Professional BUILDER Product Test

Opening doors

Professional Builder's John Dyer installs the latest in fire door technology from Jeld Wen with more than a little help from Trend.

Not being one of your second fix house bashing kind of chippies the world of jigs has always been something of a mystery to me. Trend very kindly offered to enlighten me with the loan of their two-part hinge jig with carrying case and lock jig.

The job was to replace three half-hour fire check doors that, for reasons that remain rather puzzling, were missing from their frames. Jeld Wen's six-panel Arlington, 44mm, half-hour fire-check doors were selected. The company's range is extensive with a number of facing styles to choose from and all of the Internal Moulded Panel FD30 Fire Doors are fire rated to BS476: Pt 22: 1987 (Certifire Certificate CF 160).

The doors are constructed from an extremely sturdy moulded wood-fibre facing, softwood/MDF framing and Flaxboard core. In the case of these doors they were supplied fully finished in white semi gloss paint, which was an optional extra, but they can also be supplied white primed for paint or stain finish on site.

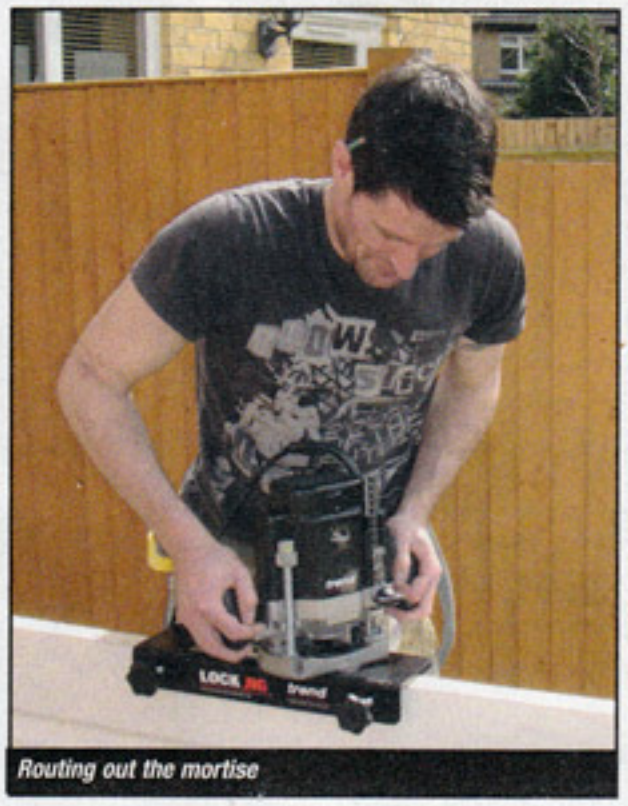
As the hinges were already chopped out in the frames I had to offer up the frames and wedge them in place then mark out where the hinges and latches went. In theory I could have measured everything but better to be safe than sorry, even if this does mean lugging an 838 fire check door up and down a twisting flight of stairs.

Lock jig

A brief look at the instructions and I was ready to centre the jig using the four notches around the aperture and fix in place using the adjustable levers on one side and two knobs on the other. I selected the correct mortise template from the laminated (nice touch) selection chart. These are simply held in place magnetically, which makes for a minimum of fuss.

The router I used was Trend's own brand T10 – a medium duty router. It needs to be fitted with the 30mm guide bush and it is supplied with and a 12mm cutter with an overall length of 115mm. It should be noted that I used different routers for the lock and hinge jigs. With the use of a guide bush collar supplied with the lock jig it is possible to use one router for both operations without changing the guide bush.

Zeroing the Router for hinges



Routing out the mortise

The technique, as with the old fashioned auger method, is to make a series of overlapping holes. The difference being that you don't go to the full depth but plunge down about 20mm at a time make a clockwise pass to clear then repeat the process until you get to the required depth. This is obviously done once the depth (plus a few mil, for clearance) has been set.

I then selected the correct faceplate template and changed it. After zeroing the cutter down to the door edge I then reset the depth and routed the face plate. The corners can be cut out with a Trend corner chisel or a normal chisel.

Hinge jig

Having done this for all the doors I then moved on to the hinges. This involved a little messing around as the position of the hinge apertures was governed by the already recessed frames. The first thing to do is to set the width of the recess and this is done by laying one leaf of the hinge on the jig (lining it up with the scribe line on the edge of the jig) and then moving the edge stop up to meet it and then tightening.

Fixing the hinge jig in place with bradawls

It is then a matter of setting the length. This is done with the aperture blocks, which slide up and down the inside of the jig. Don't forget to use the 4mm spacer gauge at the top of the hinge, as I nearly didn't. Once all is in place it is simply a matter of fixing the jig in place with the bradawls supplied.

I used Trend's own brand T5 light router but, as mentioned before, there are many other options and the majority of routers should be compatible with Trend's system. Once this was zeroed and the depth set it was just a matter of routing out and repeating the process on the other doors.

MORE INFORMATION

For further information on the Jeld Wen range of Fire Doors use the reader enquiry number 194
For further information on the Trend range of tools use the reader enquiry number 195