



HMH Vises Newsletter

June 2009

HMH JAWS!

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Featured Product

HMH JAWS

Micro

Greetings!

In this issue of the HMH Newsletter I want to focus on jaws. After all, the jaw of a fly tying vise, its shape, holding power, the materials its made from and how it's made are really what a tying vise is all about.

HMH with its interchangeable jaw options (Micro, Omni and Magnum) offers the fly tyer the best of all jaw types. All of our traditional style vise models (SX, Spartan and Standard) offer this interchangeable jaw feature. The shape and profile of all three jaw styles are carefully designed to optimize access to any hook design for effortless tying.

Jaw Features

- Through-hardened chrome-moly tool steel
- Best access to any hook
- Change jaws without tools in seconds
- 30+ years of proven dependability
- Guaranteed for Life

Please see our new HMH Jaw video for an overview of the three jaw types that HMH offers, when to use each jaw and how to properly mount hooks in each.



Omni



Magnum



New HMH Jaw Video!

In our newest video we give an overview of the three jaw types that HMH offers, when to use each jaw and how to properly mount hooks in each.

[HMH Vises Jaw Video](#)

Join in on the Fun!

The HMH Fly Tying Forum!

<http://hmvises.com/board/index.php>

Want to connect with other fly tying

HMH Vises Jaw Video

Which HMH jaw is best for me?

Omni Jaw

If you tie flies ranging mostly in size from #16 to 4's or 6's, the Omni jaw is perfect for you. Its tapered nose gives you excellent access to the smaller hooks; for larger and longer hooks, the Omni gives you plenty of steel towards the rear of the jaw to get a strong grip. The Omni's gape will accept 2/0 and some 3/0 or even 4/0 hooks, depending on the degree to which the manufacturer flattens the hook wire at the bend. At the other extreme, if you occasionally tie flies down to 20 or smaller, the Omni is still very good because it's small nose gives you plenty of access to those hooks for tying.

Micro Jaw

If you tie a lot of flies #20 or smaller, or if you tie small hooks for extended tying session, then you should seriously consider the Micro jaw. The Micro's needle nose is perfect for holding small hooks and gives you better access to the tiniest hooks than any other jaw on the market. It is a specialized small hook jaw and will make those tiny midge patterns much easier to tie. Please note: do not use the Micro jaw for hooks larger than #18. The Micro is not designed for larger hooks, and clamping larger hooks in the Micro could 'spring' the jaw, and will void the guarantee.

Magnum Jaw

If you tie mostly large patterns, whether for salt or freshwater, or are tying lots of large streamers, deer hair flies, etc., even on hooks as small as 10's or 12's, then you should own the Magnum. The serrated Magnum has a huge gape and will accept hooks up to 10/0. At the other end of the scale, it's slightly rounded profile still makes it easy to access and tie on hooks as small as #10, #12 or even #14 depending on hook style.

The myth of hook size ratings for jaws.

Don't be fooled by hook size ratings for jaws. Hook ranges specified by most manufacturers are general guidelines. Almost every jaw out there is rated for hooks down to #32. But think about it. Obviously, you can solidly clamp even the tiniest hook in virtually any jaw. But a vise and a jaw must let you get to the hook once it's clamped up tight, otherwise you might as well be using a monkey wrench.

enthusiast? Want to share recipes or learn how to tie a certain fly pattern? We do too! Help our new HMH Fly Tyer's Forum get off to a great start by posting questions, comments, pictures, recipes, etc. Collectively we can take our knowledge and skill to a whole new level.

If you have any suggestions regarding our new forum, we're all ears. We look forward to reading your posts.

Help spread the word by telling your fly tying friends....

HMH Video Links

[How to get the most from your HMH Vise](#)

[Using the HMH Tube Tool](#)

[HMH Vise Jaw Options](#)

[HMH Vises 360 degree rotation](#)

[Pete Gray's Dual Tube Flies](#)

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So, don't rely simply on the hook ratings for how small a hook a jaw will accept. Instead, look for several things. First, the jaw profile: will the shape of the jaw actually let you get your fingers close in to the hook so that you can position materials easily? Is the jaw so massive side-to-side that you'll have the same problem? Second, look at the length of the jaw. Does it extend far enough away from the rest of the vise and its component parts so they won't interfere with tying? And third, look at overall vise design - the jaw may be just fine, but are there vise components that are placed close to the jaw or that otherwise might interfere with easy hook access?

When we rate the Omni to #20, we mean that you can comfortably tie #20's all day long in the Omni. You can tie #32's, too, but those would be a lot easier in the Micro.

Flat, Serrated, Grooves, or Slots?

The HMH Omni and Micro jaws are smooth on their inside faces. The Magnum is serrated throughout the length of the inside face. The recent fad, however, is to build jaws with grooves or slots or 'hook pockets'. Which is better?

First, bear in mind that HMH jaws have been holding hooks for production tyers, professional tyers, and regular tyers like you for more than 30 years. Hundreds of production tyers for major fly tying houses since 1994 tie literally millions of #32 to 6/0 hooks each year on the HMH Omni, Micro, and Magnum jaws. Those companies wouldn't keep replacing their other vises with HMH interchangeable jaw vises unless the vises worked well, and lasted a long time.

Hooks today come in many different shapes, wire diameters, and lengths. Simply put, hook pockets limit where you can put a hook -- you must put the hook in the pocket all the time, and although the pocket may be positioned just right for one style of hook, it may not be quite right for many others. And, if you're not going to put all those other hooks in the pocket, then you might as well have a jaw without hook pockets. We at HMH would much rather let you choose where you position the hook in the jaw so that you can tie more efficiently, and as a result, tie better flies faster.

Don't get us wrong -- we agree that hook pockets in a jaw can hold a hook well. But designing hook pockets into a hook is a relatively easier solution to building a jaw than paying attention to such things as cross-sectional shape, jaw profile, length, and length to mass ratios. We pioneered the concept of interchangeable jaws because it made sense. Our three jaw styles are affordable, and they let you hold any hook securely, with elegance, and with better access to any every hook than any other jaw/vise on the market.

How hard do you need to hold a hook anyway?

Simply put, just hard enough so the thread will break before the hook moves. We feel strongly that too much attention is focused these days on 'hook crushing power'.

We can pretzel a 3/0 stainless hook in the smooth-faced Omni Jaw. But there is no need to hold a hook so hard. You can, in fact, damage the hook. And if the hook is too close to the edge of the jaw, you'll shoot it across the room, perhaps injuring an innocent bystander, and chipping your jaw to boot. If you're holding a hook that hard, you're working too hard, and your vise is working too hard.

HMH jaws are designed so that you can place any hook properly in the jaw so that it won't move while you tie, and so you'll have free access to the hook for easy tying. You'll tie better flies with less effort with HMH jaws.

Shooting hooks, or, Proper hook placement in a jaw

An unfortunate consequence of inadequate hook design is that tyers generally place hooks too close to the very tip or the edge of the jaw. Round-nosed jaws, or jaws that are set too close to the rest of the vise make it hard to reach hooks, so to get access to the hook bend, one almost has to place the hooks as far towards the tip as possible. The unfortunate result is that hooks a) fly out of the jaw when pressure is applied because the jaw hasn't been able to grab enough wire to hold it; b) the jaw edge chips, because when the hook flies out of the jaw at hundreds of feet per second, the jaw faces snap back together which such force that the hardened edges chip; or c) the jaw edges will 'roll' -- there is a great deal of pressure bearing on the hook, but the edge of the jaw has the least amount of steel to back it up, so no matter how hard any brand of jaw is, the hook wire will eventually 'wear out' the jaw edge.

We move our hooks all over the jaw depending on the style of hook and what type of pattern we're tying. But we always make sure that no part of the hook is flush with the edge of the jaw, and that there is a distance equal to at least one hook wire diameter between the hook and the jaw edge. (See illustration)

Please ask for HMH Jaws and other HMH products at your favorite HMH Dealer.

[HMH Dealers](#)