

TREND T32 M-CLASS VACUUM CLEANER

Equipment for cleaning up wood dust properly can be expensive, but the **Trend T32** apparently combines the high filtration required with a low price. Too good to be true? **Jonathan Salisbury** takes a good look – inside and out!

In the good old days, wood dust wasn't dangerous like it is now. All you needed was a dustpan and brush and the household vac – and you didn't have to worry about clouds of dust coming from a leaky bag, either; not if you kept the windows open a while...

Even if that were true – which it isn't, by the way – removing wood dust is now a serious business, with dedicated workshop vacuums to suit every pocket, from discount supermarket bargains to those which double up as large volume extraction units.

Beware of those bargains, though! What are their filter ratings? Will you even be able to buy replacements in a year's time? It's difficult to spot the good from the bad without experience. Filters that fall off during cleaning, poorly fitting seals that allow dust to escape, bagless containers that redistribute dust as you empty them over the dustbin – even if it isn't windy – shut the lid, quick!



Large on-off button and push-pull filter cleaner



H&S training hat on

All dust is hazardous, but how much damage it does to you is down to the type – size and material – how much there is, and for how long and how often you're exposed to it. And possibly luck, too. It's impossible to know how much damage even infrequent exposure to small amounts of fine dust will cause over a long time, until it's too late. The solution? Don't create dust.

But if you can't avoid creating dust – and who can? – remove as much as possible at source (extract), filter the air (face mask) and vacuum up anything that settles. Dust on surfaces won't harm you, it's when moving it to the bin – whether brushed or vacuumed – that you risk adding fine particles to the air you breathe in. Vacuuming is in theory safer, but it depends on filtration.

Consider yourself a professional craftsman from now on. A vacuum cleaner for controlling dust in a professional setting must have at least

an M (for medium) class rating. M-class means 99.9% of dust down to 0.3µm stays inside the cleaner; most of the smallest of these particles can't even be seen in normal lighting conditions. M-class also requires an indicator to alert the user when air flow is restricted. Forget bagless too; collection bags provide primary filtration to contain as much dust as possible so that the secondary HEPA (high-efficiency particulate air) filter only has to deal with the much smaller volume of the finest dust that still gets through.

But is the T32 any good?

The T32 is M-rated, compact, light, manoeuvrable and looks suitably professional. The vacuum unit in the lid clips onto the steel collection container securely and seals tightly. The big red power button is easy to push for on and off, the flow indicator above this shows when air isn't getting through or the bag is filling up; there's a push-pull



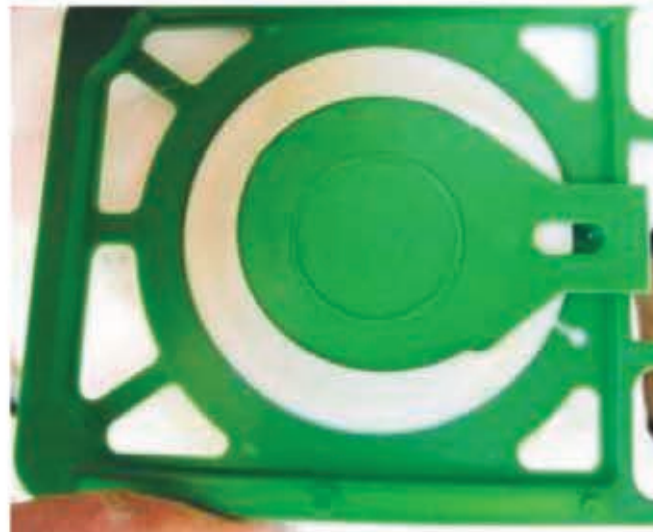
The 5m cable can be stored on top



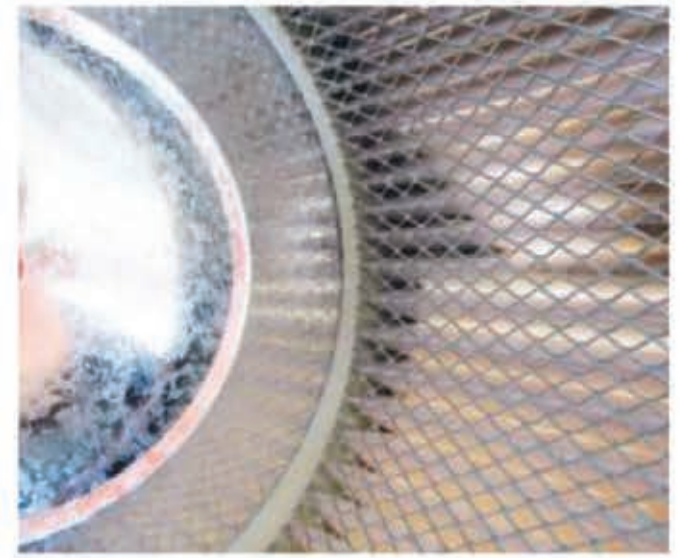
The 15 litre bag has plenty of collection potential



A few seconds of vacuuming and look at the state of the bag



Flip the flap to seal in the dust



The spotless inside of an efficient HEPA filter after use



You can use the vacuum bagless...



... but the HEPA filter will soon be blocked



A crevice tool is supplied for small spaces

button to clear the HEPA filter surface. The generous 3m tube and 5m cable provide plenty of reach and the tapered, flexible dust spout adaptor attaches to the hose so that it can be fitted to ports on power tools for 'dust control' purposes.

In order to test it, I vacuumed everywhere – the floor, walls, workbenches, lathe, shelves and cupboards. The only problem I encountered was the crevice tool getting blocked with large flakes from my axe-carved spoon blanks. The two floor cleaning tools worked very well on hard surfaces, the larger one being better for carpets, and the stainless steel tube set is long enough to reduce the need to bend down. The crevice tool for small gaps has a brush that flips out for cleaning flat surfaces, although this did have a tendency to flip back during use. A medium-sized surface cleaning tool would have been useful.

The bag is exceptionally good at filtering – witness the horrid grey-brown stain in the photo – and a flap seals it securely after removal

to prevent any dust escaping as it's transferred to the bin. The large HEPA filter seals tightly, with a wing nut to ensure it doesn't fall off, and, although it will eventually need replacing, it can be washed to keep it clean. If you leave the bag out, you lose the M-class filtration and the HEPA filter quickly clogs up. Bags may be wasteful, but they aren't that expensive. Using the bag to contain the waste also makes emptying a joy compared to an open container: gently separate the seal from the inlet, flip the flap to prevent anything escaping and take it to the bin.

To test dust control (extraction), I plugged it on to a planer using the adaptor, which stayed in place for the whole length of the wood (2.4m) and removed all shavings – nothing obvious was left behind. Trend point out that the T32 is a vacuum cleaner and not rated as an extractor, even though there's a photo of it being connected to a track saw on the box. You must wear an FFP3 mask too. Bags also fill up very quickly when you extract, so if you really insist on using it frequently



The flip out brush doesn't always stay in place

for this purpose, order a cyclone separator to remove as much waste as possible before it gets to the vacuum hose. Then put a proper extractor on your wish list.

The 800W motor is powerful but quiet: at 80dB, it's on the hearing-protection-required threshold for average daily noise exposure, so if you use it for long periods, in small spaces or



The crevice tool can get blocked with bigger chips



A flexible dust spout adaptor provides dust control on a planer...



... and also fits a router shroud



ON TEST

Trend T32 vacuum cleaner 800W 230V

at the same time as a power tool, it's probably best to put those ear defenders on. The other bit of good news is the price: it can cost as little as £160 if you shop around for deals, and it also comes with a three-year guarantee.

Conclusion

There are more powerful, flow rate workshop vacuum cleaners at the same price point, half the



Now you see it...



... now you don't

price, or even less. But it's not about what gets picked up, it's about what doesn't get expelled into the air afterwards. You only have to compare the horrid state of the inside surface of the collection bag with the spotless interior surface of the HEPA filter to appreciate its performance.

The technical specifications of cheaper models tend to include vague descriptions such as 'high-performance', 'high-efficiency' or 'ideal for the workshop'. So is it worth spending the extra just for the reassurance of the extensive, accredited safety compliance CV of the T32? Yes, it most definitely is. ✖

SPECIFICATION

Voltage: 230V

Rated power: 800W

Capacity: 20 litre drum (bag 15.3 litres)

Max vac pressure: 14.6Kpa

Max suction: 146mbar

Hose: 3m x 39mm OD

Hose spout: 35mm OD

Noise level 230V: 78dB(A)

Flow rate 230V: 20l/s

Airflow: 4,200l/min

Cable length: 5m

Machine weight: 6.5kg

Dimensions: 350 x 390 x 610mm

Ideal for on-site use – certified for professional use: meets standard 2006/42/EC, dust class category M-rated to EN60335-2-69 and legal requirements set by HSE for workplace limit values of > 0.1mg/m³



The red bar indicates flow restriction; blocked hose or a full bag?

Typical prices: £190.80; dust collection bags – £35.95 for 10; replacement HEPA filters – £29.95
Web: www.trend-uk.com

THE VERDICT

PROS

- Lightweight and easy to manoeuvre; M-class filters 99.9% of dust; securely fitting seals and filters; good capacity for a reasonable price; three-year guarantee from a trusted brand

CONS

- Extraction limited to dust control; bag fills quickly when attached to high-waste power tools

RATING: 4.5 out of 5