

Adjustable Spanners (Wrenches)

DT Workshop Equipment Reference — D&T / STEM resource for school workshops | Hand Tools



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An adjustable spanner grips hex fasteners of many sizes with a screw-adjusted jaw, fitting in place of a full spanner set in a pocket or tool roll. One good adjustable spanner covers a range of sizes, but it must be set firmly and used on the flats, not corners.

Key Features

- Jaw openings from 15 to 46 mm
- Screw and worm gear adjustment
- Chrome vanadium jaws
- Comfort grips and mirror finishes
- Metric and imperial jaw scales

Typical Uses in the Workshop

- Fit odd-size and imperial fasteners
- General workshop fastening on site
- Emergency repairs without a full set
- Bicycle and machinery adjustments

Safe Operation

1. Open the jaw wider than the nut
2. Slide onto the flats and tighten the worm
3. Pull toward the fixed jaw for grip
4. Re-set the jaw to avoid rounding
5. Do not use on stubborn fasteners with force

SAFETY NOTES

- Never use an adjustable as a hammer
- Keep the jaw firm - loose jaws slip and round nuts
- Do not exceed the tool's rating
- Pull, do not push, where possible
- Check the worm gear is not worn

Maintenance & Consumables

- Oil the worm gear occasionally
- Clean the jaws of scale
- Check the jaw faces for wear
- Store in the tool roll or rack
- Replace worn spanners

Specification & Buying Notes

One quality 250 mm adjustable spanner per bench covers most jobs. Chromium-vanadium steel with a firm jaw beats a cheap loose one. Add a smaller 150 mm for electronics and tight work.