

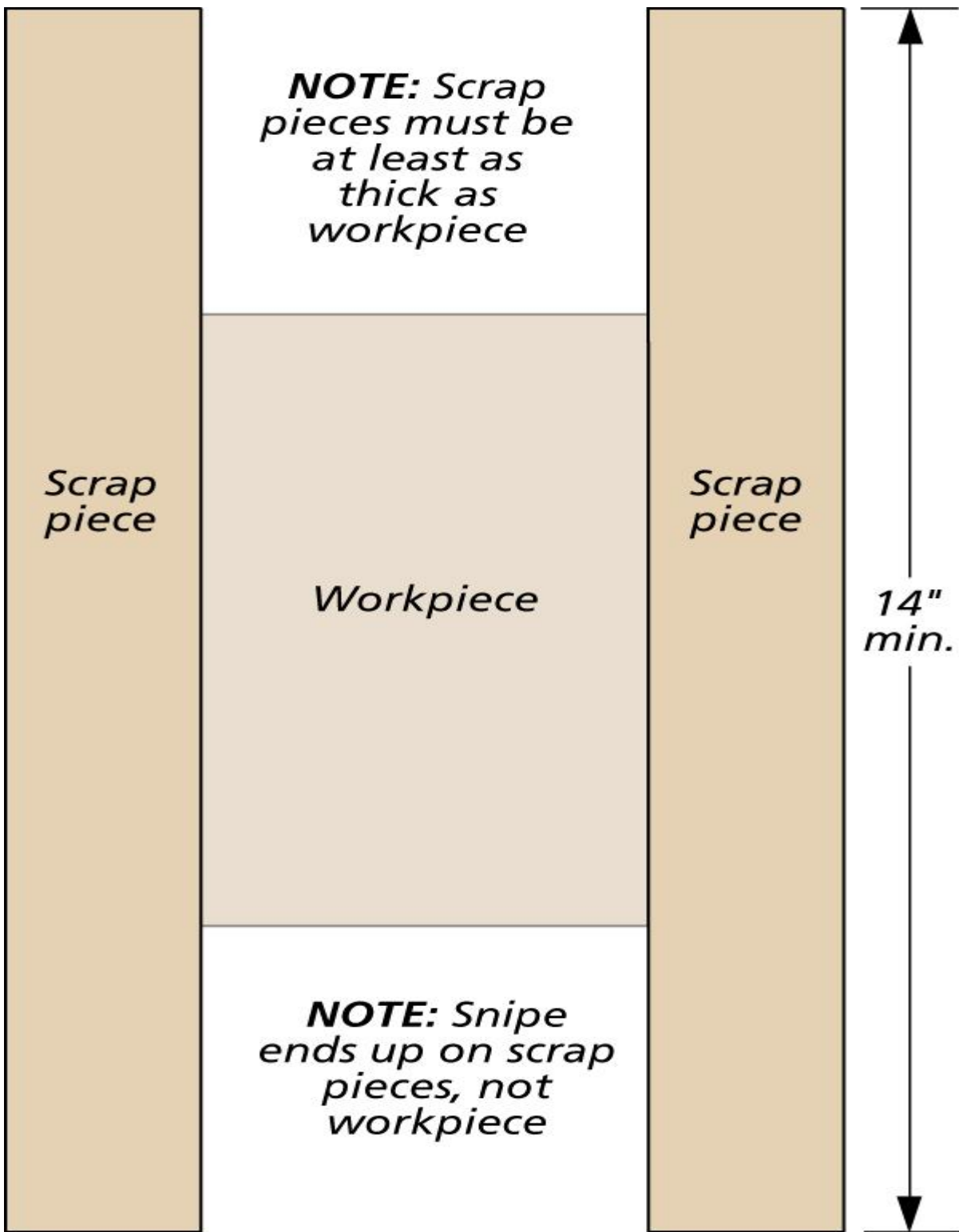
# Saving Lumber with Your Planer

By: Erich Lage

Here's an easy safe way to salvage the scraps from projects.



I can never bring myself to throw away the short hardwood pieces left over from a project, especially if they're exotic or expensive. They're often ideal for small projects. But they typically have to be planed to thickness before I can use them. The problem is that running a board less than 12" long through some planers isn't recommended. It can get caught between the infeed and outfeed rollers, causing it to lift off of the planer bed. At best, this causes severe snipe (a deeper cut near the end of a board). At worst, the board can get chewed up, damaging the cutter head in the process.



To prevent ruining the board (or my planer), I glue long, narrow scrap pieces to both edges of the piece I want to plane (illustration above). Inexpensive pine or fir works well here. These scrap pieces span both feed rollers, so the board stays flat on the bed of the planer. The result is a planed surface that's mirror smooth. If there's any snipe, it ends up on the scrap pieces, not the board. Once the board is planed to the desired thickness then just cut off the narrow scrap pieces at the table saw.