Purpose built Plasma cutter ??

Posted by Rocket - 2008/05/04 04:17

(stollen from my newbie introduction :cheer:)
I'll explain the machine a little that I want to build.

I need a machine to cut (Hi- def. plasma I spose) stainless square tube into little square blocks, but before it does that, it has to cut a hole in one side, a slot in the other side (turned 180 deg.from the hole)then the block cut off. It would have to be self feed & clamping (like a lathe _style_ chuck)
I imagine a 2 axis cutting head will do (but ofcourse there would be a 3rd to set the torch height) and the rotaion of the chuck would turn the tube for each opperation.
I have seen a Trumph machine do exactly this, but on a much larger scale of course & any quotes I've had to do this opperation (in laser anyway) has been more than the retail price of the total item and they still require me to supply the raw materials.

I have absolutely no experience with CNC machine, just the idea I should be able to do it, so on that note any help/advise would be appreciated.

I should also add I currently have parts laser cut & it would be nice to do this in house, though I doubt I'll be able to make a laser machine, I think Hi-Def Plasma might go close to the quality of finish, there fore the little clean up I currently have.

CHEERS.

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Re:Purpose built Plasma cutter ??

Posted by Rocket - 2008/05/12 02:16

Well, I've had a few lookers, but no suggestions yet :(
I still have no idea where to start with this machine & but I'll continue to search this site and take as many of the tutorials as possible. B)

Should I start by deciding what torch I need to run and work back from there to know what size steppers to use etc ???
I've had a lot of trouble researching clamping equipment too :(:(

Any suggestions would be great & possibly a return email from you Ivan would be good.

Thanks,

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Re:Purpose built Plasma cutter ??

Posted by Rocket - 2008/05/19 09:11

Well Another week goes by.....
At least I've been though the video course on CNC basics

(Thank's heaps Ivan B) B)) I now understand a very small amount about cnc now :S :S

With lots of googling and checking out ebay etc I'm finally finding cnc gear, but no actual clamping, rotating assemblies etc to use for my purpose built machine. The closest I've come is a tube accessory for a plasma table , but no auto feed. I figure I should know what I need to run before out buying any steppers etc (though I very nearlly bought a complete kit just to make a start)

If anyone know where I can get clamping/holding gear and cnc stuff in Australia I'd love to know. It's still looking like I'll have to import what I want, even just as the cost is huge for even basic gear here :unsure:

Come on Ivan, I've seen you on line, so a reply from my email would be great :dry:

Sorry, but I've come to this place expecting a little help, being a pure novice. I now think I'll get through the whole site with in another week, so there maybe somehwere else I can hunt for answers.

Please, Please, Please !!

CHEERS GUY's!!

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Re:Purpose built Plasma cutter ??

Posted by Bobo - 2008/05/27 01:48

Hi, how many of these widgets do you want to make? Is manual feed not good enough? As you have seen from the tube cutting and profiling videos on youtube, actually doing the cutting is relatively easy to come by the technology, clamping and autofeeding is the domain of the big boys and their secrets cost money. As you have found out they charge money because they have spent a lot of time and money developing the system. I'm a noobie myself to home cnc operation, though I have worked on industrial automation. Building a clamping and feeding device is relatively simple and Mach will do all the controls, but you are going to have to put in some of your own time to design the system. Auto feeds have been around for a long time, so you should be able to modify an old Ward autolathe to do the job, and with the advent of cnc, they are available for scrap value.

Robin

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Re:Purpose built Plasma cutter ??

Posted by Rocket - 2008/05/27 03:13

Bobo wrote:
Hi, how many of these widgets do you want to make? Is manual feed not good enough? As you have seen from the tube cutting and profiling videos on youtube, actually doing the cutting is relatively easy to come by the technology, clamping and autofeeding is the domain of the big boys and their secrets cost money. As you have found out they charge money because they have spent a lot of time and money developing the system. I'm a noobie myself to home cnc operation, though I have worked on industrial automation. Building a clamping and feeding device is relatively simple and Mach will do all the controls, but you are going to have to put in some of your own time to design the system. Auto feeds have been around for a long time, so you should be able to modify an old Ward autolathe to do the job, and with the advent of cnc, they are available for scrap value.

Robin

Thank you heaps for the feed back Robin.
I'm an absolute novice when it comes to and CNC stuff, though I'm giving it a go at learning as much as possible.
I hadn't thought of using an old lathe (Great thinking B) B))
It has to be auto feed as the "widgets" (I like that :silly:) are only 3/4" when cut from a length of tube.
You are so correct in the cost of the "big boys toys" but I too figured I should be able to do this in small scale only (just a long machine for the tube.
It doesn't have to be auto load, I'd be happy enough to load each tube as need be. I'm not doing high turnover yet (only about 1000 at a time)as it's only early days with this yet. At the moment I cut all the by chop saw,drill the holes in a jig on a press & do the last slot in another little jig mounted in a 4" grinder stand. Lot's of work per 1000 items :ohmy:

Getting back to a lathe. I'd have to find a real long one to be able to use it for this job ?? & how would I have auto clamping on it.
I have NO IDEA where to start with all this, I'll probably buy a as complete as possible steppers, drivers and power source to save me the hassel of trying to learn to much about that side of things at this stage, but I really do need to do this as cheaply as possible (I'm really just trying to put my time to better use, as I can not afford to employ any one yet.

That's great to know Mach will run that stuff.
Is there auto clamping parts available some where (I would love to find it in Oz, but I've found nothing so far :S)
I'm not really sure where to turn for advise, so I've been waiting, hoping someone will be able to help me get sarted, though Im still spending hours on the net trying to source stuff.
I think your right about the cutting side of things, that should be quite simple .....even for me.

Thanks again.

Anyone else have some input PLEASE !!
(come on Ivan, I haven't heard from you yet :(:( )

CHEERS ALL

Rod.

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Re:Purpose built Plasma cutter ??

Posted by Bobo - 2008/05/27 07:18

Hi Rod, Ward 10's had a short bed, the material is pushed through the headstock. They were known as capstan lathes because they had tools on a capstan which rotated to present new tools to the workpiece. Very much like a cnc autochanger, only turned by hand instead of a stepper. A face plate could be retro fitted with a timing pulley and the head driven by the stepper. This means that the face plate would be driven backwards and forwards and not rotate more than 360 degrees. Because the plate is not making a full rotation, it is easy peasy to fit an air driven clamp on the faceplate. Because your widgets are so small and you are using small tube, even a small lathe like a myford would do the job. Infact, replacing the drive pulley on a myford with a timing pulley and the drive motor with a stepper and that's one less piece of jig to build. You can push the tube through with an endless timing belt with a clamp fitted to it. A limit switch on here and when the material is exhausted the whole system ends.
By the way the term widgets is so you can have a subcontractor make a part that he was not supposed to know what it was.

Robin

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Re:Purpose built Plasma cutter ??

Posted by Rocket - 2008/05/27 07:30

Bobo wrote:
Hi Rod, Ward 10's had a short bed, the material is pushed through the headstock. They were known as capstan lathes because they had tools on a capstan which rotated to present new tools to the workpiece. Very much like a cnc autochanger, only turned by hand instead of a stepper. A face plate could be retro fitted with a timing pulley and the head driven by the stepper. This means that the face plate would be driven backwards and forwards and not rotate more than 360 degrees. Because the plate is not making a full rotation, it is easy peasy to fit an air driven clamp on the faceplate. Because your widgets are so small and you are using small tube, even a small lathe like a myford would do the job. Infact, replacing the drive pulley on a myford with a timing pulley and the drive motor with a stepper and that's one less piece of jig to build. You can push the tube through with an endless timing belt with a clamp fitted to it. A limit switch on here and when the material is exhausted the whole system ends.
By the way the term widgets is so you can have a subcontractor make a part that he was not supposed to know what it was.

Robin

Yahoo..... Some more thinking to do.
So an air clamp would replace the lathe chuck ??

Now.....mmmmmmmm to figure out how to move along the tube.
would you suggest it only be moved from one end or how about 2 clamps.
one holds while the 2nd one moves back,cuts are done, meantime the 2nd clamp has grabbed hold of the tube, 1st clamp releases and the 2nd moves the tube through the chuck. 1st clamp claps & cutting begins again.

Does this sound silly ?? I'm just trying to work out how not to have a machine that needs to run the full length of the tube (sure, it has to be supported)

I think I need to introduce widgets to my manufacturers he in Oz B)

CHEERS,
Rod.

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Re:Purpose built Plasma cutter ??
Posted by oklahomadan - 2008/12/25 22:31

I read all your posts today for first time,I like the lathe and pneumatic clamp ideals.with all that in mind,what about a cnc rotary table with stepper motor on it with a pneumatic chuck,on the athere end supporting the tubbing there is a rotating air clamp that swivals with it in a bearing or something.you could rotat it forward then reverse because of air line rap around.I'am knot sher on the feeding of the tubing.maybe put stepper on suport clamp, it rotats with it all.on the release that stepper rolls the tubing for the next cycle.you mite need to cut the tubing in half or something before hand.so is that theoretical or what,start up could be cuputer on with mach3 control load tubing start cycle feed begins hits limit switch,or stepper stops at the right distence, chuck closes,plasma cuts hole or the slot,rotary table turns 180 then plasma cut again this time it cuts it to length cycle finished,my question is the part,where does it fall in the front side of the chuck or do you push though with next feed cycle, you would have to find someone to write the G-code,to get the steppers to move at the right time with clamp on and clamp off,same thing on rotary air chuck.
If this does not make sense sorry,I am not a writer or a good speller but it mit help you, or somebody else come up with a ideal.

thanks Dan

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Re:Purpose built Plasma cutter ??
Posted by Rocket - 2008/12/25 23:01

Thanks for your input Dan.(I really appreciate that :P)

I have been extremely busy (shifting into a new shop) but I had only thought of this the other day, as I have only 200 left from my last batch (hand cut) and will need to set something up asap.
(unfortunately I'm a total novice when it comes to CNC stuff :( )

I had a look at a rotary table not long ago & I thhink it would be quite easy to fit a stepper to it. The jaws/chuck seems to be a problem at the moment and air may be the way to go.(there seems to be plenty of second hand air rams on ebay and such) the tube will of course go through the centre, so clamping will have to be even from all sides.

As for the feeder I'm not sure a long screw thead is the answer, but the tube does only come in round about 12 foot lengths (4 metres here)
Limit switches are probably a good (safe) way to get things to stop. but I feel I should be able to program all the actions into it.The feeder I think will be the main problem.

Yes, to load & then just set to run until the end of the run is the way I invisage it running. When they are cut off, they would just fall into a catchment area below, or even a little conveyor to clear them would be cool (that's not really a concern at this stage, but still worth thinking about)

I wish I knew some one who could help me with this, but I just can't afford to employ anyone or just to help out where they can.(this is why I figured I would look into it myself)

Yes, someone to help with programing would also be great, but again, I live in the country & no one has the remoteness idea of what I'm up to let alone the experience.

The most expensive part of this would be the Plasma it self, as I think a Hi-Def plasma would be the way to go ($10k au where my last quotes :ohmy:)

Thanks again Dan,
I'd really love to start seriously thinging about this, but I feel without some knowage & proper planning, I'd be buying stuff I just don't need or use.

Rod (aka Rocket)

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Re:Purpose built Plasma cutter ??
Posted by stugod - 2008/12/26 00:06

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well you got me interested in your project the first thing i consider on a job like this is can i use it,s own weight to feed it (gravity)it,s free. try thinking about standing your work piece on its end. no 2 thinnk about using the piece to be worked as the template for the cutting the shape ie if you added a roller to your cutter head and pre load it. ie add a light spring the roller will follow the profile of the box you still you wiil need to fab a stop for the cutter so that when fresh stock is dropped in the cutter is clear your roller will prob be slightly in front of cutter so it lifts or moves cutter in advance so the only thing left to do is eject via a cylinder so in summary stand your work piece on it,s end insert into square female machine opening add one motor to turn this axis any way i will leave it there only one thing to do now crack open a beer and add smugg look on ya face:woohoo:

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Re:Purpose built Plasma cutter ??

Posted by Rocket - 2008/12/26 00:45

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stugod wrote:
well you got me interested in your project the first thing i consider on a job like this is can i use it,s own weight to feed it (gravity)it,s free. try thinking about standing your work piece on its end. no 2 thinnk about using the piece to be worked as the template for the cutting the shape ie if you added a roller to your cutter head and pre load it. ie add a light spring the roller will follow the profile of the box you still you wiil need to fab a stop for the cutter so that when fresh stock is dropped in the cutter is clear your roller will prob be slightly in front of cutter so it lifts or moves cutter in advance so the only thing left to do is eject via a cylinder so in summary stand your work piece on it,s end insert into square female machine opening add one motor to turn this axis any way i will leave it there only one thing to do now crack open a beer and add smugg look on ya face:woohoo:

great ideas :P :P

I would never have thought of that (using it's weight)
The roller idea is a good one too, though I would expect I should be able to set it's height quite easily.
The piece when finished will just fall off, as it only requires a hole cut, a slot in the tube, then it just has to be totally cut off into a block.....easy as.....or so I thought.

Thanks B) B)

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Re:Purpose built Plasma cutter ??

Posted by stugod - 2008/12/26 10:52

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ps i also wanted to add a few other things if you are rotating the object 360 degrees it fairly easy to add a cam on a rotating object ie to engage a switch to clamp the work piece for example i have not thought it out completley but it seems to me that u could easily make it with three stepper motors and:woohoo: a few other parts if i get time i will try do a sketch of what i am thinking but i recckon a few hundred bucks can achieve what you are trying to do :woohoo:

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Re:Purpose built Plasma cutter ??

Posted by stugod - 2008/12/26 12:55

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pps i think you need to forget about the piece (dropping off) if your stock is going in vertical it needs to hit a bed if you set a cam up and micro switch to auto clamp the work piece as the cuts are made it should be fairly simple to have some type of hook mounted on the plasma, i reasoned this as it would fairly simple to generate a gode to say retract 4 inch at the end of the last cycle thus pulling the part onto a chute etc i did think that you could get away with not clamping but the cut pieces could fuse back together with wieght of stock on top most cam programms can be set to do your inner cuts first so that does not require any more thought i reckon the project is achievable you may have to make the hook with a fail safe in case of snagging but a simple spring or shear pin type of set up (with a hair trigger)set up would thinking a head a bit it,s fairley easy to make a magazine set up to feed stock in when using a gravity set up

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Re:Purpose built Plasma cutter ??

Posted by Rocket - 2008/12/26 15:31

Just to give everyone an idea of what I'm trying to achieve,
click on the You Tube short cut to watch a tube laser cutter in action.

Boy what I'd give for one of these machines (lots of $$ of course)

Enjoy : http://au.youtube.com/watch?v=yDbCtGSy-Kc&feature=related

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Re:Purpose built Plasma cutter ??

Posted by stugod - 2008/12/27 01:40

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hi dan looked at vid had to come of or i would sit there all day watching it. first i did notice the travel out of the chuck as i did not know exactley what you were planning any way it does not make any difference you can drop your part down so tha all machineing area is visible you can then carry out all the ops on face with a two azis job ie two motors you do need a third motor to rotate to next face and a clamp system .looking at it you can even use a piece of rubber tube and inflate or electtro magnet the reason i suggested dropping on a bed is that the clamping is only for allignment the weight of the piece can be born by the bed it would be cheaper to set up some type of type of ejector. one point i did not cover is your rotater if you are constantley rotating 360 deg any wire pipes etc can be tangled this can be over come by counter rotating ie machine goes clockwise for first cyle but does the second cycle counter clock there are also available rotaters for compressed air and elec but i think i would be cheaper to set g code up for this hope this helps i still reckon it can be done cheap ps get a pic of u tube one and stick it above your home made one title one day. the way the economy is going if you biuld it and own it you can not go wrong

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Re:Purpose built Plasma cutter ??

Posted by stugod - 2008/12/27 02:15

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pps i may of misled u slightly about the roller the roller is only going to follow the profile of your box as it rotates to next machine op ie riding up the corners of the box. if you do neeed to counter rotate you will need two. if you wan,t you can set g code to retract while turning i just thought it would save machine time positioning and re positioning i have just priced job for three nema 34 stepper motors with breakout board etc for £750 i reckon you could build it for approx £1200 please do not take my word for that there are a lot of cheap deals in the uk at the moment i am assuming you have a cuuter:woohoo:

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Re:Purpose built Plasma cutter ??

Posted by Rocket - 2008/12/27 03:08

More info Ta ;)
Oh, I'm Rod (aka rocket) Dan is oklahomadan who replyed on the last page.

Anyway,
I had been thinking maybe a cheap lathe with mill attachment could be a good start, but I will have to have a look at the drive first. It may just be as easy to build it from scratch with parts and a 360 deg. chuck like the one I looked at a couple of months ago & just add some form of clamps (so long as they centre it) I can't see aproblem with with the rotation of only 360 deg. then back the opposite way, then forward again, yes, it will come down to what I end up using.

The laser tube cutter on You Tube is exactly what I want, but it only has to be in a small scale (my tube is only 3/4", but in Stainless)
Laser would certainly leave less clean up, which is an issue I'm currently facing without all the work just to cut it out.

The clearing of the blockes when cut (as mentioned somewhere before)isn't a prob. as I reckon even a shoot to guide them away from the cutting area is the easiest way to go.

I think your right about the programing. The 'G' Code shouldn't be a problem on any of this as it's all basic opperations, it's just that I don't know where to start with any of that. I can buy even those larger stepper motors quite cheap here, but

I'm not sure what else I need (which boards to use, programs etc)I have a spare Windows 98 computer in perfect working condition, so I hope I can use that to run it all, though in some of the reading I've found so far, maybe a second computer will be needed. I think that will only be an issue when I want to biuld a table in the future though.

No, unfortunately, I don't have a cutting source. I would love to go laser for the cleanlyness but mybe Hi-def Plasma would be easier (less for me to learn & do) I don't think a normal plasmas would do a good enough job.

CHEERS,
Rod (aka rocket :silly: :P ;))

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Re:Purpose built Plasma cutter ??

Posted by stugod - 2008/12/27 07:42

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sorry rocket did not spot your handle been thumping away on keyboard during hols i have just spent 3 months looking at converting a machine but have decided to build from scratch.ok here are some ideas say you are going to use and old chuck you will need to buy one with the bearing sub assembley if you are lucky you might get one with a simple cast flange that you could bolt to a piece of horizontal steel plate make sure the centre hole is big enough to let your work piece through. i was thinking that u could use the usual square drive that you would use to clamp the a piece and make it automatic. u could for instance add a rubber solid wheel on the axis around the chuck key this is not straight forward as the running surface needs to b e engaged and disengaged. another simpler way is to add a star type peice of steel around the axis of the chuck key so it is back to a gode job rotate twice this would give you two clicks on your star drive and two rotations back to tighten the interfrence part that engages the star drive can be made to engage and not engage fairly easy it depends on the reduction in the chuck the bigger the better so least amount of clicks as you are only holding it but we are already getting a bit complicated.another idea is to mount a v pulley to the chuck so it can be driven if u can use a drive pulley half size of chuck pulley it makes things easier later on re programming u may have to experiment with many different star drives 6 8 10 12 fingers any way i will leave you with that lot for now warning chucks are usualy very hard mat,l so might not be easy to drill etc but can be done

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Re:Purpose built Plasma cutter ??

Posted by Rocket - 2008/12/27 08:48

Good'o
(no drama's with the name mix up ;))

When I flipped open the cover on my little lathe some time ago, it had a cogged drive belt, so I figured to fit a stepper would be real easy to one like that(I mist have another look :blush:)
Maybe a 4 jaw chuck would work, seeing as though to undo & re tighten the chuck doesn't need a lot of turns with a chuck key & you only need to turn in one place to get all 4 to move, that could work ?? Is this what you where meaning ?? I can't help but thinking that cheapo lathe/mill I swa might do the job, and even more so when I think about some form of feed. If I could use the chuck and then the mill part to carry the cuting head & just add a couple of extra axis if need be, then the bed of the lathe could almost be used as the feed if I could cut it off and put it on the other side (or shift the Mill part) The feed could travel on the lathe bed and just shift short runs, as the chuck would be holding it most of the time while it'sbeing cut ??

Errrrrrrr place the tube in the machine, it is clamped in the chuck (manual over ride on the machine of course)it's rotated, cut etc, then the chuck releases & it is then fed in the required distance & the chuck clamps again. The feed could also be a clamping devise of some kind, so it only has to travel a short distance while the tube is supported down it's length. The only othe rproblem I can see is there would be abit of waste at the end (though I spose I could soon weld them together to get value for money)

This is only one of a few machines I'd love to build, but without the knowledge & $$ it is gong to be tough, but we may just nut out the easy bits here B) B) B) B)

Thanks so far.

(are lasers very costly ?? & what size do you reckon I'd need to cut 1.6mm Stainless.....sorry, my conversion charts are at work, so I'm not sure what thickness that = to in imperial measurement)

Strooth....it's 1.15 am here.....I'd better hit the fart sack.

CHEERS,
Rod.

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Re:Purpose built Plasma cutter ??
Posted by stugod - 2008/12/28 00:01

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yea thats what i ment but there is a bit of a problem say you used an old chuck key with some type of profile cut star shaped metal for your method of opening chuck.i do not think you could say weld that to the chuck you could make some sort of race that would have to go round the entire chuck assem so that it,s supportwd at it,s extremities.even with a rapid opening chuck you would prob have to do do a few cycles of chuck rotation to open and close .that does not matter realy it,s just a g code job realy if you got a toothed drive you are half way there i just had another thought while typing instead of an outer race to support chuck key maybe some sort round clamp on chuck itself balance is not an issue i assume all low speed re laser i have never used one i worked on lot bigger stuff but the principles are same .how you going to feed if you go with lathe set up if u use a physical stop on bed u can make a simple if u are looking at a power feed it,s gona get tricky:woohoo:

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Re:Purpose built Plasma cutter ??
Posted by Rocket - 2008/12/28 00:19

G'Day again from Down Under on a Sunday arvo.

I think the feed would be pretty easy, as 2 servos could control that.
one for clamping and one for travel.
I'm not to worried about having extra servos as it should be quite easy to control any number.....just a matter of getting it all to work at once.

I'm starting to think of just using a chuck for the rotational work & not clamping (just run 4 rollers in there) then there wouldn't be any problems with what we have been chatting about, not convinced of that though (what would be holding the work when the feed lets go to shift back ??
Just using the feed to hold and move the stock up after each cycle would make it a bit simpler though.

yes, I think to head for something that already has a toothed drive is the go.
I just fornd a pic of a lathe that has it's head frame only bolted to the main frame. Not what I would call good, but it may be able to be turned around, so I could use the bed for the travel ??

I'd rather keep the cost down though with just the main investment being in the cutting euqipment itself (a head I can leave on the machine so i can later build a table would be great.....

Now....just to find a retired engineer who wants something to do B) B)

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Re:Purpose built Plasma cutter ??
Posted by stugod - 2008/12/28 03:20

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i just typed a full page and it,s gone so just give a brief description of it RE ROLLERS any where use rollers thro away the clamp u can pre tension any roller. example four jaw chuck drill four holes one in each clamp face add a compression spring into each hole and one ball bearing push down and bur edge (just an example)you now have a chuck that u can tweek to any size via chuck key you can then add just one sevo motor for the feed u can pre tension to any degree you wan,t right up to clamping. the stock needs to be held central so may be advisable to get a piece of tube machined to go up the centre of chuck and lathe and maybe give it 20 thou clearance if you know what i mean gona have breakfast and walk the dog

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Re:Purpose built Plasma cutter ??

Posted by msnienke - 2009/01/04 09:57

I am getting into this conversation late, b ut I think I understand what you are atempting to do. What about modifying an independent four jaw chuck by making it into a two jaw chuck. Make a pair of v-jaws to hold the square tube, fix one jaw permanante and use the other jaw to clamp. THe screw can be removed and use a cylinder the move it in and out. You will not need a a great deal of clamp force. If you do not need the lathe it would be prety simple to make a face plate to do this clamping and set it up to be drivin by a stepper motor. The advance could be like you mentioned early on with two clamps. The chuck and the advance mechanism. The clamp mechanism would move back the distance of the advance and clamp, release the chuck clamp, advance the movement and then clamp the chuck. There will be a great deal of coding involved in this project. Not an easy first project, but I think it can be done. You could also set up a bar puller like this one. This would save on material. http://cgi.ebay.com/Grippall-CNC-Lathe-Bar-Puller-Haas-Chuck-MADE-IN-USA_W0QQitemZ310112482929QQihZ021QQcategoryZ41946QQssPageNameZWDVWQQrdZ1QQcmdZViewItem it is a Grippall CNC Lathe Bar Puller Haas Chuck. Here is a two jaw power chuck. http://cgi.ebay.com/10-CNC-Power-2-Jaw-Lathe-Chuck-1-5-x-60-HAAS_W0QQitemZ310113399394QQihZ021QQcategoryZ25292QQssPageNameZWDVWQQrdZ1QQcmdZViewItem It is rather large for your needs but gives you an idea. Haas makes all kinds of things that may help you out. Here is a rotary indexer that you may be able to get to work. http://cgi.ebay.com/Haas-7-Rotary-Table-Parts-Repair-w-Servo-Controller_W0QQitemZ120358312466QQihZ002QQcategoryZ41942QQssPageNameZWDVWQQrdZ1QQcmdZViewItem . Basically go to ebay and search HAAS in metal working. All kinds of goodies.
Hope this helps some.

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Re:Purpose built Plasma cutter ??

Posted by Rocket - 2009/01/05 02:26

Never to late mate!!
I'm still collecting ideas & am yet to purchase anything. (though I very nearlly...again!...bought some steppers, but I resisted as I'm not sure what I need.

I think to build the main machine with the add ons, then buy the required motors & then drivers etc would be the way to go, though not much around (in OZ anyway) as far as equipment like you have just mentioned. Even steppers etc are in short supply with the boards that run them (especaially for multi steppers) even harder to find.

I've gotta really get prganised and find out what I need to run it, drivers, boards, computer etc, so I've got lotts to learn. Your right this is a tough project for a first timer, but I really need it for work, not just as a hobby project.

I'm keen to by matched equipment like boards with steppers etc (as I just don't know what does what.

Thanks again for the input, I will be looking to any odeas that you guys can add, so hope fully by the time I put pen to paper in the planning, purchase & actually build it, I'll be on a winner.

CHEERS,
Rod.

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