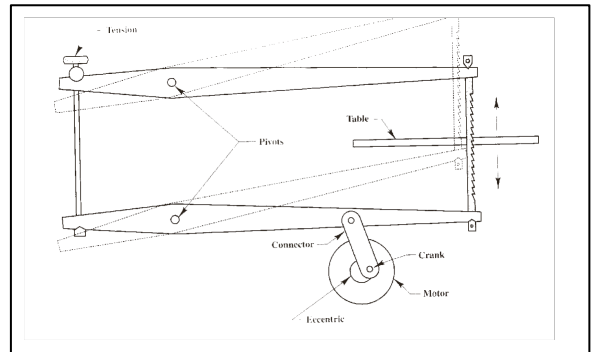
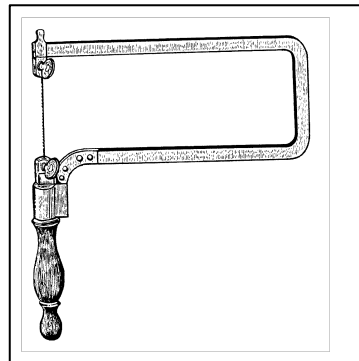
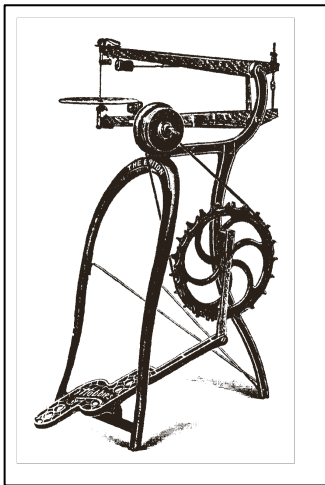


The Scroll Saw

The Scroll Saw is a very diverse, less hazardous piece of machinery that can cut intricate and smooth edges in wood, soft and precious metals, plastics and acrylics, paper and cardboard, rubber compounds and a range of other materials. The simplest way of describing its action is similar to that of a sewing machine. It uses a fine reciprocating blade that cuts on the downward motion.

The concept of the scroll saw is not new. It has been around for centuries and had its beginnings in the shape of the hand held fretwork frame. This concept was subsequently developed until during the mid to late 19th century when a range of foot-operated fretwork saws were produced. Subsequently some became motorized in the early 1900's until the modern saw was developed in the early 1970's.



Left is the New Rogers Saw of the 1880" while centre above is a hand frame from the 1600's and on the right is the arm assembly most used in modern day scroll saws.

Using a fine blade that ranges from 0.6mm to 2.5mm in width generally said all machines available on the Australian market claim a capability to cut wood up to 50mm in thickness. Realistically most of these cut accurately up to approximately 25mm.

There is a range of machines on the market starting as low as \$150 and rising up to \$2000. Most of the brands are manufactured in Taiwan or China and these tend to be in the lower (\$150 - \$350) to mid price range (\$600 - \$1100) while only one brand manufactured in Germany has claims of cutting up to 65mm in thickness. These saws are in the price range \$1500 - \$2300.

The design principle among saws marketed in Australia is similar in all brands available.

- The reciprocating action of the top and bottom arms are the same
- All have the capacity to cut at vertical angles other than 90%
- All have some form of dust removal, operating either on a blower or suction system
- Most have a variable speed electric motor that offers benefits to the user.

How well a saw performs will depend on the quality of its design and manufacture. Some will perform very well others will do an adequate job and yet others might be best described as frustrating to use. How "user friendly" a saw is, is an important consideration when purchasing a scroll saw.

Before purchasing your first saw, do some homework, talk to those who use the saws, research the brands available and the features of each and avoid buying a saw because it is a "cheap price at a hardware sale." In scroll saws the old adage rings true "You get what you pay for".