

FEATURES:

- all blades are 5" long
- plain unpinned ends
- all blades are skip tooth design for fast cutting and greater chip clearance
- for hand or machine sawing of wood, plastic and fibrous material
- for spiral blades see #s94574-590
- for pinned end blades see #s 99566-574
- sold in packs of 12

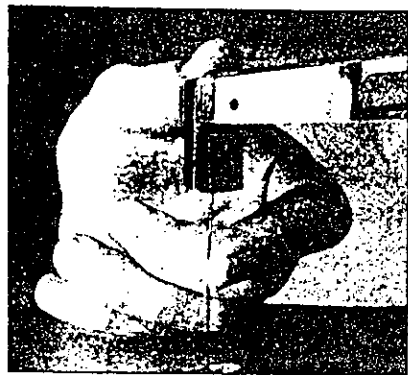
APPLICATION:

- #52712 - for extremely intricate sawing
- #99516 - for right radius work in thin 3/32" to 1/8" materials
- #52746 - for close radius cutting in material 1/8" or thicker
- #52753 - for cutting hard or soft woods 3/16" or greater
- #52761 - for cutting woods greater than 3/16"

SPECIFICATIONS:

Catalog	Universal Size #	Width	Thickness	Teeth Per Inch TPI
52712	2/0	.022"	.010"	28
99516	2	.029"	.012"	20
52746	5	.038"	.016"	12.5
52753	7	.045"	.017"	11.5
52761	9	.053"	.018"	11

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A few months ago, I bought a new scrollsaw. And, a couple of weeks later I had exhausted the supply of blades provided with the saw. Instead of just spending a few bucks at the local hardware store for the brand carried there, I did some research into the topic. Let me tell you, poking my nose into the scrollsaw-blade business provided me with a real education. Read on and I'll fill you in.

Bill Kim

Products/Techniques Editor

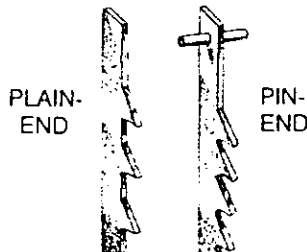
The woodworker's survival SCROLLSAW

Pin- or plain-end blades: It depends on your saw

Those of us who already own a scrollsaw really have no options when buying new blades. Most saws generally accept only one type—either pin- or plain-end blades. Both have advantages.

As shown *below*, a small pin at each end of the blade serves as a holding device in the pin-end types. Although slightly more ex-

pensive (about 7 cents more per blade), pin-end blades quickly slide into place for hassle-free mounting. But, I discovered that even though plain-end blades require a little more work to clamp into position, nearly all serious scrollsawers use them. And, Chuck Olson of the Olson Saw Co. tells me plain-end blades outsell pinned blades by about 20 to 1. "You can buy plain-end blades in a much greater variety of sizes and tooth configurations," Olson told me. "And because pin-end blades have to be wider to accept the pin, they're not available in the thin sizes necessary for intricate work."



Choose a coarseness to match the job

Ron King, who travels the country demonstrating scrollsaws for Advancery Machinery Imports (AMI), has plenty of advice on buying scrollsaw blades. Of all the pearls of wisdom he passed on to me, this one really cut to the core of the matter: "Select the coarsest blade that gives a cut that's satisfactorily smooth for your job." Coarse blades, because of their extra width, help you cut a straighter line. Fine blades, on the other hand, cut more smoothly than coarse ones, but they also cut slower and break more often. So, it pays to test coarser blades first, then turn to finer blades as you look for the ideal type for your project.

As you can see by looking at the chart at *right*, plain-end blades have universal numbers, with the high-numbered blades being the

CHOICES, CHOICES: CUTTING THROUGH THE MAZE OF BLADES

(standard, skip-tooth, plain-end blades listed)

UNIVERSAL NUMBER	WIDTH (inch)	THICKNESS (inch)	TEETH PER INCH	APPLICATIONS
2/0	.015-.022	.010	28-30	Extremely intricate sawing in veneers, plastics, hard rubber, and pearl up to 3/32" thick
0	.024	.011	25	
1	.026	.011-.012	23-25	
2	.028-.029	.012-.013	20-23	Tight radius work in hardwoods to 1/2" thick, softwoods to 3/4", and plastics to 1/2"
3	.032	.013-.014	18-20	
4	.035	.014-.015	15-18	
5	.038-.039	.015-.016	12 1/2-16 1/2	Tight radius work in hardwoods to 3/4", softwoods to 1", and plastics to 1/2"
6	.041-.043	.016-.017	12 1/2-15	
7	.045	.017-.018	11 1/2-14	Hardwoods to 1", softwoods to 1 1/2", plastics to 1/2"
8	.047-.049	.017-.018	11 1/2-14	
9	.053	.018-.019	11 1/2-14	
10	.056-.057	.019-.020	11-12 1/2	Hardwoods to 1 1/2", softwoods to 2", plastics to 3/4"
11	.059-.063	.019-.020	9 1/2-12 1/2	
12	.062	.024	9 1/2	

guide to buying...

BLADES

What you need to know about tooth patterns

As you can see from the illustration at right, scrollsaw blades come in five different tooth patterns. Here's a few tips on each:

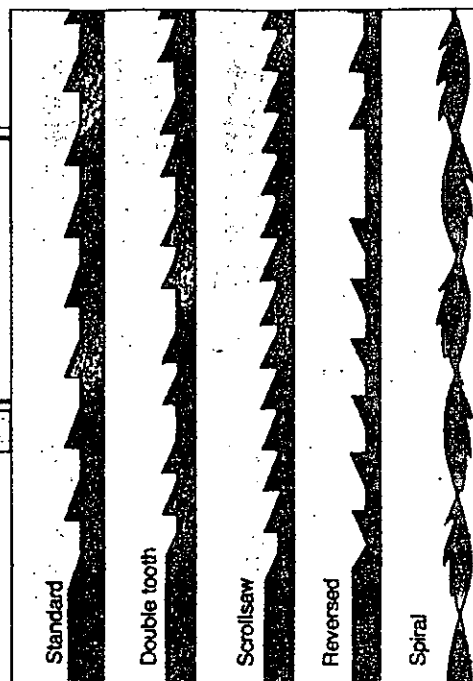
• **Standard.** Sometimes referred to as a skip-tooth or fretsaw blade, these kerf-cutters easily outsell all other types. The gullet between each tooth helps clear away wood chips and cool the blade. In my hands-on testing, this blade cut faster and smoother than any other blade in 3/4" stock. Available in plain-end only.

• **Double tooth.** Currently, only AMI imports these blades, but because of their rising popularity the Olson Saw Company is also consid-

ering manufacturing them. "These are AMI's hottest-selling blades," Ron said. In the WOOD® magazine shop, double tooth blades produced less chip-out than the other blades in materials less than 1/8" thick.

• **Scrollsaw.** Most often found in coarser sizes, especially in pin-end blades, these stiff blades work best in rigid-arm scrollsaws. Although not recommended for smooth or intricate cuts, the wide (.250") versions of this blade work well for straight cuts such as rips. Available with plain and pinned ends.

• **Reversed.** This new blade from the Olson Saw Company has five or



six teeth at the bottom of the blade that point upward. Why? The reversed teeth reduce splintering on the bottomside of the workpiece. Available in only a few coarser sizes of plain-end blades.

• **Spiral.** These twisted scrollsaw blades leave a wide kerf. But, because they cut in all directions you don't have to rotate the workpiece for curved cuts. And, they work well for bevel cuts. Plain-end only.

coarsest. Various suppliers assign different model numbers to pin-type blades, but the same width, thickness, and teeth-per-inch guidelines apply to choosing the right pinned blade.

What blades do the pros use? To find out, I asked Gene Douglas, co-owner of Marlow Woodcuts in Americus, Kansas. His family operation cranks out more than 5,000 intricately scrollsawed pieces every year, and goes through more than 2,000 blades in the process. Gene wouldn't reveal his source, as he considers that a trade secret, but he did tell me what type of blade he favors. For 1/16" walnut plywood with a poplar center, the Marlow scrollsawers clamp no. 2/0 scrollsaw blades into their machines, and use no. 5 standard blades when sawing 3/16" solid walnut.

A few more blade-buying guidelines

• For metal cutting, buy a jewelers blade. Available in up to 20 universal sizes, these plain-end, hardened blades have the same tooth pattern as scrollsaw blades.

• If you plan to buy a scrollsaw, keep in mind that you'll find the widest array of blades in the 5" length. Although the majority of saws accept this size, some "hobby" machines take 2 3/4" blades.

• Don't forget that the quality of your scrollsaw may have a bear-

ing on your blade purchase. As Ron King told me, "If I'm using a less-expensive Sears or other Taiwanese-made saw, to avoid breakage I have to buy a thicker and wider blade than if I'm working with a Delta, RBI, Hegner, or other high-quality saw."

• And yes, it's nearly impossible to tell one size scrollsaw blade from another. So, you need a storage system such as the one we designed (see page 80). ♣

For more information and catalogs

Olson Saw Co.
Route 6
Bethel, CT 06801
Call 203/792-8622

Written by Bill Krier Illustrations by Jim Stevenson Photograph by Bob Calmer