

Woodworking Magazine Weblog

New Source for Wooden Vise Screws

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One of my favorite things about the Holtzapffel Workbench I built for [Issue 8](#) of *Woodworking Magazine* is the monster twin-screw vise with wooden vise screws. The wooden screws move the vise's chop quickly, engage the work firmly and are quite durable.

Plus, they're wood. And I like wood.

Now there's a new source of wooden vise screws that I can heartily recommend after inspecting the finished product this weekend. Woodworker Joe Comunale of Romeo, Mich., has started a new business called [BigWoodVise.com](#) to sell vise screws, nuts and handles for woodworking benches.

While I was teaching a couple classes at the Sterling Heights, Mich., Woodcraft, Joe stopped by the store to show me the screws, which he has been selling for some time to friends and fellow woodworkers in the Detroit area.

The screws are as nice as I have seen on any bench. The threads are crisp, with no visible chipping or tear-out along their entire lengths. The hub, which is the large end piece on the end of the screw, is finished as well as any piece of furniture. One style of hub that Joe makes, which he calls the "Classic" style, has crisp black lines burned into the hub.

The screws he sells come with the matching nut, the handle and round ball-shaped caps for the ends of the handle. The two nuts I tried moved smoothly and rapidly on the screws and showed very little slop in the



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mechanism. Joe says he wants to tighten up the fit of the nuts on the thread, but I think they're great as-is.

His vise screws attach to your vise's wooden chop with a garter system. Garter systems confuse many woodworkers who have never seen them, but they are really quite simple. The job of the garter is to secure the chop to the screw so that the chop will move out when you retract the screws.

The garter itself is a small piece of wood that is mortised into the chop of your vise and held in place with friction. One end of the garter nests into a groove in the screw.

The 2"-diameter, 2 threads-per-inch screws from BigWoodVise.com are made from ash. The handles I inspected were made from maple.

Joe has just launched his web site recently and is having a "March Madness" sale that ends March 31. So if you are in the market for vise screws, you might want to place your order soon. The "Classic" vise screw, nut and handle are on sale for \$99 for each set this month – the regular price is \$150 for each set.

This business is a side job for Joe, who is a mechanical engineer, but he plans to keep several screws in stock and promises (at most) a four-week delivery time. He also is happy to do custom work if you have something special in mind. Contact Joe at joe@BigWoodVise.com for details.

So if you're tired of getting grease marks on your work from your metal-screw vise, or you are building a bench with an old-school look, then definitely check out these screws from BigWoodVise.com. I don't have any plans for building another bench (where would I put it?), but if I do, I'm definitely going to buy a set of these screws myself.

— *[Christopher Schwarz](#)*

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