

Choosing Figure 8 Fasteners for Tabletops: 2026 Buying Guide

Engineering Hardware · engineeringhardware.com/choosing-figure-8-fasteners-for-tabletops-2026-buying-guide

[Home](#) / [Blog](#) / Choosing Figure 8 Fasteners for Tabletops: 2026 Buying Guide

July 25, 2026 · Nigen

Key Takeaways

Tab Lock Washer for Round Nut — GB - T 858 (Series 073) — GB - T 858

Tab Lock Washer for Round Nut — GB - T 858 (Series 073) — GB - T 858

- The true cost of figure 8 fasteners includes tooling wear, labor time, and rework risk—not just the per-unit price.
- Common purchase errors include choosing incompatible screw sizes, underestimating fastener quantity, and ignoring recess depth.
- Figure 8 fasteners scale from small custom shops to industrial lines, with bulk packs that let you standardize on shop-specific hardware.
- They support a finishing-before-assembly workflow, reducing handling and allowing easy disassembly for transport or service.
- Always verify material and coating suitability for the end-use environment to prevent corrosion or staining.

1. Who Needs This and What Problem It Solves

Tab Lock Washer for Round Nut — GB - T 858 (Series 089) — GB - T 858

Tab Lock Washer for Round Nut — GB - T 858 (Series 089) — GB - T 858

Are you trying to fasten a solid wood tabletop to a base without inviting splits or warping? That's the precise challenge that figure 8 fasteners solve. Wood expands and contracts with seasonal humidity changes, and rigid metal brackets or screws can trap the top, forcing it to crack over time. Figure 8 table top fasteners — small, twisted metal clips shaped like the number eight — provide a flexible, mechanical connection. They secure the top firmly yet allow it to move laterally, making them indispensable for furniture makers, cabinet shops, and high-volume manufacturers producing tables, desks, and workbenches. Whether you run a custom woodworking studio or an industrial production line, using the right fasteners significantly reduces returns and warranty claims caused by split tops.



► Watch video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wliV_Vy3868

How to Install Figure 8 Tabletop Fasteners // Quick & Easy Woodworking Tutorial— by Bike City Woodworks on YouTubeIn this video, I show you how to install figure 8 tabletop fasteners, sometimes called figure 8 table top clips or connectors. Figure 8u00a0...

2. Key Selection Criteria

Not all figure 8 fasteners are the same. When buying for your operation, focus on these practical aspects:

Load Capacity and Table Size

A fastener's steel gauge and overall dimensions directly correlate with how much weight it can support. For light-duty desks or occasional tables, standard 18- or 20-gauge clips suffice. Heavier hardwood conference tables demand thicker 14- or 16-gauge fasteners. Always match the fastener size to the table's scale: underspecified clips can deform over time, leading to wobbly connections.

Material and Corrosion Resistance

Most figure 8 fasteners are stamped from mild steel and finished with zinc plating to resist rust in normal indoor environments. For outdoor furniture or humid shops, look for stainless steel options or a heavier coated finish. The material also affects ease of driving: softer low-carbon steel bends rather than snaps under stress, a useful safety margin during installation.

Recess Dimensions and Installation Speed

The fastener's footprint—specifically the diameter of the circular recess it requires—determines tooling. Common sizes are 5/8" or 11/16", both easily cut with a Forstner bit. In a production setting, throughput matters: choose fasteners that seat cleanly in a single plunge without needing shim adjustments. Some brands include self-centering features or a slightly tapered edge for faster

alignment. Pre-attached screws or bundled hardware packs can shave additional seconds off assembly.

Compatibility with Wood Movement

Figure 8 fasteners work by permitting the screw in the apron to slide within the clip's slot. Verify that the slot length accommodates the predicted movement of your local climate and species. A 1/4" slot covers most interior applications, but wide tabletops may need 3/8" or more. Cheaper fasteners sometimes have short slots that restrict movement, defeating the purpose.

After-Sales and Bulk Availability

For ongoing production, consistent supply is critical. Confirming that a vendor carries large-quantity boxes (50, 100, or 500 packs) prevents last-minute hardware store runs. Also, check for included screws: some suppliers sell clips and screws separately, while others offer complete kits. Having a reliable source reduces procurement headaches and ensures you're not mixing incompatible screw sizes.

3. Common Configurations/Models and Who Each Suits

Figure 8 fasteners come in a few standard configurations tailored to different scales of operation.

Small-Workshop Packs (8-20 Pieces)

These retail-oriented packs, often found at home centers and woodworking specialty stores, include enough fasteners for one or two tables. They usually come with matching screws and a basic instruction sheet. Ideal for custom furniture builders who make single pieces or limited runs. While unit cost is higher, the convenience of a pre-packaged kit makes sense for low-volume work.

Bulk Industrial Boxes (50-500 Pieces)

Medium to large manufacturers benefit from buying in larger quantities. Bulk boxes frequently omit screws, allowing you to use your standard hardware in the exact length and head style you already stock. The fasteners themselves are identical to smaller packs, but the per-unit price drops significantly. This configuration suits shops producing dozens of tables weekly.

Alternatives: Figure 8 vs. Z-Clips

While figure 8 fasteners are popular, Z-clips are a frequent alternative. Both allow wood movement, but the installation differs: figure 8 fasteners require a simple 1/8"-deep Forstner recess, whereas Z-clips often need a routed slot or groove. For shops already equipped with a slot-cutting bit, Z-clips can be just as quick; for everyone else, figure 8 fasteners demand less setup time. Additionally, figure 8 clips position the screw closer to the table's edge, which can be an advantage when the apron is narrow. Choose the style that matches your existing tooling and workflow.

Total Cost of Ownership: A Complete View Beyond Purchase Price

When evaluating figure 8 fasteners, the per-fastener price tells only a fraction of the story. Consider the full cost of ownership, which includes tooling, labor, and the potential for rework over the life of a production run.

The primary ongoing cost is the Forstner bit needed to create the recess. A quality 5/8-inch or 11/16-inch Forstner bit can bore hundreds of holes in hardwood before dulling, but shops running high volumes may replace bits regularly. Factor in this

consumable expense — and the downtime for bit changes — when calculating per-table costs. Additionally, if you choose a model that requires a specific screw length, you might need to stock unique hardware rather than using your standard screws, raising inventory complexity.

Labour is where the biggest savings hide. A well-designed figure 8 fastener, paired with a simple drilling jig, can be installed in under a minute per bracket. Compare that to alternatives like wooden buttons or shop-made blocks, which often demand more precise joinery or multiple fitting steps. For a small shop producing custom furniture, the time saved can mean an extra commission per month. For an industrial line, cumulative seconds per unit translate to significant throughput gains.

The payback logic is straightforward: if switching to a bulk pack of figure 8 fasteners reduces assembly time by even 10% compared to a slower method, the investment likely pays for itself within the first few production cycles. Focus on the total labor cost reduction, not just the unit price of the fastener. Shops that overlook this often end up with false economy — a cheaper bracket that requires more setup time or yields to callbacks for tabletop cracks.

Mistakes Buyers Make — and What to Verify Before Ordering

A surprising number of purchasing errors stem from assumptions rather than measurements. The most frequent mistake is ordering fasteners without verifying the exact screw size your apron stock can accept. Figure 8 fasteners come with a fixed through-hole diameter; if your planned screw head is too large, it will bind and prevent the fastener from sitting flush. Always test-fit a sample with your intended screw before committing to a bulk order.

Another common oversight is underestimating the number of fasteners needed. A large dining table may require eight or more brackets to adequately resist racking forces. Some buyers mistakenly believe two or four will suffice, only to face a wobbly top. As a rule of thumb, space fasteners every 12–16 inches along the apron, adding extras near corners.

Ignoring the fastener's thickness relative to the recess depth is another pitfall. If the recess is too shallow, the bracket protrudes and prevents the top from sitting flat; too deep, and the screw may not engage enough thread in the apron. The recess must match the fastener's thickness precisely — most figure 8 clips measure around 1/8 inch thick. Always measure your batch; slight variations between manufacturers can cause assembly headaches.

Finally, buyers sometimes mix incompatible coating with their humidity environment. Zinc-plated fasteners work well indoors, but for outdoor furniture or humid workshops, stainless steel or a higher-grade plating resists corrosion and prevents rust stains on the wood. Check the material specification and intended use before ordering.

How Figure 8 Fasteners Fit into Your Wider Production Workflow

Figure 8 fasteners are not an isolated component; they integrate directly with your cutting, assembly, and finishing processes. In a shop using CNC routers, the recess for the fastener can be programmed into the same file that cuts the apron joinery, eliminating manual layout. Even in a traditional shop, a simple template and a plunge router with a depth stop make the operation repeatable and fast.

For assembly, figure 8 fasteners allow the top to be secured from below without visible hardware, which means finishing can occur before attachment. This is a workflow advantage: you can spray or sand the entire top surface without masking screw holes, then drop the top onto the base and drive the screws home. The disassembly is equally straightforward, making transport and on-site installation possible for built-in furniture.

In higher-volume operations, the choice of bulk packs — often without screws — lets you standardize on your own fastener inventory. The same #6 or #8 wood screw can serve multiple products, reducing the number of SKUs in your stock room. Pair figure 8 fasteners with powered screwdrivers or auto-feed systems, and the attachment step blends seamlessly into an assembly line.

Consider also the aftersales service you offer. If a client ever needs to move a large table, the ability to remove the top easily is a selling point. The figure 8 system supports this without rework, unlike glued or permanent joinery. So the fasteners not only speed initial production but also add life-cycle value to your product.

Consolidated Buyer's Guide: Figure 8 Fastener Selection at a Glance

Aspect	Key Considerations
Installation method	Recess with Forstner bit or router; screw to apron. Quick with jig.
Fastener count	Space every 12–16 inches; extras near corners. Eight or more for large tables.
Material & finish	Zinc-plated steel for indoors; stainless or high-plating for outdoor/moisture.
Tooling required	5/8" or 11/16" Forstner bit; can use CNC or template for repeatability.
Common pitfall	Wrong screw size, insufficient depth, too few fasteners, incompatible coating.
Workflow integration	Enables finishing before assembly; easy disassembly; bulk packs cut inventory SKUs.

Frequently Asked Questions

How many figure 8 fasteners do I need for a tabletop?

As a general rule, space them every 12 to 16 inches along the apron, and add extras near corners for larger tops. For a standard 6-foot dining table, eight fasteners typically provide secure attachment and resist racking.

What is the difference between figure 8 fasteners and Z-clips?

Both allow wood movement, but figure 8 fasteners mount in a simple drilled recess while Z-clips require a routed slot. Figure 8 clips also position the screw closer to the table edge, which suits narrow aprons. Choose based on your tooling and preference.

Can I use any screw with figure 8 fasteners?

No—the screw must fit the countersunk hole in the fastener and be short enough not to protrude through the tabletop. Use the manufacturer's recommended screw size and test-fit before ordering bulk quantities.

Are figure 8 fasteners strong enough for heavy tables?

Yes, when spaced correctly. Each steel bracket supports significant weight, but the critical factor is using enough fasteners to distribute the load and prevent racking. For very heavy solid-wood tops, increase the count and consider thicker-gauge brackets.

Do I need a special tool to install figure 8 fasteners?

A Forstner bit matching the fastener's outer diameter (typically 5/8 or 11/16 inch) is required for the recess. A drill and driver for the screws are also needed. Many shops create a simple jig to speed placement.

Categories [Uncategorized](#)