



JET
JMS 10CMS
RANKING ★★★★★

Price: \$300

Max. cut at 90°, ¾ in. thick: 5½ in.

Max. cut at 45°, ¾ in. thick: 6 in.

Likes: Jet (opposite, top) pulled out the stops with this saw—40 pounds of power and pro features. Contractors will like its robustness, even heavier than that of our first-place finisher. Its front-mount bevel lock and stable 13½-inch-wide stance enhance productivity.

Dislikes: It left a nub crosscutting a 4 x 4.

SKIL
3316
RANKING ★★★★★

Price: \$120

Max. cut at 90°, ¾ in. thick: 5¾ in.

Max. cut at 45°, ¾ in. thick: 6½ in.

Likes: Left-handed users will appreciate the Skil's attention to their needs. It has dual triggers, one for lefties, one for righties. It's also a good generalist that's reasonably accurate. The miter table turns smoothly and locks where it should.

Dislikes: Tightening the miter-lock knob can slightly shift the miter table.

MAKITA
LS1040F
RANKING ★★★★★

Price: \$210

Max. cut at 90°, ¾ in. thick: 5 in.

Max. cut at 45°, ¾ in. thick: 5 in.

Likes: This saw is sleek and powerful, with hair-splitting accuracy, and its internal blade-guard mechanism helps provide a clear sight line to your cut. Joseph Truini, a former carpenter and cabinetmaker, vouches for its work light: "Absolutely! Some work areas are quite dim."

Dislikes: Needs a wider base.

HITACHI
C10FCH2
RANKING ★★★★★

Price: \$160

Max. cut at 90°, ¾ in. thick: 6 in.

Max. cut at 45°, ¾ in. thick: 6½ in.

Likes: Great saw, great price—that sums up the Hitachi. It cuts with power on a par with Makita and DeWalt and offers outstanding handle comfort, a heavy-duty work-support extension, a work clamp, and a folding auxiliary fence.

Dislikes: A broader base would help to increase stability and reduce rocking.

RIDGID
R4110
RANKING ★★★★★

Price: \$200

Max. cut at 90°, ¾ in. thick: 5 in.

Max. cut at 45°, ¾ in. thick: 5 in.

Likes: The Ridgid looks as if it should weigh more than its 30 pounds because its base is 15½ x 20 inches. Yet this highly stable saw is easy to transport, thanks to excellent weight distribution and the best carrying handle of the bunch. Its 2¼-inch-diameter dust port is the largest among the saws we tested.

Dislikes: None.

Tool Test



MITER SAW

FEW WOODWORKING MACHINES match the versatility of today's 10-inch compound miter saw. These saws can cut framing lumber, furniture parts, trim, and crown molding. With a specialized blade, you can slice aluminum, copper tubing, or plastic pipe. We tested eight machines, cutting framing lumber and trim in both our shop and at a small remodeling job, plus plumbing parts on-site. We're pleased to report that all rigs received a rating of "good" (3½ stars) or better. Thrifty tool shoppers, rejoice: Dead-on woodworking accuracy can be yours for \$120 to \$300.

BY ROY BERENDSOHN

DEWALT
DW713
RANKING ★★★★★

Price: \$220

Max. cut at 90°, ¼ in. thick: 6¾ in.

Max. cut at 45°, ¼ in. thick: 6½ in.

Likes: What do you need in a miter saw? Power? Check. Precision? Check. Attention to detail, such as just the right amount of tension in the spring hinge so the saw moves effortlessly into and out of a cut? Double check. Add to these excellent weight distribution and a broad stance.

Dislikes: Nothing.

CRAFTSMAN
21236
RANKING ★★★★★

Price: \$130

Max. cut at 90°, ¼ in. thick: 5½ in.

Max. cut at 45°, ¼ in. thick: 6¼ in.

Likes: Beginners will find it a great and inexpensive machine. Experienced woodworkers and contractors will get good service from it as a backup or as an auxiliary to a larger, heavier saw.

Dislikes: The saw's base should be enlarged for cutting when the saw is not fastened to a support surface of some kind.

RYOBI
TS1344L
RANKING ★★★★★

Price: \$120

Max. cut at 90°, ¼ in. thick: 5½ in.

Max. cut at 45°, ¼ in. thick: 5½ in.

Likes: To be perfectly blunt, you can't beat this stone-simple saw for the money. It has enough power and accuracy for basic woodworking, especially with soft woods. Its miter table turns smoothly and locks firmly, and the laser line registers accurately across it.

Dislikes: The bevel gauge is tough to read.