

The Leader in Sharpening Systems Gets Even Better.

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Tormek T-8 Water-Cooled Sharpening System

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There are two basic styles of sharpening machines – wet-grinders, which use water to lubricate and cool a large, wide, slow spinning grindstone, and the more conventional dry grinders that spin a considerably narrower grinding wheel at significantly higher speeds in the range of 1,750 to 3,450 RPM. One of the main advantages of wet grinders is that there is no risk of overheating metal and compromising its temper. Additionally, the wider grindstone makes it easier to sharpen wider chisel and plane blades.

The name that has been synonymous with wet grinding over the past several decades is **Tormek**. Recently they upgraded their commercial grade grinder, the T-7. The new **T-8** has a number of welcome enhancements that further entrench Tormek as the sharpening system of choice for both professional woodworkers and avid hobbyist woodworkers.



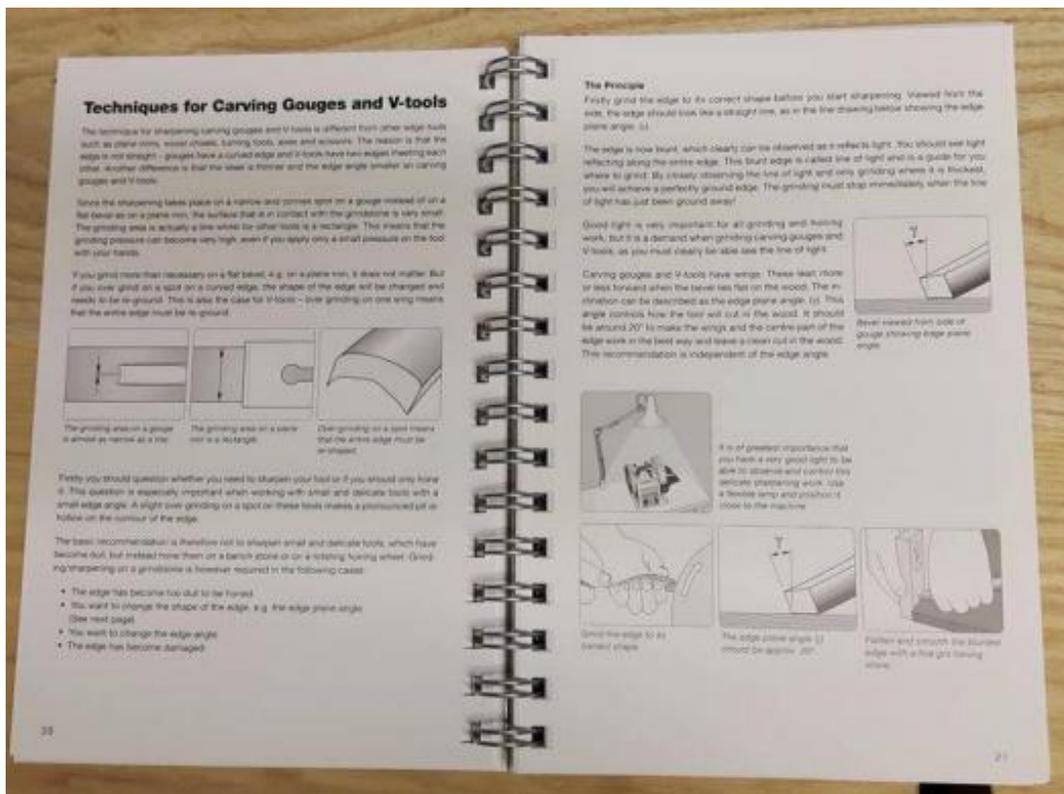
The T-8 Kit - minimal assembly

Before you can use the T-8 you need to mount the grindstone, condition the leather honing wheel, and mount the water trough onto the unit. The whole process takes all of 4-5 minutes, and is clearly outlined in the accompanying user manual – which means you can be up and running with the T-8 in no-time.

The kit comes with a water trough and water chute, a scraper for cleaning the trough, oil for initial conditioning of the leather wheel and honing compound for subsequent polishing on the leather wheel, and a user guide and DVD. Plus you get:

- US-105 Universal Support with a micro-adjust dial – the tool rest on which most of the Tormek accessories ride, and which you can also use freehand;
- SE-77 Square Edge jig that holds chisels and plane irons;
- TT-50 Truing and Dressing tool – used to keep the grindstone round and flat;
- SP-650 Stone Grader – used to alter the cutting properties of the grindstone from normal (220-grit) to fine (1000-grit);
- WM-200 AngleMaster – used to set the required bevel angle.

These five accessories will enable you to sharpen the most common woodworking tools, specifically chisels and plane irons. For more specialized sharpening, such as turning and carving tools, adzes, hatchets, planer or jointer blades, knives, and scissors, Tormek has various jigs and accessories you can purchase separately or in kit form .



Superb instructional media

The user guide (164 pages) and DVD (58 minutes) that come with the T-8 are among the best instructional media I've used. They explain everything you need to know about sharpening and honing just about any tool you can think of. There are hundreds of line drawings and step-by-step instructions that clearly outline how to set up and use the T-8, and get the most out of its various accessories.

The book is meant to be used in the shop – it's spiral bound so you can lay it fully open on a benchtop, and the front and back are protected by clear plastic covers. Unless you have previous experience using a Tormek, I highly recommend that you take the time to watch the DVD. Its 23 sections cover machine set-up and use, and every jig and attachment in the Tormek arsenal.



Convenient accessory storage

The accessories that ship with the T-8 (except the water chute) fit nicely in the rigid Styrofoam tray. It can be attached vertically to a shop wall, or stored in a drawer – in my case in a purpose built sharpening station. I also store the grinder in a separate drawer, which keeps it free of dust when not in use.

With a footprint of only 10-5/8" W x 10-5/8" D x 12" H, the grinder takes up very little space, and at 32 lbs it's easy enough to move to a sharpening station and then store away when not in use.



Durable cast zinc and stainless steel

Unlike the T-7, which had a steel housing, the main portion of the T-8 housing is cast in zinc, with two small side panels of ABS plastic. The zinc alloys used today are just as durable as aluminum or magnesium alloys. They're dimensionally stable, resistant to corrosion, exceptionally strong, and can be cast in thinner walls, which makes for a lighter end product. So, you should expect the housing on the T-8 to last for decades.

The beefy main shaft on which the grindstone rests is made of stainless steel – no worries that it will bend, break, or rust out over time.

The T-8 employs an industrial-grade 200-watt continuous duty, maintenance-free induction motor to turn the shaft at a leisurely 90 RPM. The motor is rated for a 25,000 hour life – that's the equivalent of operating the T-8 for over 3,000 continuous 8 hour days – essentially forever. And, with a decibel rating of 54dB it's likely to be the quietest machine in your shop.



Integrated tool mounts

Atop the motor casing are the mounts that support the tool rest, i.e., the Universal Support bar. The fully machined tool mounts are cast into the body rather than being bolted onto the housing as was the case for the T-7. This further helps minimize any vibration that might otherwise be transferred to the Universal Support bar, and ultimately to the tool that you're sharpening. When inserted into the mounts and locked in place, the Universal Support is rock solid – there is absolutely no wobble or deflection in use.



The Universal Support bar with the Micro-Adjust dial

The Universal Support is an 'F' shaped 1/2" diameter stainless steel bar that has one of its arms threaded to accommodate a micro-adjust dial. It's essentially a mounting rod for the various Tormek jigs, and it can be installed on either side of the grindstone, enabling you to grind either towards, or away from, the rotating edge of the wheel. As well, it can be flipped 180 degrees to be used with the honing wheel. The micro-adjust dial enables you to fine tune the angle of the Universal Support in .01" increments, which gives you an exceptional level of precision in setting bevel angles.



Convenient wheel raising system

Another new feature on the T-8 is the inclusion of a lift for the water trough. A dial on the side of the grinder enables you to move the trough up to the wheel. It doesn't improve the sharpening process in any way, but it does make it easier to mount the trough, and avoids water sloshing about when raising the trough to saturate the grindstone, and when removing the trough for cleaning. Tormek also includes an ABS plastic scraper that makes it very easy to remove the crud that builds up in the trough during grinding. There is also a magnet on the outside of the trough to attract the metal grinding residue. The magnet can be removed for cleaning purposes.



A water chute helps keep water where it belongs

The T-8 also comes with a handy chute that clips onto the side of the water trough. You can dispense with the chute when sharpening most chisels and plane blades. However, it's very helpful when sharpening wide tools that extend well over the side of the grindstone, like jointer and planer blades, or axes and drawknives. Runoff is diverted back into the trough.



It's not entirely mess-proof

Don't expect that sharpening with the T-8 will be mess-free. While it does a very good job of diverting most of the water back into the water trough, some ends up on the top of the unit, and some on the workbench. I've found that more water spills out when I get impatient and move the accessory along the universal support bar too quickly. Slow and steady is a more effective pace. If you do your sharpening atop a workbench you'll want to place a tray of some kind under the T-8 to catch any water. Tormek offers a nice rubber tray (RM-533) expressly for this purpose.



Updated Square Edge Jig

For many woodworkers the Square Edge Jig is the most frequently used Tormek accessory. It rides along the Universal Support bar, and holds chisels, both Western and Japanese and plane blades square to the grindstone. The updated Square Edge jig now has two adjustment knobs (red circle in the top photo) that you can use to put a camber on plane blades. Loosening the knobs increases the pendulum motion of the jig, which increases the curvature of the bevel edge. Alternately pressing a tad harder on each side of the blade during the sharpening process also helps define the camber.



Tools mount perfectly square in the Square Edge Jig

The Square Edge jig holds tools up to 3/8" thick and 3" wide securely at a perfect 90° angle to the grindstone. A pivoting pressure bar on the jig applies even clamping pressure on the tool, pushing it up against the flat edge of the jig. In profile, the pressure bar has a slight angle at its back edge, which facilitates clamping tapered and Japanese style chisels.

High performance engineered plastic inserts on the jig enable it to move smoothly along the universal support bar. And you don't have to apply a lot of pressure on the locking knobs to ensure that your tools stay perfectly aligned.



Square grindstone and squarely mounted blade result in perfect bevels

The aluminum-oxide 220-grit grindstone, at 2" by 10" is fairly massive. Out of the box it's perfectly square to the sides. Because it rotates at a leisurely 90 RPM, it takes longer to sharpen tools than on a conventional high speed dry grinder. However, due to its slow rotation, and the water lubrication, there is absolutely no heat build-up on the cutting tool. This means you never have to worry about ruining the temper of your steel, and you'll never unintentionally grind off too much steel.



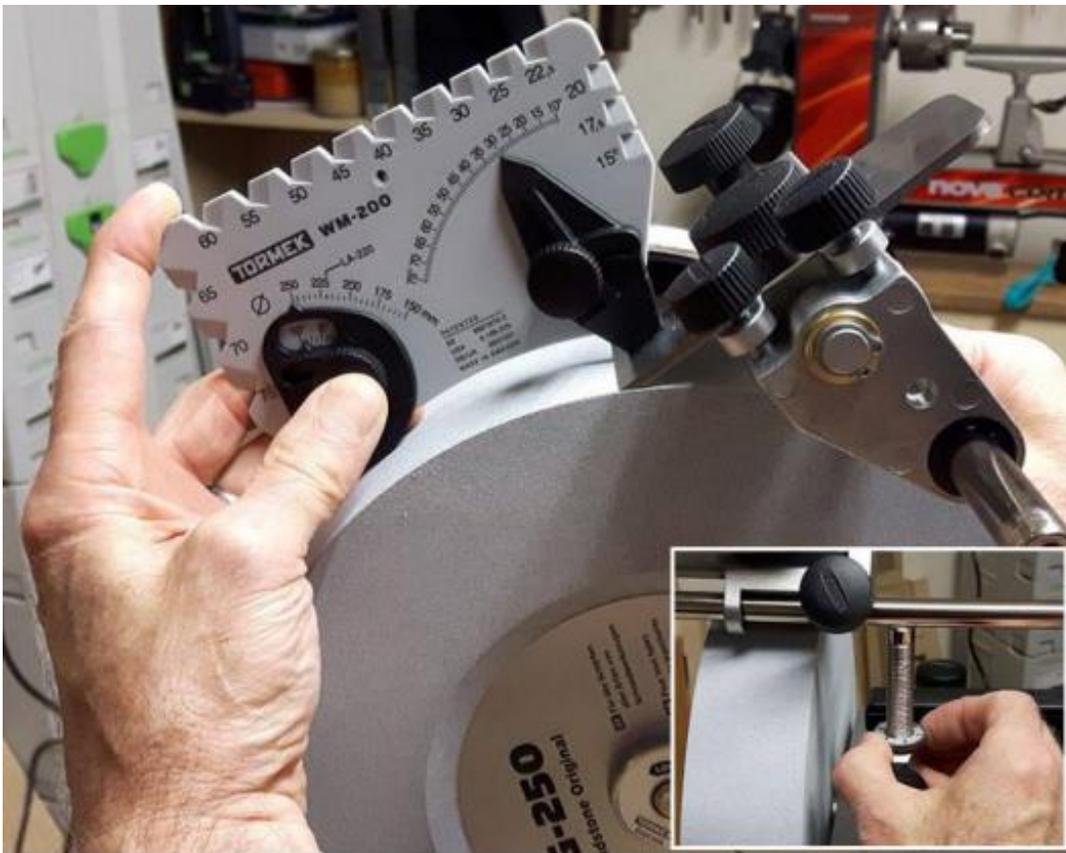
The grindstone being 'converted' from 220 to 1000-grit

A great feature of the Tormek is that once you've achieved the desired bevel angle, you can quickly convert the 220-grit wheel to the equivalent of 1000-grit by means of the Stone Grader – a two sided silicon carbide stone. You simply press the fine side of the stone grader against the spinning grindstone for fifteen to twenty seconds to convert it to 1000-grit. To go back to 220-grit you press the coarse side against the wheel. Being able to change grits on the fly is a huge time saver – you can move from initial shaping to final sharpening in one fell swoop – without having to replace the grindstone. The grader also serves to quickly remove glaze build-up on the grindstone, which naturally occurs during the sharpening process.



It's easy to maintain the grindstone

Depending on how often you use the Tormek and the type of tools you sharpen, the surface of the grindstone may get out of square. Some users, such as wood turners, may choose to sharpen their tools only to 220-grit, so may not use the Stone Grader, which will likely result in the grindstone glazing over sooner than later. Fortunately, dressing the grindstone is done quickly with the Truing and Dressing tool, which mounts on the Universal Support bar. It's near impossible to dress the wheel out of square, and you can remove precise amounts, as little as 1/16" at a time, which is usually all you need to remove to get a clean, square surface.



The Angle Master establishes precise bevel angles

With the T-8 there isn't any guessing when it comes to setting bevel angles. If you don't need to sharpen at an exact predetermined bevel angle, simply mount the tool in the Square Edge jig on the Universal Support and raise or lower the support to match the existing bevel angle using the marker pen technique (as explained in the user manual). This is the quickest approach, and the one I use 80% of the time for basic sharpening of a dull chisel or blade.

For those occasions when I need to establish a new bevel or remove a major nick, I use the Angle Master to establish an exact bevel angle. You simply set the Angle Master to the bevel angle you want, place it's tip on the grindstone, and then adjust the height of the Universal Support using the micro-adjust dial so that the Angle Master rests flush against the surface of the blade. The angles ground using this technique are spot on.



Safety stops keep you on track

Even though the grindstone is fairly wide, you could easily push the tool past the edge of the stone, causing you to mar the side of the tool, scrape your knuckles, or damage the edge of the stone. Tormek has thoughtfully included two safety stops that mount on either side of the Universal Support to prevent sliding off the edge. One of the stops is adjustable along the arm of the Universal Support to accommodate various tool widths. Very effective.



Flatten the back of a chisel or plane blade in no time

Because of the massive size of the grindstone, and its slow rotation, you can use its side to flattening the back side of a chisel or plane blade. You don't need to flatten the whole back, just the 1/2" or so closest to the cutting edge. Unless the back is severely deformed the whole process should take no more than two or three minutes.



Side-to-side with moderate pressure does the job

Sharpening is very easy on the T-8. The key is moderate downward pressure, allowing the grindstone to do the work, and constant side-to-side movement, to prevent grinding a belly in the wheel. Unless you're grinding a new bevel, the process goes surprisingly quickly, and best of all, there is no guesswork – the results are consistently stellar.





Dependable results

I've had the opportunity of using the T-8 over an eight week period, and I'm very satisfied with its performance. It's a durable, maintenance-free machine that is easy to use, and gives consistently excellent results. And, it has a wide range of accessories that can handle just about any specialized sharpening task you might need.

Sharp tools make for easier, more accurate and more enjoyable woodworking – they require much less effort to use, and the cuts they make are more precise, crisper, and cleaner. If you're looking for an efficient sharpening system that will minimize your time sharpening, yet produce perfect results every time, then you'll want to consider the Tormek T-8.

KEY FEATURES:

- Size: 10-5/8" W x 10-5/8" D x 12" H
- Motor: 115V, industrial grade, 25,000 hour life
- Wheel Speed: 90 RPM
- Grindstone: 2" x 10", aluminum oxide
- Honing Wheel: 1-1/4" x 8-5/8", leather
- Housing: Cast zinc, ABS sides
- Weight: 32.6 pounds
- Warranty: 7-Year (when registered)
- Includes: Water Trough, Water Chute, Trough Scraper, Square Edge Jig (SE-77), Truing and Dressing Tool (TT-50), Stone Grader (SP-650), AngleMaster (WM-200), Leather Wheel Conditioning Oil, Honing Compound (PA-70), Handbook, and DVD

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| COMPANY: | Tormek |
| MODEL: | T-8 |
| PRICE: | \$849.99 |
| MADE IN: | Sweden |
| SOURCE: | Distributor: Big Bear Tools Other Retailers |

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