

On Test

Trend

templates

John Perkins checks out some useful new additions to the Trend range of routing jigs and templates

Trend's new range of clear acrylic templates include a set of letter and numeral stencils, an internal and external corner template and one for cutting

round and rectangular recesses for standard desk cable tidys and concealed hinge recesses. There is also one for inlaying repair veneers to disguise knots or blemishes in natural timber and man-made boards.

Design and material

All the templates are made of 6 or 8mm thick clear acrylic, making them rigid and suitable for use with most makes and styles of guide bush. Although designed for use with Trend

style guide bushes, they can be used with all other guide bush systems.

Cutters for all but the Timber Repair template, are supplied separately, but details of both the recommended cutter and guide bush, suitable for use with the template, plus full instructions, are provided.

It is also recommended that the templates are clamped in position over the workpiece. However, for speed and accuracy, simple home-made positioning frames and jigs are advisable. Hole templates can be aligned by either clamping edge battens to the templates or carefully scribing your own centre lines on to the acrylic.

Trend have however, kindly provided a small hole for hanging your template on a peg (or nail etc.) to keep it out of harms way when not in use.

Letter and numeral templates



This set of four alphabet templates are ideal for direction signs and name boards and are matched for use with the numeral templates



Both numeral and alphabet templates can be used with alternative cutters to produce rounded, moulded or Vee cut lines, all using the same diameter (13mm) guide bush.

With a nominal letter height of 57mm, these templates are intended for producing name boards and directional signs for both commercial and domestic applications. Available as a set of three letter templates or two numeral templates, they are intended for use with a 13mm guide bush and straight flute 8mm cutter (available together as an optional extra: *Set Temp/LN57x1/4 @ £9.95 ex vat*).

The typeface in both instances is all uppercase 'Vogue'. Some variation can be achieved using a similar diameter Vee or cove profile cutter, or by using a straight cutter of a slightly smaller diameter, but retaining the same 13mm guide bush.

It is recommended that the script is traced from the template onto the workpiece first, to ensure that the spacing appears even (suggested spacing 10mm between letters). A straight edge can be clamped across the workpiece to align the bottom edge of each letter or numeral. This should be a batten no thicker than the template, with clamps positioned clear of the router path. In use the template is placed over the relevant letter or numeral and the template clamped securely. Always check that the cramps do not interfere with the router path and, in order to avoid damaging the template, always allow the router to stop rotating before lifting the guide bush out of the slot. Some letters and numerals are made up from part shapes, requiring the template to be repositioned to form the complete letter or number. A better method of holding these templates in place is to make up a jig that allows the workpiece to be slid beneath the template and locked in place by a toggle clamp.



When using these templates it is advisable to first draw out each letter to ensure that the spacing is correct. Using a simple jig to align the template over the timber ensures that the letters or numbers are neatly

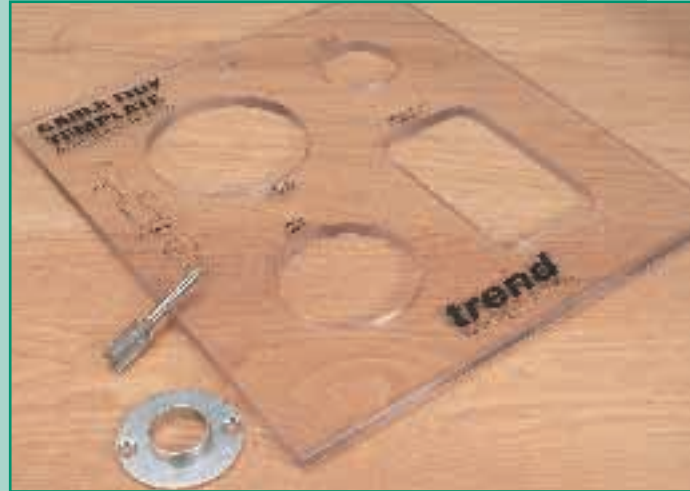
*Letters set of four: £29.95 Ex VAT
Numerals set of two: £14.95 Ex VAT*

Trend templates

	Quality & finish	Performance	Value for money
Letter and number templates	4	5	5
Circle and curve template	3	4	3
Cable tidy template	3	4	2
Timber repair template	4	5	5

Scores out of 5

Cable tidy template



As well as for cutting holes for cable tidy inserts, this template can also be used for inseting the blind hole to take concealed cabinet hinges.

Corner and Hole template



The corner and hole template can be used not only for rounding corners and cutting infinite diameter holes, but for producing accurate, square edged curved templates

This template is intended for cutting concave and convex curves as well as holes, making it ideal as a master template for producing precision curved and compound curved working templates. It can also be used for rounding corners on panels, table tops and worktops, as well as for cutting holes for finger pulls, inserts, ironmongery and other decorative features.

The four hole diameters are 25, 50, 75 and 100mm diameter, while the corner radiuses are 50 and 100mm both internal and external. Measuring 290 x 290mm the template has four straight edges that can be used for alignment, although there are no centre lines for aligning the holes. The template can be used with any guide bush/cutter combination to produce holes of various diameters, or with a flush trimming cutter to reproduce the original diameters.

Price: £29.95 Ex VAT

Intended for cutting recesses for standard size cable tidys when making desks and computer consuls, this template offers a square recess to produce a fitting aperture of 105 x 55mm and round fitting apertures of 80 and 60mm. This is achieved by using a 12mm straight cutter and a 30mm guide bush. A hole template is also provided for cutting 35mm recesses for concealed cabinet hinges, using the same guide bush and cutter diameters. Parallel sided, the overall template size is 290 x 320mm.

Standard size cable tidy inserts, in brown, grey or black, are available from various manufacturers or (at £4.95, £5.95 or £6.95 per pack of 3) from Trend.



Trend also supply a range of plastic cable tidys and inserts in several different colours

Price: £24.95 Ex VAT

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Timber repair template



The timber repair template can also be used for inlaying contrasting timbers, veneers or laminates

The plug thickness/recess depth, is up to a maximum of 5mm. Although this can be increased by cutting in further steps of 2-3mm, cutting a matching plug of any greater thickness may prove difficult.

This template, as with the others, can be used with this type of cutter/guide bush or bearing combination to inlay veneers, fittings and other decorative features.

Price: £29.95 Ex VAT

This oval template is designed for cutting both the recess and plug for covering knots and surface blemishes. To achieve this it is supplied complete with a 10mm long shank cutter, 20mm guide bush and a guide bush collar to increase the guide bush diameter to 40mm. The guide bush is of the Trend T5 type. The template measures 400 x 180mm with parallel edges. For surface repair operations, the template is simply held in place with double-sided tape or cramps over the knot or blemish, with the major axis along the grain.

The 40mm guide bush (i.e. with the collar fitted) is then used to cut the recess (pocket), first following the template (feed direction against the cutter rotation), before removing the centre waste. The recommended



The repair template is supplied with a 20mm guide bush, 40mm collar and a 8mm straight flute cutter

Opinions and conclusions

Template making is one of the most necessary skills required for productive and creative routing as it is essential that they are cut precisely, with smooth edges and curves that flow flawlessly into one another. One of the best methods of achieving this is to finish the edges with the router, using a series of intermediate templates to produce the final master. Remember that from virtually any circular or shaped template you can decrease or increase the size of the finished template or workpiece simply by using different combinations of cutter, guide bush and bearing diameter.

However, for many simple operations, ready made templates can save a lot of time and effort, while more complex ones such as letter

stencils that require a high degree of precision are possibly best left to commercial CNC production methods.

When it comes to making your own hole and disc templates, as opposed to buying ready made ones, well I will stick with the first. From just one good clean hole you can cut any size, bigger or smaller even with a limited number of cutters and guide bushes. These templates would, however, benefit from having centring lines to make them easier to align.

The method of cutting repair plugs and pockets by matching cutter and guide bush diameters is common practise in most routing workshops, its cutting the initial oval that the difficult part (not that its got the be an oval). However, as this set comes with cutter, guide bush and collar, the cost of the

template is not excessive. Of course by using it as a master template, larger oval copy templates can be produced for cutting small oval frames and similar work.

The guide bushes recommended for use with these templates, are those suitable for use with certain Trend, Elu\Dewalt, Makita and Perles routers. However, other routers can be fitted with a sub-base, such as the Trend Unibase, designed to take this guide bush or with own their designated 20mm guide bush.

When it comes to letter and number templates, these are difficult to produce oneself (unless you have a set to copy) and therefore do represent good value. I can see that a lot of public signs as well as domestic house signs are suddenly going to appear in a particular Trend 'Vogue' typeface! If you make

up a suitable jig, these templates become very easy to use.

The clear acrylic that these templates are made of is rigid, durable, and takes a good edge finish. It also allows easy alignment. In time it will undoubtedly scratch and fog over, but not to the detriment of their use. However, do take care not to cut into the template itself. In many cases it is best to keep the acrylic template as a master and use MDF or plastic materials to make working templates, cut from the original template, using a flush trimming cutter.

Further information

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