

Want to Go Fast? Put in the Stops

Version 2

By R. G. Sparber

Copyright protects this document.¹



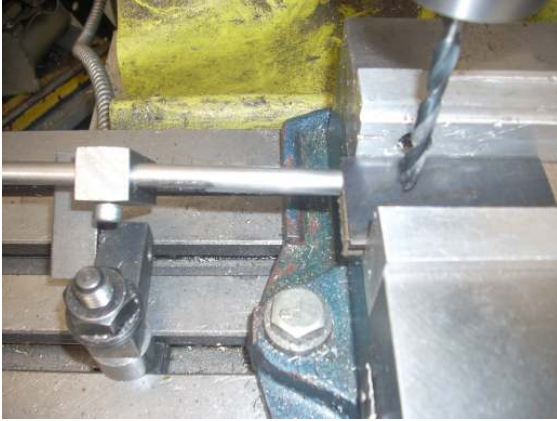
If you only need to cut one piece of strap, it is no big deal to measure it on the saw and cut. But what if you need 22 pieces? The task quickly becomes tedious and finding shortcuts becomes a priority. The answer is often to set a stop. My saw has such a stop and it sure can be handy. The parts will come out almost identical and only the first one is measured. I am also cutting 4 pieces at a time.

Note the V block clamped on the bar that supports my stop.



This V block sets the distance of the stop from the part being cut while permitting the stop to swing out of the way before cutting starts. Leaving the stop in place can cause jamming of the part against the saw blade which can cause unwanted shop excitement.

¹ You are free to copy and distribute this document but not change it.



After cutting this strap, I needed to drill a hole on the centerline and 3/4" from each end. This is another good place for a stop. This stop is homemade and bolts into a T-slot. I am holding the strap in my vise so the fixed jaw is another stop. And finally, I put down a strip of Medium Density Fiberboard that is slightly narrower than the strap. It lets me support the part yet not damage my vise.

With this arrangement, the hole will always be drilled at the same location on each part.

Glenn of the yahoo group mill_drill suggested placing a piece of cardboard against the movable jaw in order to securely clamp a stack of parts in the vise at the same time. Although not part of the subject of stops, it is such a good trick; I just didn't want to lose it. Without the cardboard, the widest piece would be firmly clamped and the rest would be loose.

Instead of cardboard, I used a piece of MDF and it worked fine. I was able to stack 4 pieces at a time.



It is a simple matter to drop in the part, press it against the end stop and fixed jaw, tighten the vise, start the machine, drill the first hole, stop the machine, loosen the vise, and flip the part around. Then start the machine and drill the second hole.



Even this simple fixture only makes sense if more than a few parts are to be made. Then it really speeds up the work and provides a high degree of consistency.

I have offered two examples of where stops are useful. Keep your eyes open for other opportunities. They will speed things up.

Acknowledgements

Thanks to JRW of the yahoo group valley metal plus to Jim of the mill_drill group for pointing out that the stop on my bandsaw should not contact the material during cutting. Thanks to Glenn of the mill_drill group for suggesting the use of cardboard to permit the secure clamping of a stack of parts in a vise.

I welcome your comments and questions. All of us are smarter than any one of us.

Rick Sparber
Rgsparber@aol.com