

## Why use a tablesaw molding head?

**Q:** I've seen tablesaw molding heads for sale and wondered what they're used for. Is there an advantage to using them?

—STANLEY DROZD,  
Chicago, Ill.

**A:** A MOLDING HEAD IS A CUTTER-HEAD for the tablesaw that cuts profiles much like a router or shaper does. Some have interchangeable knives and cut numerous profiles.

The popularity of routers has made molding heads a rarity, but they have a couple of advantages over a router or router table. They can produce a very smooth cut. Because of the large radius, the cutters enter and exit the stock at a much shallower angle than a router bit, which reduces tearout.

Also, the larger table and outfeed support of the table-



**Where a blade meets a bit.** A molding head runs in a tablesaw, but cuts profiles like a router bit. Molding heads excel at profiling the middle of wide boards, something a router can't do.

saw make it easier to profile long pieces such as base-board moldings. Another benefit is the ability to mill profiles on the center of boards, such as a bead on a back board.

These advantages come at a price. A starter kit from Magic Molder ([www.lrhent.com](http://www.lrhent.com)) with two profiles is \$265. Additional profile sets are \$99.

—Michael Pekovich  
is FWW's art director.

## Cook pine to harden the sap

**Q:** I bought some air-dried white pine. The moisture is at 10%, but it's still oozing pitch. I'm worried that it will bleed through a finish. Any suggestions?

—JULES HARLAN,  
El Paso, Texas

**A:** A COAT OF SHELLAC works on older wood. On fresh-cut wood, however, the best solution is to heat it for 24 hours at 170°F.

If the pieces are small enough, you can use a kitchen oven.

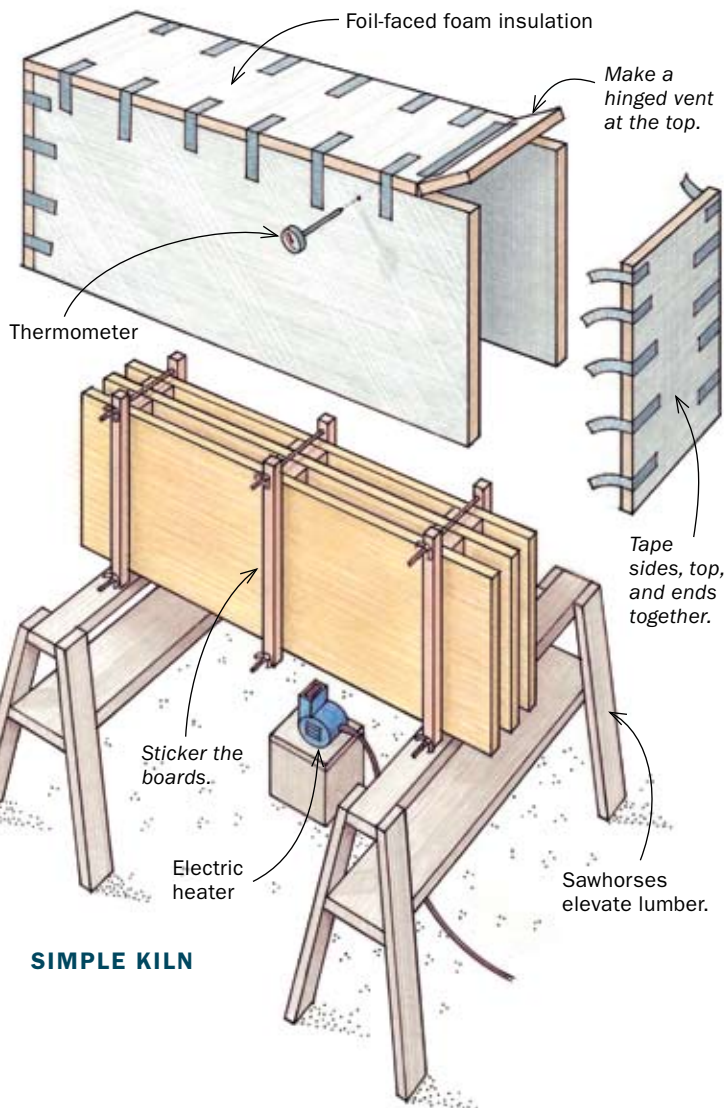
For larger pieces, I make a temporary kiln from foil-faced foam insulation. It has two sides, two ends, and a top, but no bottom.

Make a hinged vent at the top of one end by cutting off a 6-in.-wide strip and reattaching it with tape.

Stack the boards, placing stickers at 2-ft. intervals, and cover them with the kiln. Use an electric heater to heat the kiln to 170°F. Track the temperature with a thermometer. Adjust the vent to maintain it.

Pitch might ooze and settle on the surface, but once it cools, it can be scraped off.

—Christian Becksvoort is a contributing editor.



**SIMPLE KILN**



**Woodworker's oven.** Becksvoort uses a kiln made from foil-faced rigid insulation to cook large pine boards and set the pitch.