

The Australian Woodworker

USER REPORT

Lidwig Clamps & MagJigs

by Jason Burgmann

Like most Industrial Arts teachers I am always on the lookout for student safety. Some might say that we have been doing it for years — even before the powers that be thought it was important.

Two products that have certainly taken my interest in the last couple of months are the Lidwigs X4 clamp and the MagJig. Both of these are great innovations in the materials they use, the way they operate and their simplicity of use.

Employed separately (Photo.1) or combined (Photo.3) in a custom jig, they are very effective at keeping students' hands away from machining operations. Their application reduces teacher setup time dramatically and significantly improves accuracy.

Lever Clamps

The Lidwig clamp is made of a glass filled composite resin, making it lightweight, durable and easy to use while still allowing it to provide plenty of clamping force.

When you're in a situation requiring 20 students to complete the same cutting or drilling operation, the clamp excels. Once set to the required distance the clamp can be repeatedly used at that setting.

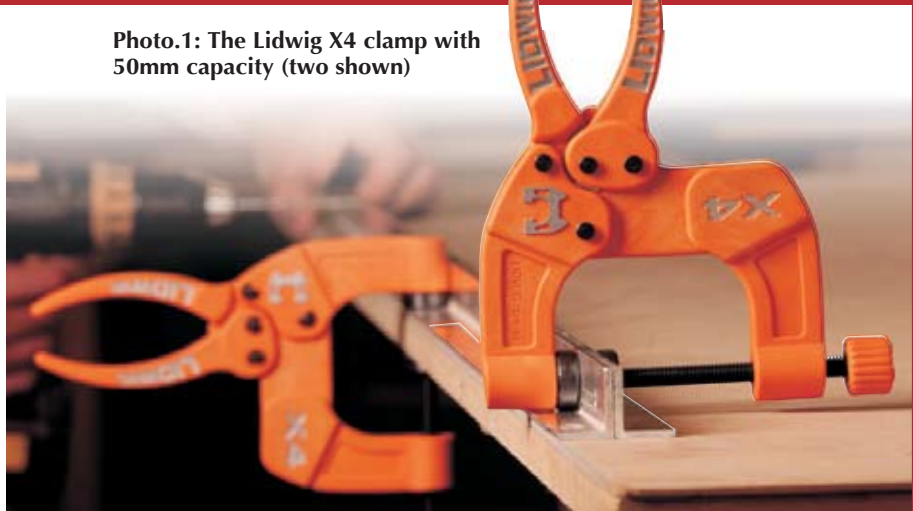
To operate the clamp, close the handles together to the 'locked' position. Adjust the screw to the thickness of the two pieces being clamped.

Then press the handles apart to release the clamp. Turn the adjustment screw clockwise a couple of times to set the clamping force. You can vary the number of turns to suit the timber being clamped and the force required.

Place the tool in position and close the handles to clamp the wood. Note that both locking and releasing the tool is a one-handed operation, making many applications much easier as the student can use their other hand to steady the materials being clamped. Another benefit is that the leverage provided by the handles eliminates the need for 'muscle' to achieve effective clamping force.

The orange X4 has a clamping distance of 50mm, making it ideal for cabinet work. The red X5 (Photo.2) has an adjustable arm and a wider clamping distance of up to 100mm, to cater for the building industries and larger clamping applications.

Photo.1: The Lidwig X4 clamp with 50mm capacity (two shown)



Magnetic Clamps

When securing jigs to a machine table such as a drill press, the usual solution has been a couple of clumsy G-clamps. While the humble G-clamp has been around for as long as I can remember, substituting MagJigs for the clamps greatly simplifies the process.

Simply turn the magnets on or off as required. The MagJig 'fastens' itself to anywhere on the ferrous table top (steel or cast iron) and holds the jig firmly in position. The use of two



Photo.2: The Lidwig X5 clamp with up to 100mm capacity

MagJigs may be required to prevent the jig rotating around a single magnet.

The MagJig is part of the MagSwitch range and specifically designed to be incorporated into workshop jigs. This simple yet valuable piece of equipment is very effective in saving setup time, improving accuracy and increasing user safety.

The Lidwig clamps sell for around \$25 for the X4 and \$30 for the X5. The MagJig comes in two sizes, 20mm and 30mm diameter. The larger unit has bigger mag-

Photo.3: This setup uses two MagJigs (centre left and bottom right) to secure the jig on a drill press table and an X4 to lock the workpiece in position

nets and more holding power, but is only required for heavy duty applications. Prices for the MagJig are around \$35 for the smaller one, \$50 for the larger.

Both products are available from
40 Pty Ltd Australia:

Adelaide

Ph: 1800 99 81 66

Sydney

Ph: 1800 99 81 66

Brisbane

Ph: 1800 99 81 66

Townsville

Ph: 1800 99 81 66

