# Flair Woodworks SWITCHER-D Dust Extraction Split

BY CARL DUGUAY

If you've ever used a Y-splitter on a dust extractor or shop vacuum, you probably know the drill. Connect two hoses, fire up the extractor and you're good to go — or so you'd think. The problem is a conventional Y-splitter doesn't really give you control over where that suction goes, as the suction is actually split between two (or more) hoses and tools. That's where the Canadian-made Flair Woodworks' SWITCHER-D takes a different approach.

There are two SWITCHER models. The CT SWITCHER-D, which I tested, is designed specifically for Festool CT dust extractors (the CT 26, CT 36 and CT 48 series). It uses anti-static material, which is appropriate for Festool's anti-static dust-extraction system. The VAC SWITCHER-D is intended for general shop vacuums and dust extractors using nominal 2" (50 mm) hoses. It's made from impact-resistant plastic rather than the anti-static material used for the CT version.

At first glance, these direct-mount suction controllers look just like a compact version of a Y-splitter. But instead of simply dividing the airflow between the two outlets, the SWITCHER-D lets you control exactly how much suction each hose receives.

The idea is pretty simple. A sliding control on the front lets you adjust the airflow from one port to the other. Slide it completely to one side and you get 100% of the available suction at that hose. Move it the other way and the second hose gets it all. Stop somewhere in between and you can divide the airflow however you want – 50/50, 60/40, 80/20 or anywhere else along the way.

In my experience, that flexibility makes a lot of sense in a woodworking shop. Not every tool needs the same amount of airflow. A router or saw can benefit from substantial suction, while a sander may need considerably less. With a standard Y-splitter, the airflow




**Quick Adjustment** – When attached to a dust extractor, the switch between hoses, or even fine-tuning a ratio of suction between the two hoses, takes only a second or so.




**Dial in the Suction** – When the SWITCHER-D is moved all the way to one side, only one of the hoses receives suction. The ratio of what hose receives suction can be adjusted by positioning the slider towards the middle of the unit.

is simply divided between the two connected hoses. If both are open, both are drawing suction, whether you need it or not. Flair's controller lets you put the suction where it's doing the most good.

I also like the fact that you can leave both hoses connected. If I'm moving between two tools, I don't have to unplug one hose, find somewhere to put it and connect the other. I simply slide the control to direct the suction where I need it. That sounds like a small convenience, but anyone who spends time in a busy shop knows how quickly little interruptions add up.

There's another useful application. Some tools, particularly routers, can have more than one dust-extraction port. The SWITCHER-D allows you to connect both ports and adjust the airflow between them.

The compact, direct-mount design is another advantage. Rather than adding a bulky Y-fitting and extra hose length, the SWITCHER-D attaches directly to the front of the dust extractor. The "D" in the name stands for direct and the result is a much tidier setup. The precision taper on the unit provides a secure, tool-free, no-clamp connection.

There are two versions. The VAC SWITCHER-D is made from tough, impact-resistant plastic and works with most shop vacuums and dust extractors using nominal 2" (50 mm) hoses. The CT SWITCHER-D, which I tested, is the anti-static version, designed specifically for Festool CT 26, CT 36 and CT 48 dust extractors, and made from anti-static plastic with stainless-steel fasteners.

For me, the biggest appeal is that the SWITCHER-D is simple, effective and solves a major limitation of the traditional Y-splitter – variable suction control for each hose. That little bit of control makes for better dust collection, less hose swapping and a cleaner, more efficient workflow.

Tester: Carl Duguay
Manufacturer: Flair Woodworks
Model: CT SWITCHER-D / VAC SWITCHER-D
MSRP: CT model: $99; VAC model: $55
Website: FlairWoodworks.com



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