

Groz #5 (Jack) Plane Review

Purchased the Groz #5 Jack plane from Woodcraft (web) and had it shipped to me in Jan. 2012. At that time, Woodcraft had the Groz planes on clearance and the #5 was \$17.99 (plus \$7.50 for shipping).

Out of the box:

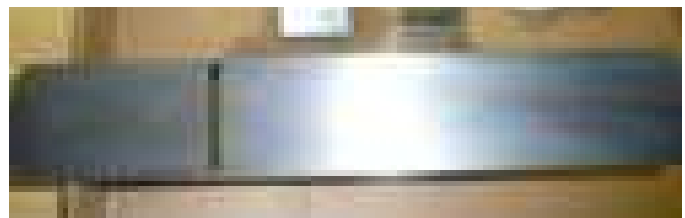
I had hoped to use the plane right out of the box... so I could do a before and after. However, when the plane arrived it was in a cardboard box with no instructions or paperwork of any kind. In addition, the manufacture had coated the metal to prevent rusting. I have no idea what the coating was but it had to be removed before the plane could be used. (see two picture on the right)



Preparing the plane

I used mineral spirits to remove the coating. It was everywhere (including under the frog).

Once the coating was removed I decided to flatten the sole. I "painted" the sole with a permanent marker and sanded the sole with 100grit sand paper (attached to a granite tile). It took about 60 seconds of sanding to flatten the sole enough that the marker was completely removed. I repeated this same process with 220 grit and 400 grit paper. The result was a very flat and smooth sole (total time about 10 min).



Next I used a small file to remove all burrs from the mouth of the plane. In the corners, under the frog there was some paint that needed to be removed. After “cleaning” the mouth, I also filed lightly on the frog to ensure flatness and secure seating of the frog to plane. (maybe 5 min.)



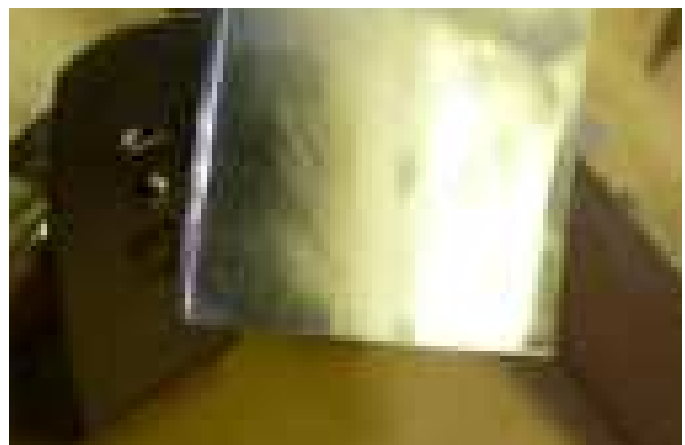
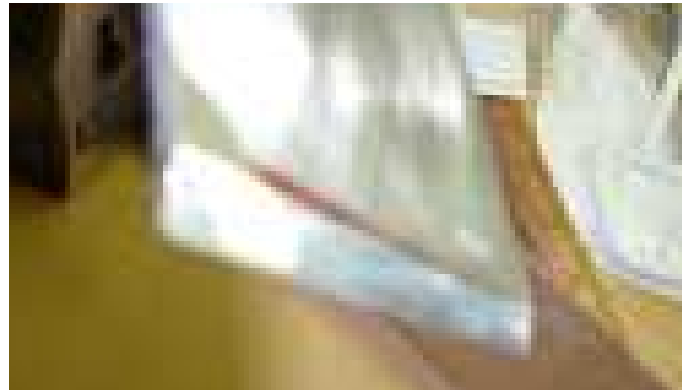
One thing I did not like about the Groz plane was that the screw, positioning the frog relative to the mouth, could not be adjusted with the frog in place. The knob used to adjust blade height was in the way. This forced the user to adjust the frog screw and then install the frog to see if it was ok. If not... pull off the frog adjust the screw and try again. I positioned the frog so that the angle of the mouth and the frog align perfectly.

Sharpening the blade

Woodcraft has a blade sharpening service, but the pictures I saw in some reviews did not impress me. So, my blade arrived without any additional sharpening. (picture to the right) It was sort of sharp, but since it was already off, I decided to sharpen it myself.



I have several granite tiles with different grits of sandpaper adhesively attached to them. Using the “scary-sharp” method, I started at 220grit and went up to 600 grit. (Flattening the back and sharpening the bevel) Sorry that the picture is blurry, but the blade was now had a mirror surface that was sharp enough to shave with. (total time 15 min)



Actual results

After assembly the plane. My first use was on some oak that I had “resawed” down to $\frac{1}{4}$ ” thick using my band saw. The surface of the oak after the band saw was very jagged. With my new Groz plane I was able to quickly clean up the surface so that sanding was optional. (both sides of the cut in picture).



The shavings from the plane were paper thin and the chip breaker did a good job of removing material so the plane never clogged.



Conclusions

I am very pleased with my new plane. The results and quality make we feel like the \$25 and half-hour or “tuning” were completely worth it. I would not hesitate to buy another Groz plane.