

# Record Power BS300E

Mid-sized, durable, upgraded - perfect for discerning amateurs

**G**ood Woodworking first looked at the BS300 bandsaw back in GW150, when we gave it a 'recommended'. Afterwards, Record made some improvements and called it the BS300X, since when there've been even more changes resulting in the BS300E, which has been built to hit a particular price point.

One result of this process is that the E has lost the quick-tensioning lever — a feature that's still available on the X and Record's two bigger models, the BS350 and BS500. In its absence, the E reverts to the age-old method of cranking up the tension with a knob. The original internal tension indicator is now positioned at the rear of the saw, and a small tag of steel protrudes through the casing to

read against the scale — a setup that looks remarkably similar to the tensioning system used on my Jet150 bandsaw. It works well enough, but like most tensioning devices it shouldn't be seen as a spot-on guide, and you may need to tweak it slightly to get the blade working at its best.

### Cast iron table

The other noticeable difference between the X and E is the table, which is still cast iron but reduced in size from 550 x 500mm to 480 x 400mm. This isn't a major problem — the bandsaw's cutting ability isn't compromised — but obviously you have less support for the workpiece.

Looking at the cutting side of things, the maximum depth under the guides is 200mm, although it's fair to say that this shouldn't be considered its maximum cut, which Record suggests is 190mm. To be fair on the machine, I'd be inclined to set the maximum ripping depth lower still — say, 170mm. The distance to the throat, meanwhile, is 305mm.

The guides are based on industrial versions, so they have a fine adjustment facility, which means that spanners and hex' keys are unnecessary and makes setting up the saw quick and easy. The guides themselves are cast discs rather than bearings; the thrust

bearing is a similar disc, but does require a hex' wrench to adjust its position.

The lower guides again use cast discs for side support but the thrust bearing is a proper wheel-type bearing, with the blade running along its periphery in what I consider to be the proper orientation to minimise friction. This bearing is micro-adjustable, which again makes it easy to set-up, and is a bonus when you're working in the confined space under the table. In fact, while we're under the table, it's worth mentioning that the tilt adjustment has been upgraded too, the pressed steel rack and pinion having been replaced with a heavier cast one. A dual rack and pinion crescent controls the tilt easily, with 45° on the outboard tilt and 10° inboard if needed.

A peek inside the micro-switched doors of the cabinet reveals the upgraded bandwheels, which are now cast iron instead of cast alloy. Although micro-switched, a hex' key is required to access the cabinet to satisfy new CE legislation which requires tool-only access if a push button negative-type switch is used as it is here.

The lower door has a small crank handle to the side to adjust the speed setting. Two speeds are available, which gives you more scope for working soft metals and plastics as well as timber.

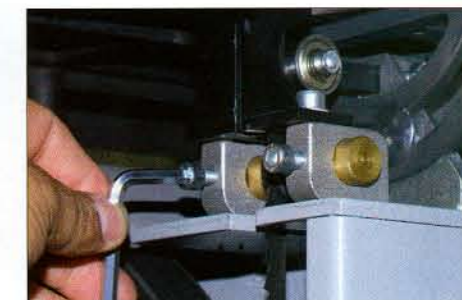
### Fence fix

Testing the saw highlighted an easily rectified problem with the aluminium fence. This is a Startrite design that's robustly made, runs well on its steel rail, and locks firmly. However, the fence is linked to the

sliding adjuster with a couple of cast T-nuts. When making a cut, I found that the fence kept slewing across the table slightly. Closer examination revealed that both of the cast nuts had split — possibly as a result of overtightening at the assembly stage — and so weren't gripping properly. It's something to be aware of should you encounter a similar problem, and a couple of standard hex' nuts or a piece of tapped flat steel will do the same job.



▲ Pic 7: Top side adjusters are micro-adjustable; the thrust roller needs a hex' key



▲ Pic 8: The lower guides need a wrench to adjust the side rollers



▲ Pic 9: Tilting the table is a one handed operation; the small knob above micro-adjusts the thrust roller



▲ Pic 10: Deep ripping wasn't a problem, and once the fence problem was rectified the saw would make veneer rips easily

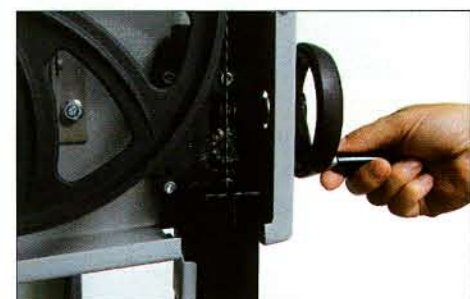
The saw's open leg frame has a simple handle and incorporates a pair of wheels, allowing it to be moved around if necessary. If you need more mobility, a scissor lift-type frame is available for around £50, and would be a good option if you think that you might struggle to lift and walk with the saw's 80kg weight.

Currently on offer at just under £300, the BS300E is a very good saw for the money, with heavy components that promise durability and performance; the rack and pinion adjustments on the table and the height setting post make it very set up. The blade capacities are similar to others in this size range, and the BS300E's 15mm maximum width will cope with light ripping jobs as well as normal crosscut and curved cutting jobs.

With a five-year warranty and Record's aftersales service, this machine is a good mid-sized choice for discerning amateurs or hobby users who want good build quality without having to pay for the odd non-essential extra. If that isn't enough, it currently comes with Alan Holthorn's *Bandsaw Masterclass* DVD as well, which is a great way of learning how to set up and get the most out of your saw.



▲ Pic 11: Built-in wheels allow you to store the saw out of the way



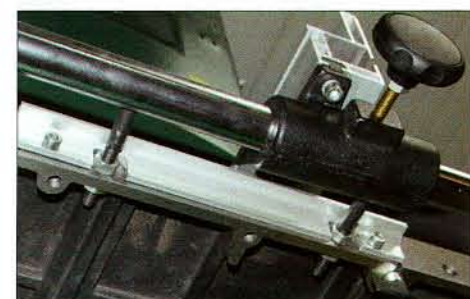
▲ Pic 1: Heavy duty rack and pinion raises and lowers the steel toolpost



▲ Pic 2: This knob sets the blade tension; the spring is pretty substantial



▲ Pic 3: The tension can be read at the back of the saw, the scale indicating blade width



▲ Pic 4: The underside of the fence reveals the heavy bracket and solid steel post



▲ Pic 5: You can see where the small cast brackets have split preventing the fence from locking properly to the casting



▲ Pic 6: Although micro-switched, new legislation means that the doors require a tool to open them

## Good The Woodworking Verdict

+ Good adjustments on guides and table  
- Fence bracket needs a stronger retention method

Rating ★★★★★

Typical Price: £299.99  
Blade length: 2370mm  
Blade width: 6-15mm  
Max depth under guides: 200mm  
Max throat: 305mm  
Speeds: 360 & 780rpm  
Motor: 3/4hp (output)  
Noise: 76 decibels

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