

## Collinear Hoe Nos. 403/175RE & 403/100RE

### Use:

Very light cultivating hoes suitable for weeding very small sensitive crops and for weed control in well-prepared soil.

### Description:

With the narrow razorblade-like blade of these tools weeds can be undercut with minimum effort. There is almost no movement of the topsoil when using the hoe, so cut weeds dry out and die.

The angle between the blade and the handle enables the operator to work in a comfortable, upright position.

The hoe is light and the blade is easily replaced.

### Technical data:

Size:	Part no.:	Repl. blade No.	Recommended handle:
175mm	403/175RE	403M/175	Ash, not lacquered 28 mm dia, 1.5 m long
100mm	403/100RE	403M/100	

*Weight:* approx. 220 gm (without handle)

*Rust protection:* head zinc plated, blade oiled.



### Getting Started with the Collinear Hoe

**Fitting the Blade.** The blade is replaceable and designed to be sharpened with a file before and during use. Nuts and bolts are provided to fix it to the hoe head, but some people prefer to use pop rivets. In either case, fit the bolt or rivet from below to minimise soil resistance in use. Fit the blade with the sharpened bevel facing upwards and the flat surface towards the soil. You will probably find it easier to sharpen the blade *after* it is fixed to the hoe head and handle.

**Fitting a Handle.** You need to find a broom handle (or similar) which is 1500 mm long and 28 mm diameter. Your local DIY or hardware store should have these fairly cheaply, and they are usually ash, which is ideal. If you want a shaped handle, you will need to pay more, and

probably at a more specialist garden shop. Don't be tempted to get a handle shorter than 1500 mm, though that should be long enough unless you are very tall. I'm 6'2" and 1500 mm is fine for me.

To get the taper on the hoe end of the handle, try drawing round a 5p piece on the end and measuring back about 80 mm on the handle. Draw a line around it here, and then aim to trim off wood between this line and the circle on the end. You can use a plane or a sharp craft knife and a 'Surform' tool is good to get a smoother surface. For final trimming try it in the hoe and see where you need to make adjustments. Coarse sandpaper will probably help.

It's a good idea to treat the handle with linseed oil but, before you do that, here is some advice from Eliot Coleman (from *The New Organic Grower*, page 166) :-

*"There is normally some amount of curve in any long wooden handle. For the ideal balance or 'feel' of the tool when in use, that curve must be accommodated when attaching the handle to the blade, as follows:*

1. *Insert the handle into the ferrule.*
2. *Set the hoe to balance horizontally on a narrow crossbar (for instance, the back of a kitchen chair).*
3. *When the tool is balanced, note the position of the hoe blade. The desired position is with the hoe's cutting edge down.*
4. *Twist the handle in the ferrule until you find the position where the hoe balances as desired.*
5. *Set the handle firmly into the ferrule and attach it with a screw.*
6. *It is helpful to have two holes in the ferrule for the handle-attachment screw. That way a new area of wood is available when the handle dries and has to be pushed into the ferrule slightly further."*

The Glaser collinear hoe has a slot rather than a hole on the back of the ferrule, so later adjustments are easily made.

If you're going to treat with linseed oil, mark the screw position with a bradawl before painting the oil on and then stand the tapered end in a jar of the oil for a day or two. If you re-soak the handle every year, it should last for ages.

**Using the Hoe.** If you have a copy of Eliot's *The New Organic Grower*, then see what he has to say (pages 163-167).

If not, then concentrate on holding the hoe correctly, with the thumbs of both hands pointing up the handle. If you hold it like this, and then try drawing the sharp blade flat along the surface of the soil, you will soon find the easy slicing action which gives you an upright non-stooping working position. A really new experience in hoeing!

Any questions? Get in touch and we will try to help.

Dave Taylor

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