

Eliminator RC Quick Change Chuck

Reviewed By: Jack Loganbill
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Introduction

Installing cutters in our DW625 router, equipped with the Woodrat Plunge-Bar and mounted to the Woodrat, drives me crazy. It is not a show-stopper, but it does detract from the fun of using the Woodrat.

The Woodrat Plunge-Bar (chipsfly.com #14-110, \$35.00) is an essential feature for Woodrat router work. However, it hinders access to the router collet (see image to the right). Furthermore, the router is mounted to the Woodrat router plate, and the router plate is somewhat captive to the Woodrat base plate making the task to install cutters even more difficult.



In the Woodrat demonstration video, Martin Godfry changes cutters without any muss or fuss using a quick-change chuck that is evidently no longer available. Suffice it to say, I have uttered a few expletives under my breath while changing cutters as I thread my hands through the Plunge-Bars trying to hold the bit, push in the spindle-lock, and turn a wrench.

I have seen the Eliminator RC (ERC) quick-change chuck advertised for several years but had the following concerns:

Would the ERC chuck extend lower than the standard collet and nut, reducing the router's plunge depth range?

Was cutter held in place with a hex screw tightened against the cutter's shaft?

Would the chuck increase cutter run-out?

Could the chuck hold the cutter tight enough so that it would not slip?



I spoke at length with Lewis Stepp (chipsfly.com) about my concerns and he quickly dispelled them. So I ordered the unit from Lewis.

My concerns were completely erased once I had the unit in hand and installed on our DeWalt 625 router. Since I am reviewing the Woodrat (I know, long over due), Lewis sent me the Eliminator RC chuck without charge. However, in case you believe a freebie swayed my review, I am budgeting to purchase two more Eliminator RC chucks.

[Eliminator RC Chuck \\$52 \(Chipsfly.com #32-190\)](#)

[T-handle 5/32" Hex Driver \\$3.50 \(Chipsfly.com #32-290\)](#)

[1/2" to 1/4" Collet Reducer \\$10.50 \(Chipsfly.com #32-270\)](#)

Special thanks to Lewis Stepp of ChipsFly.com for providing the Eliminator RC for our use and this review.

First Impressions

The ERC chuck nut and threads are well-machined and the cutter tightening mechanism work smoothly.

It is a bit heavier than the standard chuck and collet combination, and I was concerned that having the hex screw mounted off-center would result in some run-out or vibration. However, if you look closely, the body is hollowed-out across from the hex screw, evidently to balance the chuck.



The ERC chuck is longer than the stock chuck, but did not appreciably reduce the depth range of the DW625 plunge router.

I also noticed that the hex screw (as Lewis explained) does not press or tighten directly against the shank of the cutter. Rather it tightens a ring arrangement to hold the cutter in place.

The ERC chuck was packed with a stamped-steel wrench that is used to install or uninstall the chuck.



Installation and Setup

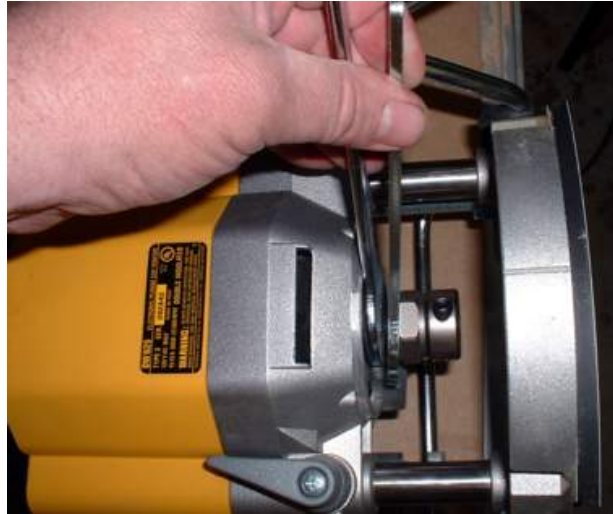
Installation went smoothly and took less than 5 minutes. Here is the process:

Remove the stock chuck/collet combination.

Thread the Eliminator RC chuck on to the router spindle.

Use two wrenches to tighten the Eliminator RC chuck. Do not use the spindle-lock to hold the router spindle when tightening the chuck.

I checked for vibration and run-out. There was none, so the installation was complete. However, if you experience excessive vibration, the chuck includes instructions to test for it and reduce it.



Using the Eliminator RC Quick-Change Chuck

I still have some difficulty inserting long cutters into the chuck with the DeWalt 625 router installed on the Woodrat. However, tightening or loosening the chuck is indeed a simple, one-handed affair. No need to lock the spindle and wrestle with the DeWalt 22mm wrench. And the shaft on the T-handle Hex Driver extends beyond the Plunge-Bar mechanism! Once you use this chuck, you will want it on every router you own, or at least those you use on a daily basis.

I installed the longest 1/4" shaft, straight cutter and 1/2" to 1/4" collet reducer from the Woodrat cutter set and observed no run-out or slippage.



The only concern I have (I plan to call Lewis for advice) is just how tight you must tighten the hex screw. I found I could tighten the screw way beyond what was perhaps necessary.

Remember that the 1/2" collet requires collet reducers for cutters with 1/4", 8mm, and 3/8" diameter shafts. Woodrat dealers sell the 1/2" to 1/4" reducer. Leigh sells 1/2" to 8mm reducers. For the record, I prefer the [Woodrat reducer](#). Its slots run almost the entire length of its body, it is longer than most reducers, and it is reversible--you can insert it from either end (no flange on bottom end).

Note: Chipsfly.com will offer a 1/4" sleeve, similar in design to the WoodRat version. It is currently being tested and should be available in a few months.

I purchased the T-handle 5/32" Hex Driver (chipsfly.com #32-290). It works very well and is long enough to pass through the Woodrat plunge-bar mechanism. It has a soft, rubberized non-slip grip. I dedicate this driver exclusively for the Woodrat. You might also consider a ball-end 5/32" driver, as it will allow you to tighten/loosen the hex screw at an angle.



What I Like About the Eliminator RC Quick-Change Chuck

Very nicely machined from quality steel. Heavy, but did not increase run-out or vibration.

Allen screw does not tighten against the shaft of the cutter.

Does not reduce depth range of plunge router.

Very easy and quick to install.

The T-handle 5/32" Hex Driver is long enough to pass through the Woodrat plunge-bar mechanism. Consequently, I don't have to thread my hand and wrench through the Plunge-bars!

What I Don't Like About the Eliminator RC Quick-Change Chuck

The chuck was easy to install, but the instructions for avoiding vibration are a bit tedious. I'm glad I experienced no vibration or run-out.

I have no idea how tight to tighten the chuck.

The Bottom Line

After installing and testing the Eliminator RC quick-change chuck, I completely agree with the following marketing statement:

The Eliminator RC quick-change chuck allows you to change bits in 5 to 10 seconds with a simple turn of a 5/32" T-handle hex wrench.

I plan to buy several more to cover our most used routers that require two wrenches. And for Woodrat owners, the Eliminator RC chuck will greatly simplify changing cutters. It certainly has reduced the expletives coming from our shop!

Rating: 4.5 out of 5!

Questions?

If you have questions or comments, [E-Mail Me!](#) Or contact Lewis Stepp at [ChipsFly.com](#). [The Woodshop web site](#) offers many more reviews of woodworking tools.



The E...inator

Change Bits in 5...
One-Handed Bit Change
No Need for 2 Large W...
No More Nicking of Fing...

1/2"



32-290 5/32" T-handle Hex Driver
Recommended with Eliminator Quick Change Chuck



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