

Stihl TS 400 Cutquik Masonry Saw Review



At the same time I must compliment Stihl and apologize a little bit for this review. The review for the TS 400 is written from my experience using a masonry saw that is eight years old. In looking at the current specs and pictures of the TS 400, I can tell that while there haven't been huge changes to the design of the saw, I'm not sure there need to be. And the fact that a review can be written about a handheld masonry saw that is eight years old and still running says something about the manufacturer.

Our TS 400 has always been a very reliable saw. Starts cold, continues to run during heavy use on hot days. The saw is one of the lighter ones we have for it's ability, which means it's a little easier on the arms and back when cutting in hundreds of lineal feet of brick pavers in a day. However, I do hope that in the more recent versions of the saw, they've addressed the vibration issue. A few years ago I spent an entire day cutting some very hard clay pavers, and by the end of the day I couldn't feel two fingers and the thumb on my right hand. This numbness continued for several days. If there was a silver lining, I had an infected cut on one of those fingers, and was able to scrub it clean with a toothbrush without feeling a thing. But if I had to draw designs with that hand, I'd have been out of commission for awhile.

All at once I both like and dislike the distance between the handles and the blade; having the blade a good deal forward of the handles makes the saw feel a bit safer, moving the cutting action a little further from your hands compared to other saws. However, this also makes for a saw that is less balanced than some of the other masonry saws on the market.

Starting. Hmmm...This one is also a good news, bad news story. The good news is I can predict exactly which pull will start our TS 400, every time, every day, cold or hot. The bad news is, it is almost always pull #13. The first couple years I tried to tweak the carburation settings, but no matter whether the mix was rich or lean, it always took 13 pulls to start. The first 10 pulls were at full choke, with the tenth pull reliably giving me a sputter. Depress the compression release valve again, flip to half-choke, and pull number three at half-choke gets her running.

Air filtration to me is a pleasant surprise. Not using some of the more [technologically advanced filtration techniques of other masonry saws](#), including oil-impregnated filters, the TS 400 relies solely on a foam filter followed by an accordion paper filter like you'd find in most cars. While you'd be inclined to think that this filtration system would not be up to the long-term abuse that the environment that a masonry saw can produce, this saw continues to have clean piston cylinder walls and no blow-by. To me, the results saw everything.

A special note on close cutting: because of the design of the saw and its blade guard, the TS 400 allows us to get in tighter against vertical structures when making cuts on horizontal surfaces. This was never made obvious to me until I had to cut away pieces of footings on which rested large posts that supported an outdoor structure. We could snug right up to the posts and cut away large portions of the footing without problems (though the reason we were cutting footings is a long story).

Other items of note: The starter cord on Stihl saws is so great that I always buy extra and outfit our other saws with the Stihl "elasto-start" starter cord. Seems to last longer and is easier on the hands and machine when pulling to the full length of the cord. Also, with an arbor size of 20mm, we often need to buy extra plastic rings to slide over the arbor for most of the [masonry blades we use](#).

So if you're looking for a masonry saw that will allow you to cut in close proximity to a vertical wall, or you're the type that appreciates the value of a saw that you don't have to repurchase every few years, and don't mind some extra pulls when starting or wearing

anti-vibe gloves, this might be the perfect saw for you.

Stihl TS 400 Specs: Displacement: 64cc Power: 4.4 bhp Weight (14"): 21.6 lbs Fuel Capacity: 25 oz Engine Speed: 9,700 rpm (I believe max spindle speed is around 5,400 rpm) Arbor Size: 20mm

