

Problem Solving Products

Swiss-Army scriber

Trend Multiscribe

I approach “multi-” tools with a healthy dollop of skepticism; too often jacks-of-all-trades wind up being masters of none. However, the new Multiscribe by Trend Routing Technology bucks the trend.

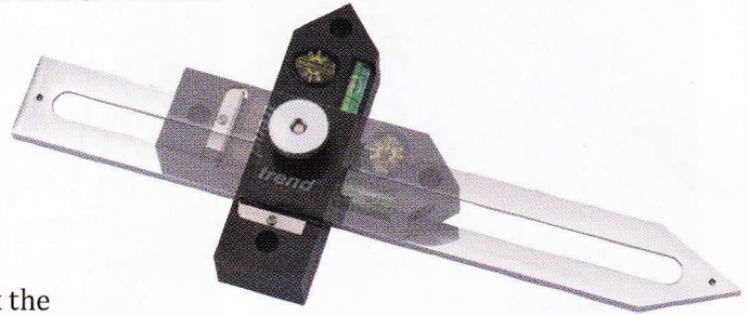
The Setup

The first thing I noticed was the all-metal construction. In an era when manufacturers use cheaper, alternative materials, this tool was designed for serious use, having a well-machined anodized aluminum head and steel parts. The knurled knob

makes it easy to position and lock the head in the blade's T-track.

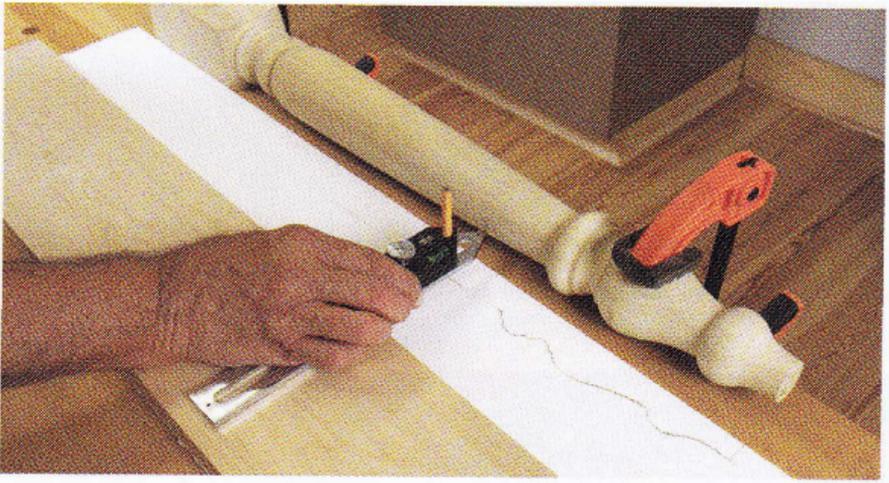
Trial Run

I began by testing the Scribe's primary function: transferring contours from one shape to another. The adjustable blade allows you to scribe lines in a variety of configurations. Such flexibility is an asset not only because of the variety of shapes you might scribe around, but also when space is tight or when positioning the tool becomes awkward.



Now for the multiple uses: with the head rotated and locked at 90° to the ¼" graduated blade or fixed inline with the blade, the scriber doubles as a depth gauge. And as with other squares, the head has a bubble level, like a small torpedo level, that lets me check the plumb or level of a wall-hung cabinet side and shelf, respectively.

A few extra details add to the tool's versatility. Small holes in each end of the blade offer



a convenient way to mark out circles from 1" to 19 $\frac{3}{4}$ " in diameter. Thread a string, and the trammel transforms into a nicely-weighted plumb bob. With the string still in place, rotate the head 90°, and the bob turns into a line block or, with the addition of chalk, a chalk line. (This might seem like a stretch, until you try doing these jobs without a helper.)

The pencil sharpener seemed like an attempt to snag one more application, but I found it a surprisingly handy feature. It's always there when you need it.

Best Application

True to the second half of its name, the Multiscribe serves best as a scribing tool. Scribing isn't something that you associate with woodworking projects—until installation time. Then, it's the difference between a project that looks like it grew there and an extra tube of caulk. In addition to cabinetry and countertops, scribing comes into play when installing siding, hardwood flooring/tile, recreating molding profiles, or developing a story stick or template for a turning project as shown in the photo above.

Tester's Take

While some of the advertised applications appear redundant, the Multiscribe holds its own as a scribe, level, square, trammel, and depth gauge. In a well-stocked workshop, it may not replace your precision measuring, marking, or leveling tools, but such versatility will earn it a place in your toolbox or the front pouch of your belt. By keeping all those tools in easy reach—preventing multiple trips back to the shop or a last-minute dash to the hardware store—this multitasker saves time and earns its keep.