

# Must-Have Tool Set FOR THE CHILD IN YOUR LIFE

**Sturdy, kid-safe 4-in-1 woodworking set offers endless fun for under \$120**

By Jon Deck, Magazine Art Director

If the lid of PLAYmake's 4in1 Workshop set, and you'll find an array of bright plastic parts that appear too toylike to be used in a workshop. Once assembled, though, it surprises with its rugged capabilities.

Powered by a 12-volt motor, the set's lathe, sander, jigsaw, and drill press can produce endless wooden shapes from softwood dowels and plywood blanks. With adult supervision, according to the package, children as young as four can safely operate these woodworking tools.

The tools are anchored by a pair of heavy plastic bases that provide a solid track for mounting and adjusting the motorized components. I secured the bases to a piece of ¾" (1.9cm) particleboard using the screws included in the set. PLAYmake provides an illustrated wordless manual that gives easy and ample instructions for configuring each tool. The motor and components are brilliantly designed to serve all four tools.



My grandson, Ben, gives the lathe a spin.

The PLAYmake 4in1 Workshop Manufactured in Austria by The Cool Tool. \$109 + S&H 4in1workshop.com

### Contents:

- 2 machine beds
- Tailstock
- Motor drive unit
- Jigsaw
- Drill
- Drilling and sanding table
- Sanding disc
- Tool rest
- 12V safety adaptor
- Screwdriver
- Gouge
- Detailed instructions, plans, and suggestions
- Wood for turning and sawing
- Child-sized safety goggles



ON THE WEB Find a video of kids using all four PLAYmake tools. scrollsawer.com

### Jigsaw

The jigsaw performs exactly like a scroll saw, and can even cut inside frets. But there's an added bonus. The short strokes of the vibrating blade make smooth cuts in wood but *will not injure skin*. Cuts are a bit slower, but patience in cutting is a great lesson for budding scrollers.



### Sander

The rotary sander sands fast and clean—just like the real thing. Young woodworkers can smooth the edges of their jigsaw creations, and learn how to perfect their cuts by sanding up to the line of a pattern.



### Lathe

The lathe was exceptional. Once running, it easily turned smooth ribbons and cut sharp and rounded details into the spindle. The motor held its speed and only bogged slightly when pushed hard.



### Drill Press

The drill press worked effectively despite being slightly unintuitive—as it doesn't mimic the action of real shop tools as closely as the others do. Twisting a knob to raise and lower the bit feels a bit unnatural, but given the scale of the machine, a hard crank might have been overkill.



### Conclusion

I brought in my nine-year-old grandson, Benjamin, to try his hand at the lathe, a tool that he hasn't seen in my home workshop. I wondered if—at his ripe old age—he might find it boring. He thoroughly enjoyed it, describing the setup as "awesome" and "a lot of fun."

If you've got a kid in your life that could benefit from a little sawdust, this is a great and safe way to bond in your workshop. It won't be long before they'll be making small projects. And, the PLAYmake has an amazing five-year warranty on all parts, except expendables. The 4in1 Workshop could last until your child is using *your* tools. What other toy can compare to that?

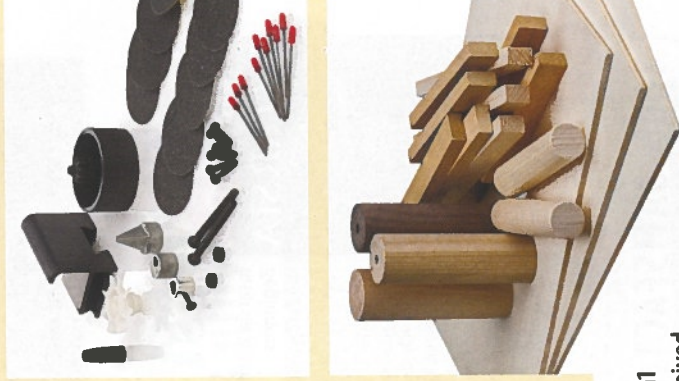
The PLAYmake 4in1 Workshop, accessories, and replacements for parts and expendables are available through many online retailers. The Cool Tool also offers the Unimat 1 Classic Woodworking Kit for model-makers.

### Replacing Expendables

The workshop set comes with a modest supply of dowels, plywood blanks, and sanding discs. Kids on a learning curve can cut through a pile of these in a short time.

PLAYmake offers a service set of 10 jigsaw blades, 10 sanding discs, and various lathe parts for \$16.95. There's also an available package of 12 thin and five thick dowel blanks for \$19.95. I recommend the service set, if for nothing more than the jigsaw blades.

These low-cost options make it easy to keep cranking out projects without breaking a sweat or the bank.



The PLAYmake 4in1 Workshop has received the Tillywig Toy Award for excellence.