

Big Easy Jaws Product Review by Kurt Hertzog

Introduction

If you are familiar with the Easy Wood Tools Easy Chuck, you'll know that one of the nicest features is the quick change mechanism allowing for jaw set changes in only seconds. The chuck body has an assortment of jaw sizes and shapes allowing the user to grip nearly anything. Well, almost anything. The bowl and platter folks didn't really have a way to reverse their near finished work until now. The folks at Easy Wood Tools have just released their Big Easy Jaws and their Big Easy Jaw Extensions. These additions to the Easy Chuck product line fills out the capabilities allowing the turner to have a way to hold just about anything.

Big Easy Jaws

The Easy Wood Tools Big Easy Jaws are their version of jumbo jaws. Generically, jumbo jaws fit on a chuck and have rubber or plastic bumpers that allow the turner to grip the rim of a bowl, platter, or hollow form to hold it safely for working on the other side. The grip isn't intended for heavy work but rather for sanding, light finishing cuts, and finishing. The Big Easy Jaws fit the Easy Chuck bringing that capability to their chuck. Of course, the Big Easy Jaws have the same quick release system that makes the whole chuck product so attractive. With no tools other than pushing the release button with the head of an Allen key, the Big Easy Jaws can be removed allowing for change to any of the other Easy Chuck jaws. The Big Easy Jaws are available in the 12" or the 16" size. Other than maximum opening size, both are identical in function using the same Urethane grippers fashionably provided in equal numbers of yellow and black.

Big Easy Jaw Extensions

If the 16" Big Easy Jaws aren't large enough to hold your work, you can get a set of the Big Easy Jaw Extensions. Easily fastened to the last ring of screw holes in the 16" Big Easy Jaws, the Big Easy Jaw Extensions now take you to 20". Of course the inside and outside gripping capacity are a bit smaller than the size call outs, you are now able to expand into a 19 1/2" opening or contract around an 18" outer diameter. Custom made for those who work on the big stuff. The Big Easy Jaw Extensions are easily removed to get you back to the Big Easy Jaw size.

Conclusions

The Big Easy Jaws and the Big Easy Jaw Extensions add that last missing functionality to the Easy Chuck product line. Now with the "jumbo jaws" available with the quick change capability, the turner can go from beginning to end using one chuck body and the necessary jaw sets. The jaws and extensions are finely made and functioned flawlessly. I really liked the durometer of the urethane bumpers and the colors. Having yellow in addition to the black even made the shop seem brighter although it could have been my imagination. The hole spacing and markings are conveniently done in 1/2" increments for easy adjustment. With the quick change and large range of holding capacity, I think the Big Easy Jaws and the Big Easy Jaw Extensions fill the gap making the Easy Chuck a complete system. Now, there really isn't anything that can't be addressed with one of the jaw sets available from Easy Wood Tools. Finely made in the USA with a money back guarantee make these jaw sets and the entire Easy Chuck product line a top shelf woodturning accessory.



Figure #1: The Big Easy Jaws and the Big Easy Jaw Extensions come packaged nicely in an informative box. All of the necessary instructions are illustrated right on the outside of the box.

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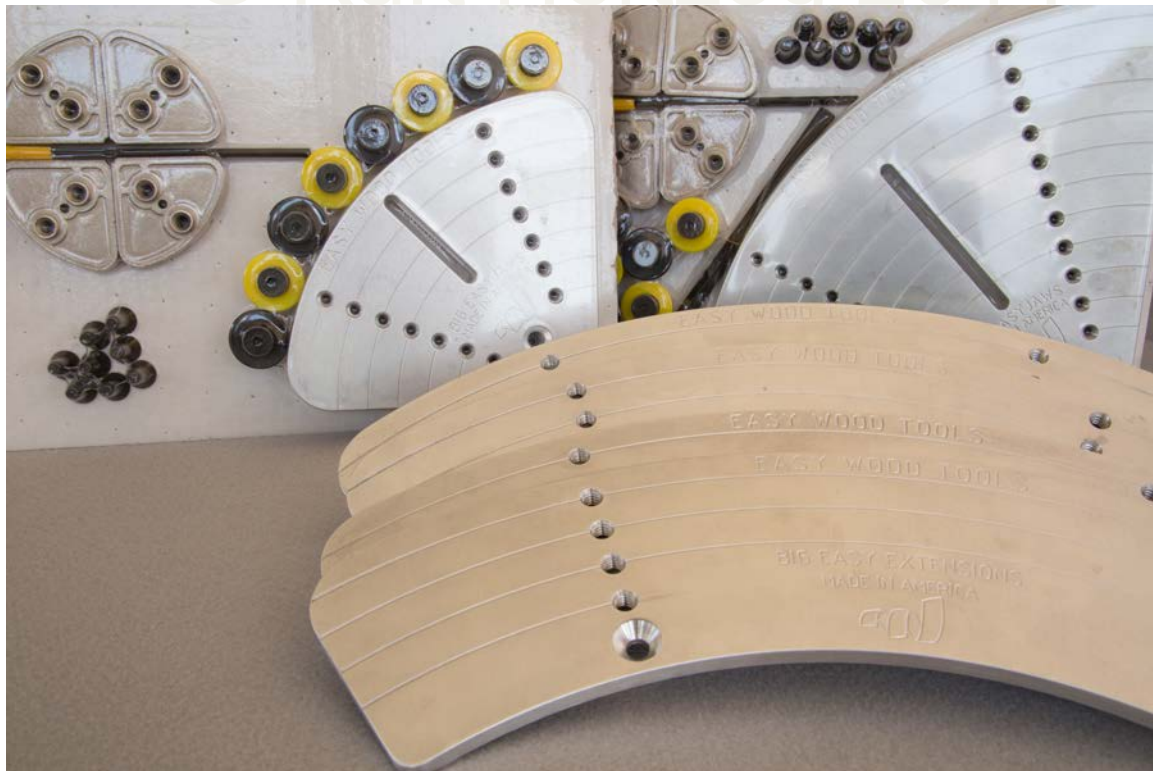


Figure #2: The packaging is well done with the parts shrink wrapped to a card board backing. The 16" jaws thoughtfully include a long Allen key as the original chuck T handle can't reach.

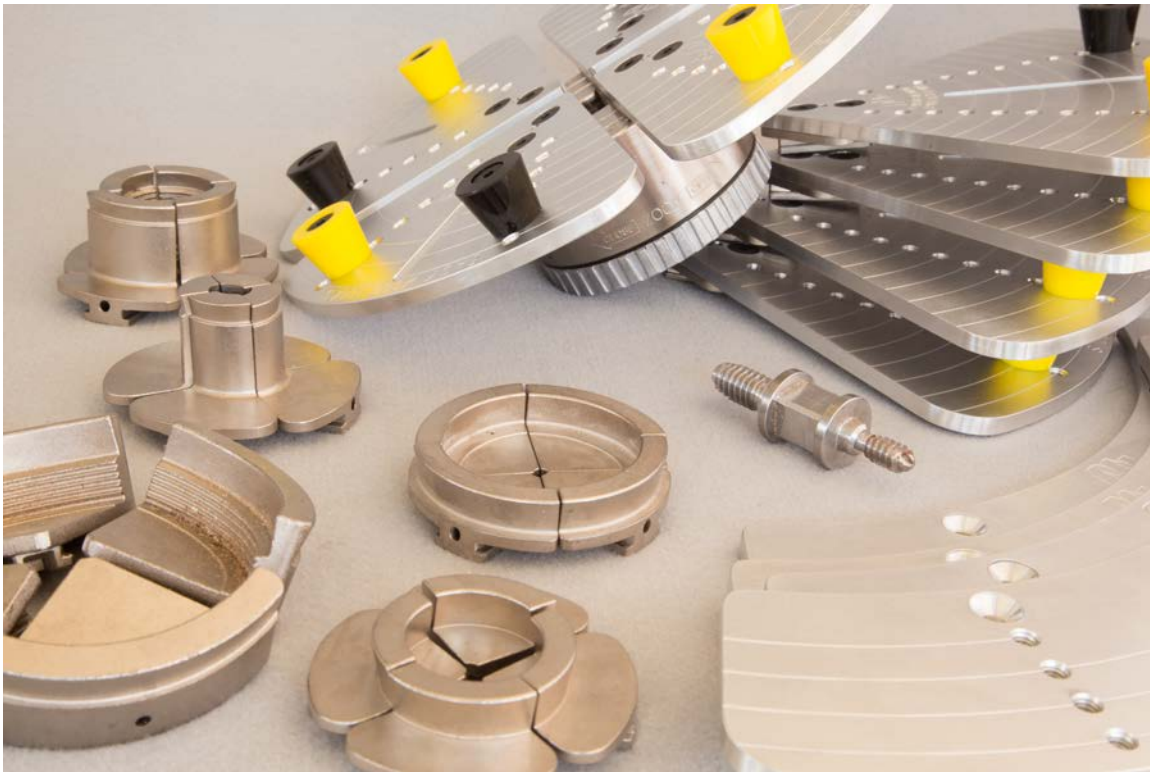


Figure #3: One of the beauties of the Easy Chuck system is the quick change jaws allowing for changeover in seconds. The Big Easy Jaws fit right into the system working identically.

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Figure #4: As delivered, the aluminum jaws need to have the quick release plate mounted using the included screws. After initial assembly, the jaws are ready for use.

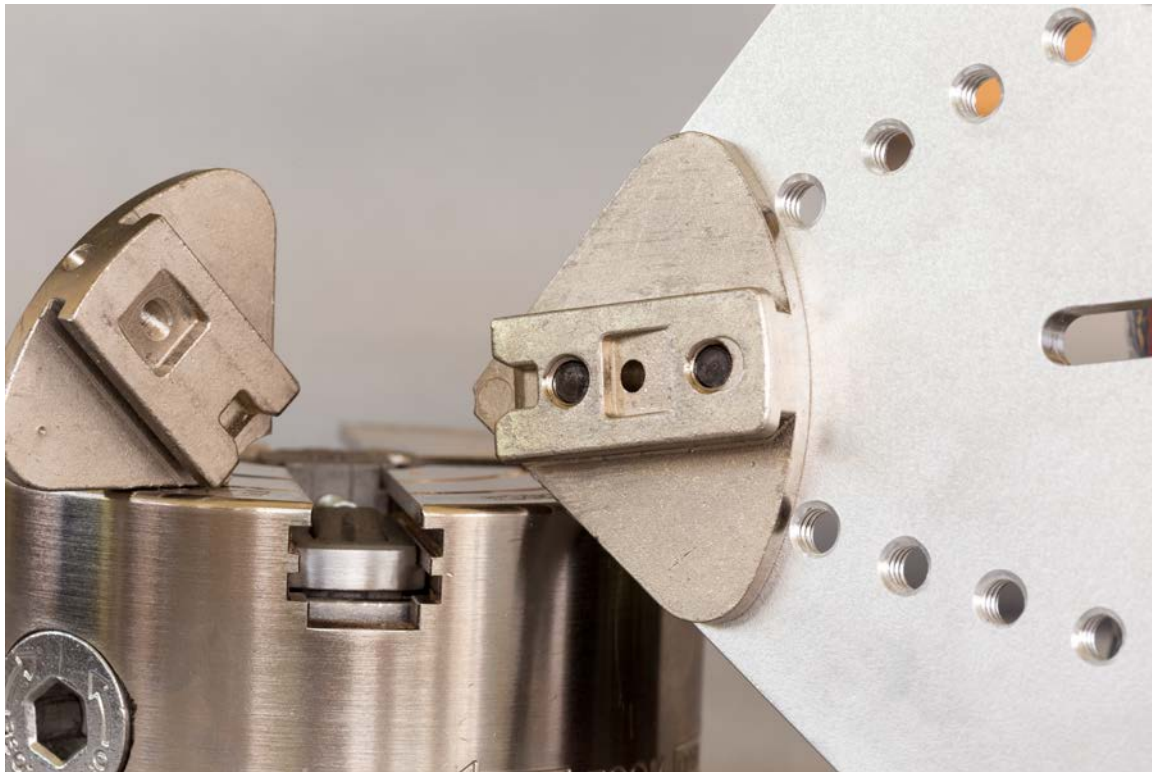


Figure #5: With the release plate added to the aluminum jaw component, the Big Easy Jaws are ready for use. They release exactly as the rest of the jaw sets.

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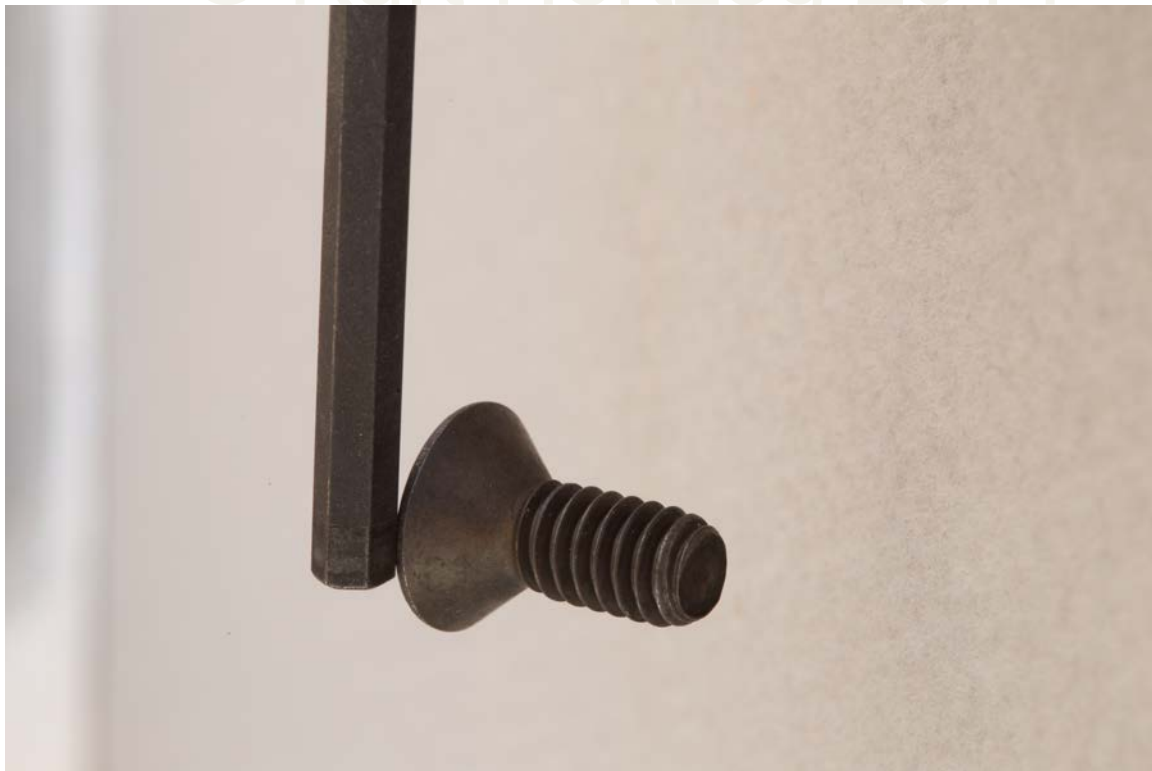


Figure #6: Whether by design or accident, the magnetized T handle wrench made positioning and fastening the screws much easier.



Figure #7: Although the access hole for jaw release is on the front of the jaws as opposed to the underside, they are just as easy and quick to release.

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Figure #8: A simple push through the hole and the jaw is released. All of the jaws are location interchangeable with no special positions required.



Figure #9: With the urethane bumpers in both high visibility yellow and a glossy black, the have steel inserts functioning as compression limiters. The bright yellow adds something cheery.

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Figure #10: The Big Easy Jaws with the Big Easy Jaw Extensions installed gives 18" compression style grip size. In an expansion mode, they hold 19 1/2".



Figure #11: In the shop on my Oneway 24-36. I couldn't find a piece of work large enough to challenge the jaws capacity.

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Figure #12: I had to move the bumpers in a bit and mount the biggest piece of platter work that I had. As expected, they ran true, held well, and worked flawlessly.