

Cheap Parallels for the Mill Vice – Mike Brown

I came across this handy tip recently in an American publication and I thought it deserved a wider audience. Machine vice parallels are readily available, but they are not cheap. The following provides a low cost alternative.



The material forming the black “snake” in the photo is the steel banding often found on heavy packages, timber, etc, and usually thrown away. I know I have several bits tucked away (just in case), if only I could find them! The use is obvious, bend up a suitable length and press whatever you are machining onto it for the object to be supported parallel to the vice base, then tighten the vice. It may not be an accurate substitute for precision ground parallels but it will do a treat for many jobs. I am sure that there are other materials out there that will do the same job, any suggestions?