Dowel Making Jig: Router Guide for 1/4 to 1-Inch Dowels

Dowel making jig setups turn offcuts into round dowels in the shop, and the size range is practical: the Veritas system cuts 1/4 inch to 1 inch diameters in 1/16 inch steps from any species with a drill and socket, according to Veritas material accessed November 2026. The classic shop version mounts a hardwood arm with coaxial guide blocks over an inverted router, chucks a square blank in a hand drill, and spins it across a straight bit, according to Highland Woodworking in 2000, checked November 2026. Birch blanks and sharp cutters give consistent results without tear-out, according to Woodgears material accessed November 2026.

How Does a Dowel Making Jig Cut Round Dowels?

Dowel making jig router arms guide a drill-spun blank across a straight bit with 1-1/2 inch hardwood blocks, according to Highland Woodworking in 2000, checked November 2026. The arm holds coaxial infeed and outfeed guides while a farther steady block stops long dowels from whipping, according to Highland Woodworking in 2000, checked November 2026. Highland Woodworking wrote "the jig works like a charm" on its dowel jig page in 2000. The same controlled feed and caliper checks appear in how we test.

What Blank Size Does a Dowel Making Jig Need?

Dowel making jig infeed holes suit the blank diagonal, such as 9/16 inch for 3/8 inch dowels, according to Highland Woodworking in 2000, checked November 2026. A 3/8 inch example multiplies 0.375 by 1.414 to get 0.530, so the next common bit is 9/16 inch at 0.5625 inch, according to Highland Woodworking in 2000, checked November 2026. Rip a test blank near 7/16 inch square and trim until it turns freely without play, according to Highland Woodworking in 2000, checked November 2026, using the rip and fit logic also used for a table saw tenon jig.

1. Plane straight-grained stock and ease corners before spinning, following Rockler guidance of July 27, 2020, checked November 2026.
2. Size the infeed hole from the blank diagonal and hold the outfeed hole at finished diameter, including 0.020 inch over blanks with a 1/4 inch roundover for 3/8 inch dowels, according to Woodgears, accessed November 2026.
3. Wax guide holes with a rag and bevel the steady-block mouth for easy entry, following Highland Woodworking in 2000, checked November 2026.

Which Router Setup Does a Dowel Making Jig Use?

Dowel making jig router tables pair half-round bits with stock planed to 1/2 inch for 1/2 inch dowels, according to Rockler on July 27, 2020, checked November 2026. A 1/8 inch radius bit cuts 1/4 inch dowels and a 3/16 inch radius bit cuts 3/8 inch dowels, according to Rockler on July 27, 2020, checked November 2026. Start with twice the stock needed for setup and tests, using straight defect-free boards, according to Rockler on July 27, 2020, checked November 2026.

Setup | How it cuts | Best use

Router-arm jig with drill | Straight bit shaves spinning blank (Highland, 2000) | Odd sizes from scrap
Chisel block jig | Angled chisel tangent to outfeed hole (Woodgears, Nov 2026) | Small batches from scrap
Half-round bit table | Paired passes form full round (Rockler, July 2020) | Repeat common shop runs

How Does a Dowel Making Jig Fit Standard Drilling Practice?

Dowel making jig chisel blocks cut a 40 cm dowel in about five seconds in shop use, according to Woodgears, accessed November 2026. Finished birch dowels near 0.375 inch ran 0.002 inch under typically with worst 0.005 inch under and none over, according to Woodgears, accessed November 2026. Space holes 5 to 8 inches apart in 1/2 inch stock and 5 to 10 inches apart in 3/4 inch stock, according to Kreg Tool of May 8, 2025, checked November 2026, with alignment logic shared by a mortising jig.

Dowel Making Jig FAQ

What wood works best in a dowel making jig?

Straight hardwood with grain works best in a dowel making jig, and birch blanks spin with little tear-out, according to Woodgears, accessed November 2026. Shops keep blanks straight and knot-free and taper the lead end to reduce jams, according to Woodgears, accessed November 2026. For 1 inch stock, space holes 8 to 10 inches apart, according to Kreg Tool of May 8, 2025, checked November 2026.

How accurate is a dowel making jig for furniture dowels?

A dowel making jig holds furniture tolerances when blanks fit snug, and birch 3/8 inch dowels finish near 0.375 inch with typical 0.002 inch under and worst 0.005 inch under, according to Woodgears, accessed November 2026. Snug infeed fit stops chatter and jams, according to Woodgears, accessed November 2026. Shops sand lightly and check each batch with calipers before assembly, following Kreg Tool guidance of May 8, 2025, checked November 2026.

Can a dowel making jig replace store-bought dowels?

A dowel making jig replaces store dowels when species or size matters, and half-round bits cover 1/4 inch and 3/8 inch shop sizes, according to Rockler of July 27, 2020, checked November 2026. The same bit family also cuts 1/2 inch dowels from matching stock, according to Rockler of July 27, 2020, checked November 2026. Shops drill matching holes and test-fit scrap before glue, following Kreg Tool guidance of May 8, 2025, checked November 2026.

Is a dowel making jig the same as a doweling jig?

A dowel making jig differs from a doweling jig: the first cuts dowel stock while the second guides a drill for joint holes, according to Kreg Tool of May 8, 2025, checked November 2026. Size joint dowels at one-third to one-half wood thickness and drill each hole to half dowel length plus glue space, according to Kreg Tool of May 8, 2025, checked November 2026.