

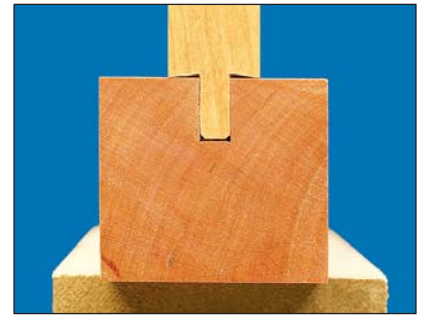
Fitting a Mortise & Tenon Joint

No matter what method you use for making a mortise and tenon joint, there's still a good chance that you will have to do some "fine tuning" to get a perfect fit.

Undercutting The Shoulders. One of the most common problems encountered with a mortise and tenon joint is a gap between the two mating workpieces. This is caused by a shoulder that isn't perfectly square or cut cleanly.

To avoid this problem, I like to undercut the shoulders of the tenon slightly with a chisel. This allows the edges of the tenon to fit tight to the mating workpiece when the joint is assembled, see top photo.

Removing Stepped Shoulders. Another common problem when cutting four-shouldered tenons is a stepped shoulder. If I run into this, I don't try to correct it at my saw. Instead, I come back after and pare them flush with the side shoulders, see bottom photo.



Undercut shoulders for a tighter fit.



Remove stepped shoulders with a chisel.