around too often...

That said, the planer won't move around much when it's working; it sits comfortably and despite the brush motor, it runs sweetly but with an ear defender requiring 96 decibels.

As thicknessers go, the capacities are much the same as others; 155mm maximum depth, and with a good maximum width of 330mm.

Still, with it hitting similar specs to many others, why should you buy one? Well, it has some great features that are well worth a look.

For starters, there's a head lock so the block doesn't try and lift when it's under load. This is easy to operate: you simply wind the head to the desired setting using the fold-down crank handle and then slide the red lever across, locking the head in place.

The planer also has a depth of cut checker at the front to determine how much will be removed in a single pass, and an easy way of

checking a thickness if you don't have a tape to hand. Pushing the timber into the planer lifts a needle to show the amount to be removed, so you can wind the head to the timber until it engages the indicator and read the thickness from the metric scale before making any cuts. Maximum cut per pass is 3mm, so it can make short work of cleaning up rough sawn boards.

The two-knife block rotates at 9800rpm, so with a feed speed of 7.5 metres per minute you get 2.6 cuts per millimetre, which I found left a glassy surface on hard and softwood alike.

The best feature of the planer has to be the repeat setting device, allowing you to thickness any board and finish it to one of six depths from 5mm to 45mm in 5mm increments. This is located on the lower left of the casing. You simply slide and lift it to the desired setting, locating it in the slot corresponding to the depth you need.

With standard joinery sizes such as these built in, it allows you to quickly re-dimension an extra piece of stock if you make a mistake or forget to machine a piece. It's also perfect if you need a run of



uniform thickness stock from an irregular batch, or just general batch work, planing up as and when you need it.

Both operation and maintenance is standard; a front mounted NVR supplies power, with the cutter block accessed from the back.

The supplied 100mm dust extraction outlet needs to be removed to gain access to the block cover. Once removed, the block is rotated until it engages the lock allowing you to remove each knife with the supplied tools. A locking lever needs to be depressed to enable you to rotate the block 180° for the second knife.

A neat storage bag is fitted to the back of the outfeed table so you always have the setting tools to hand.

Working hard and soft timbers can cause some discrepancies in dimensions, so a good test for the preset

depth stops. I ran hard and soft through on different preset depths and gauged them against each other to check; there is no discernible difference, so you can re-batch without fear of change.

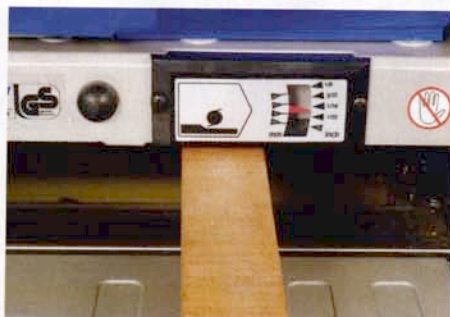
I did find very minimal snipe on both in and outfeed, about 50mm each end, but this was more prominent on thicker cuts. Finer passes seemed to minimise it.

Although there seems to be plenty of these machines on the market at the moment, the Elektra, with its extra features, should find a place at the top end with ease.

GW verdict

- ➕ Preset depths, cut indicator
- ➖ Slight snipe noticeable

Value for money ●●●●○
Performance ●●●●○



Pushing the timber under this indicator shows how much will be removed on that pass



This neat device presets the finished height in 5mm increments from 5 to 45mm



Locking the head keeps the cut uniform, although the thicknesser did show some snipe