## The Universal Rotating Fly Tying Vises by Dennis Stead

I am finding it hard to get information on the Universal Company. Based on the information I have, it looks like they produced 4 fly tying vises. I would also estimate that these vises were sold between 1950 thru the 1980s. Their first vise was the Universal Rotating Fly Tying Vise Number One. It sold for less than \$10.00 and I believe it was the first true rotary vise. The address on the vise box at that time was Universal Rotating Vise, P.O. Box 335, Holyoke, Mass. No zip code. The non-mandatory five-digit ZIP code was introduced nationwide on July 1, 1963. So, the Number 1 was being sold before that date.

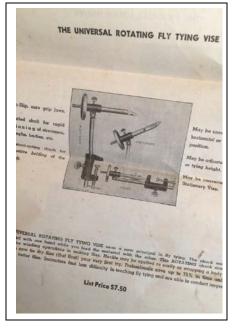


This is a great vise and with the wing nut on the shaft, you could angle it up like most of the vise at that time, or collapse it down for travel or storage. The wing nut on the top allowed you to lock the jaw shaft or unlock the jaw shaft to allow it to rotate.









The Number 1 vise was very popular and easy to use. It was copied in the early 2000 and found it for sale on ebay. The information that follows was the information on the copy and if I remember, it sold for almost ?????.

## Angler's Roost Enterprises (A.R.E.)

This is a unused Roto-Vise manufactured in the early 2000's by Angler's Roost Enterprises in New York state. . It is a replica of the old Universal Rotary Vise. I believe the founder of this company had ties to the old Angler's Roost shop in Manhattan run by Jim Deren. Not sure how many of these were made. This one is a as-new condition c-clamp model.

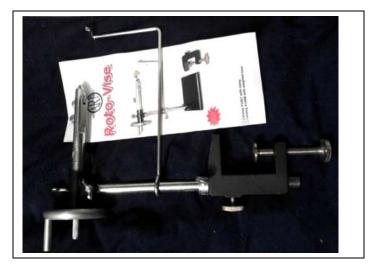
Angler's Roost 5820 Main Street, Suite 502 Williamsville, NY 14221

Tel: 716-565-9838 Fax: 716-565-9838



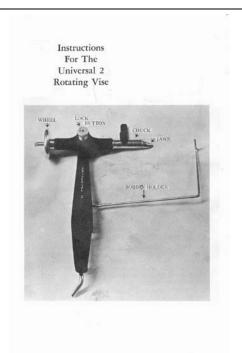






The Universal Rotary Fly Tying Vise Number 2 is another nice true rotary vise. I was collecting cast iron vises and when I came across this Universal cast iron vise, I bought it. Since that time I have been tried to get information on the company. I did find a great YouTube video for servicing and taking apart the Number 2 vise. The link is <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fyqCdQvUbkg">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fyqCdQvUbkg</a>





the bend. Holding them tight, wrap two or three turns of the silk over the tail material and one turn under and one over (between tail and hook shank to secure its position). Secure by half hitch, or drop bobbin. Clip off the strabus

surpus.

STEP THREE: — TYING IN BODY — Grasp a piece of body material. This can be a short piece of yarn or a stripped haddle quill or other material. For our purpose here, we'll use a length of yarn four inches long. This is placed on top of the hook shank, over the bend and tail winding, but forward make two or three windings and secure. To tie in additional body material such as ribbing, follow the above procedure.

material such as ribbing, follow the above procedure.

Next, wind the tying silk forward toward the eye of the hook —
and half hitch so that the knot is on the top of the hook. When vise is
spun the thread will drop over the eye with each revolution. If bobbin is
used, after material is tied in wind several wide loops forward and place
bobbin over bobbin rest.

bobbin over bobbin rest.

STEP FOUR — BODY WRAPPING — Now, holding the body material taut in the right hand, spin the knurled stem or vise wheel toward you and guide the material forward (It may be necessary in some patterns to wind back and forth to form a tapered or fat body). Wrap to within ¼ of the shank length, leaving room for the future operations. Keep the tension on body material and slide back half hith: and wrap. When using bobbin, pick bobbin off rest and tie in material as usual by several cross turns, then let bobbin hang.

To wrap the ribbing, follow the same procedure as above, being careful to keep ribbing taut and spin on evenly.

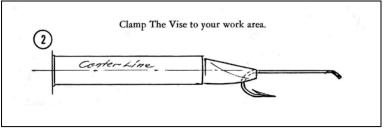
NOTE: The recycliner vice material the ribbing taut and spin on evenly.

seep nobing taut and spin on evenly.

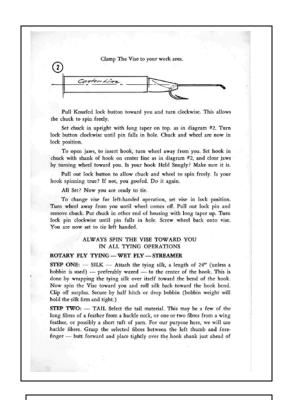
NOTE: The recoving vie makes it much simpler to tie bodies and you will find that it is not only faster, but easier and that a much better job will be done, especially by the beginner for an even tension of the material is easier to maintain. Also, you don't have any twist put in the material which occurs in any manual wrapping, causing slipping or breaking. Another advantage is that you are instantly able to view your work from any angle or turn the fly when clipping or adjusting the feathers.

STEP FIVE: — HACKLE — There are several accepted ways of hackling wet and streamer files. The simplest is to strip off a small bunch of fibres from a hackle feather and it them in on the undershank of the hook just behind the eye, turn hook barb up by half turn of vise.

Another method of applying the hackle is to select a hackle feather, stripping off the softer but hackles and tie in the butt quill and seutre. Lead the thread forward, half hitch and drop thread over eye. If using a bobbin,



Above, show the alignment of the hook, making it a true rotary. I have the complete instruction manual that came with the vise and that will follow.



after tying hackle in, drop bobbin over bobbin rest as before. Grasp hackle tip with hackle pliens in the right hand and revolve vise toward you while holding the pliers tatut. This will fan out the hackles in a \$60 degree circle. Secure and clip off surplus. Now grasp the hackle with the left thumb and forefringer and pull down and wrap the tying silk over the hackle stems so that the downward position of the hackles will be set and secure.

STEP SIX: — WINGS — Select wing material (sections of a duck quill flight feather) placing them with the insides together. Grasp the material tightly in the left thumb and forefinger placing it but first on the hook's shank just forward of the body windings and as far back as possible from the hook eye. Wrap the tying silk over the butt ends by bringing it up tightly and down between the fingers and over the material vertical and tight throughout the operation. Secure and cut off the surplus.

NOTE: The tying operation for wings as described above is applicable for streamers and wet flies. Bucktails are made from bucktail hairs that are selected and arranged in advance to be applied in the same fashion.

STEP SEVEN: - HEAD OF FLY - Spin tying silk to shape fly head

NOTE: Apply lacquer or paint as called for in the pattern

## ROTARY FLY TYING — DRY FLY

The routine for tying a dry fly is wings first, tail, body and hackle. The same operations are following in the tail and body as on the wet fly.

STEP ONE: Attach tying silk to hook at point when wings are to be tied in. (¾ way up hook from bend.)

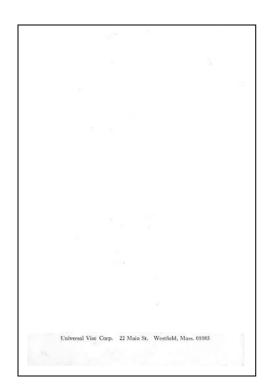
in (½ way up hook from hend.)

STEP TWO: Cut out matching sections of the wing material to be used.

This may be paired duck quills, or underflank feathers from wood duck, teal, mallard, etc. Place material with the outsides together. This is so the wings will fan out when tied onto the hook. With left thumb and forefinger, grags wings by the bett end, hold in place on hook shank, it pforward. Tie in with several turns of tying silk. Send wings backward, take a few turns of silk, cocking wings upward. Separate and secure by winding figure eights around sections of wings. Secure with half bitch or drop bobbin. Clip off but.

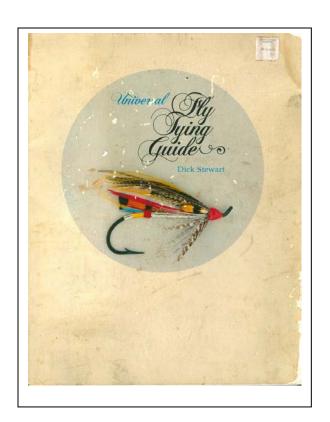
STEP THREE: Hold tying silk in right hand and spin vise toward you with left hand. Wind tying silk over butts and along shank of hook to the bend. Secure with half hitch or drop bobbin.

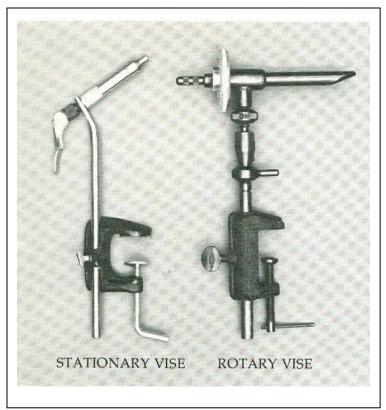




The reason I included the last page of this instruction manual that came with the Number 2 vise is to show and address change. The address is Universal Vise Corp, 22 Main Street, Westfield, Mass. 01085. So it looks like the company moved and then because of the ZIP code being added to the address, this Number 2 model had to be made after 1963 Probably late 60's and 70's.

Universal Vise Corporation published a book in 1979 called "Universal Fly Tying Guide by Dick Stewart". In that book, page 4, Basic Tools, they show their last two vises.





A Stationary Vise which was being produced earlier for the fly tying kits at the 22 Main Street address.





The Rotary vise was their Number 3 rotary vise but I have seen it call the Elite Rotary Vise. The company's address changes again at this time it was Universal Vise Corporation, 16 Union Avenue, Westfield, Massachusetts 01085. I don't have the last two vises for my collection but I am still looking. The following picture was sent to from John Walter. He has the Number 3. It is an impressive vise. You can rotate it or bend it a number of way that you cannot do with the Number 1 or Number 2. But if you want a good true rotary vise the Number 1 and Number 2 will get the job done.





Hope you find this information interesting.