INCRA Auto Centering Scale

Before installing any of the INCRA joinery templates in preparation for cutting a dovetail or box joint you must first position your fence so that the router bit is aligned with the center of your board’s width. This can be done using the manual “centering” method described on pages 3-4 of the INCRA Master Reference Guide & Template Library. The manual method does require a trial cut on a scrap of wood but it will work on any width of stock. However, if you are working with a board width that is some multiple of 1/16” you’ll find the INCRA Auto Centering Scale provides a quick and easy way to find the center that requires no trial cuts! Here’s how:

Positioning the Auto Centering Scale

1. Install the router bit recommended for the selected joint pattern and set the depth of cut as described on pages 2-3 of the INCRA Master Reference Guide & Template Library.

2. Zero the fence to your cutter with the router bit behind the fence rather than in front. To do this, slide your fence to cover the router bit (the bit should be inside the notch just slightly behind the front face of the fence) and place your jig in the micro adjust mode. Place a straight board against the fence and micro adjust the fence position until you see the router bit just barely touching the board, Fig 1. Pull the carriage clamp up to lock your jig.

3. Slide the INCRA Auto Centering Scale into one of the scale slots. You’ll notice on the right end of the scale the words “Router Bit Diameter” and an arrow pointing to the following numbers: 1/8, 1/4, 3/8, 1/2, 5/8, 3/4, 7/8, 1. Slide the scale to position the number that matches your router bit diameter directly under the hairline cursor. (Fig. 2)

Using the Auto Centering Scale

Unlock and slide the fence until you see the dimension on the scale that matches your selected stock width directly under the hairline cursor. Lock the fence in place. Example: If you are centering on a 6” wide board, slide your fence until you see the 6” mark on the Auto Centering Scale under the cursor and lock the jig in place. Now slide your joinery template into one of the scale slots, position the suggested center cut mark directly under the hairline cursor and you are ready to cut the joint.

Note: Your Auto Centering Scale has marks on the top edge that are closer together than the marks on the bottom edge. When reading the scale, each mark along the top represents 1/16” of board width. Each mark along the bottom edge represents 1/8” of board width.