

Trend T11 Router

£334.88 ☎ 0800 487363

www.trendmachinery.co.uk

Motor: 2000W Speed: 12,000 to 20,000rpm

Weight: 6.3kg Noise: 99db(A)

Plunge stroke: 80mm

Back in the days when routers were few and far between, Swiss manufacturers Elu dominated the market with the MOF96, MOF131 and MOF177 machines. Such was the impact, the MOF96 base configuration is still the most popular for all small routers, while the legacy of the MOF177 lives on in the DeWalt DW625, and also the CMT 1850.

At this end of the market, a straightforward 'brute force and ignorance' machine can often be enough for the bigger work they are capable of, but this design has always managed to find its mark amongst more elaborate models. The sheer ease of use and excellent features ensures that it rises above the more mundane and even the more complex routers – and it's still my clear favourite.

Trend established themselves as kings of the router world way back and, realising the potential of the Elu brand (and routing in general), they established a range of accessories to ensure the most adaptable tool on the market became so.

With the T5 bearing a close resemblance to the old MOF96, it made sense to bring the bigger model in line, and the introduction of the T11 has brought another MOF177 clone into the market. No bad thing in



my eyes; at the professional end of the market quality and reliability always wins favour, so another machine that has good pedigree and tried and tested operation will always appeal strongly.

This 2000W version has the same variable speed configuration via the central mounted top dial, giving speeds from 12,000 to 20,000rpm, and the same layout for plunge and power switch, along with the same comfortable grips, so no change in the general machine itself.

One thing that has been lacking on all machines is a fine height adjustment that allows easy operation, no matter what orientation the router is used. The closest they've got to what I'd call perfection is with the RouterRaizer, but this is an after market option, selling for about seventy quid, and in some cases, requiring the router to be stripped down to fit it. A boon once fitted, but not for the faint-hearted on some models.



Trend have realised the potential of such a device and incorporated it within the T11, allowing the router to be finely adjusted when fitted in the router table as easily as it can be when hand held.

The T11 retains the quick adjustment capabilities by releasing the plunge lock behind the right grip with stepped setting, and finer

adjustments can be made with the three position turret and setting post with its magnified cursor. The knob on the side of the router winds the setting post up and down as required, with the cursor sliding in a channel to zero it for much easier setting.

For the majority of routing functions these are perfect, but it's the micro adjustments both



A separate adjuster alters the fine height setting when the router is used in hand held mode



Recesses on the base allow you to clip the router in and out of the Trend PRT table (Clips £22.92)



Standard height adjustments can still be made using the dial and plunge post



This smart piece of kit screws to the base so that you can slot it onto the Trend Clamp Guides when routing straight cuts such as housings, clearing the work area of clamps so the router passes freely (£37.67)

in and out of the table that gives it its huge advantage over the opposition.

It's achieved with the threaded rod on the front left of the router, replacing the standard threaded adjuster/plunge restrictor found on the DeWalt and CMT versions. This has a round brass knurled adjuster with four flats on the bottom.

These flats locate in the forks on the casting, trapping it in position. Normal plunging disengages the adjuster from the forks so as mentioned earlier, it doesn't affect other functions, and it can be wound up or down to restrict plunges as normal.

With the nut engaged, the supplied adjusting knob can be used to wind the base up and down accordingly, with each rotation equivalent to 1.5mm. In handheld mode it makes adjusting a cinch, but it's the

inverted mode where it will gain most favour as it removes the need to get under the table to adjust bit projection.

This works by connecting the threaded adjusting rod to a nut on the base, accessed through an aperture in the casting and Tufnol anti scratch plate. With a suitable hole drilled through the plate on your router table, the adjusting knob drops through the opening to engage the nut to raise or lower the setting from above. Until you actually use it, you don't appreciate what a difference this is. It allows you to alter the cutter so easily it makes you wonder why it wasn't thought of before.

OK, there are specialist plates such as Axminster or the Woodpecker, but these need the router bolted to an auxiliary sub base, so you lose plunge capacity. Not so here; the full 85mm plunge, minus your own



The fine height adjuster will also alter the setting through the router base



This is where the T11 stands head and shoulders over the opposition, as all height setting is carried out from above the table. Here it is in the Trend PRT table, but any table with a correctly positioned hole drilled through will work

router plate is available.

Of course, Trend have adapted a plate to fit into their own top of the range PRT table, but a simple hole in the right position on any table will suffice if you don't own one.

Even so, to make it easier for the end user, three indents in the alloy base correspond with three lugs on the new router plate insert to allow it to be taken in and out of the table in seconds by rotating the clamping lugs.

Power is accessed with the left hand, pushing up the switch from below the left grip to switch on, with the thumb pushing down to turn it off. The switch automatically locks on, doing away with the need for clamps or tape to hold it on in the inverted position.

The router base follows the standard circular design with a clipped edge for straight-edge following and has a 75mm opening, allowing the bigger panel raisers to fit and plunge when needed. The plunge itself is as fluid as I would expect for a professional machine, with no slop in the rods, although the strength of the springs does make it a little on the stiff side.

A further string to the T11 bow is the optional guide track plate. This allows you to utilise the standard Trend Clamp Guide System, ensuring perfect straight edges with no danger of wandering away from the edge as you rout. The plate simply screws down to tapped holes on the router base and locates onto the guide, allowing it to slide along.

The fence is tremendously impressive, too. It's an alloy casting with adjustable plastic facings and has a fine adjuster as standard, along with twin sets of holes for the rods, 110mm for the T11 and also 85mm centres so that you can also use it with standard Mof96 configured bases.

As a simple heavy duty router, the T11 would still gain my favour, and in fact it is available badged as the T10 without the fine adjuster system, but of course, it's the adjuster that does it.

In my mind, the Trend Router is the best adjuster out there, knocking spots off all the other weird and wonderful configurations that have been invented – both professional and amateur.

Its simplicity belies its undoubted usefulness, and you have to give full credit to Trend for not only being the first to incorporate it, but also to put it on such a fine machine that's still a flagship in its own right.

If you have a big router that would benefit from this type of adjuster, the RouterRaizer is always worth investigating, but if you want a new one, this has to be the router of choice. It really is that good.

GW verdict

- ⊕ Superb height adjustments
- ⊖ Plunge is a little strong

Value for money ●●●●●
Performance ●●●●●