

TWW



Issue 11, May 2021

Hi Steve R,

In last month's letter, I talked about how so many of us have the notion that everyone else seems to be doing woodworking The Right Way. This month, I'd like to expand upon this theme of common woodworker thoughts by – HOLY CRAP WHAT'S GOING ON WITH LUMBER PRICES!!!

Okay, okay, since the cost of lumber seems to be the number one issue in the woodworking community, I think I should set aside this month's pep talk in order to give you, well, a different pep talk.

Yes, the cost of lumber has skyrocketed in the past year due to a lot of different factors beyond my control, most of which are beyond my level of comprehension. But like every issue these days, Sides Must Be Taken. (Rest assured, your side is the correct one.)

I don't pretend to understand why the price of anything goes up or down, let alone understand how commodity markets work, but I can pretty much state unequivocally that I simply don't have all the facts. Nor do I wish to spend my time in lengthy research to get to the bottom of this topic when there's very little I can do about it. There are three simple words that we shouldn't be afraid to say:

I don't know.

It's normal to feel frustrated at the price of a 2x4 and it's perfectly normal to be confused at all the opinions and reasons everyone seems to have as to the cause. But a few years ago I learned the freedom and power of being strong enough to say, "I don't know."

I apply those three words to many parts of my life and here's the thing: Nobody has ever thought less of me, ridiculed me, or shamed me in any way for simply admitting, "I don't know". It's easy. Saying, "I don't know" requires no justification and leads to no antagonism.

If you are passionate about woodworking, you will find a way to keep building. I've been there. I've torn apart discarded furniture from the side of the road to get wood, and I've busted apart more pallets than I can count.

Be content to let other people waste their time debating lumber prices while you spend your time facing a challenge. You probably got into woodworking because it's a creative outlet, so now's a great opportunity to get creative. Think about your hobby from a different perspective. Can you make smaller projects? How about finally using that scrap lumber you've been hoarding? How cool would it be to make some outdoor planters using reclaimed lumber?

Some of my most successful projects have been ones I've built using reclaimed lumber. Check out my rustic wheelbarrow below or [the pallet wood potting bench](#) pictured at the top of this newsletter. This might open up a whole new world of woodworking for you. And if you want to make a few bucks, customers love projects made with wood that has a story behind it ... just sayin'.

Keep moving forward. And let me see any of the cool things you've made from pallet wood or other reclaimed lumber. Share it with me on [Instagram!](#)



Have a great month,

Steve

BTW, my podcast is growing by leaps and bounds. It's not about woodworking, but if you are an avid YouTube viewer, you'll love it. Every week we chat with a different YouTuber from all different genres and hear stories about their channels and their passions. Whether it's about civil engineering or car detailing or internet culture, it's a super diverse range of guests and the most unique podcast around. I hope you'll check it out! You can listen to **Chad and Steve Have a Podcast** on Spotify, Amazon, Apple Podcasts or on [our all-new website](#).

Pallet Wood Wheelbarrow



Eight years ago, I made this wheelbarrow planter box out of free pallet wood. It's one of my favorite projects because it required thinking outside the box of dimensional

lumber. Plus it's one of those projects that always gets compliments anytime someone sees it in the yard.

Essential Shop Jigs

Ever try to cut tapered table legs?



The Napa Valley Dining Table project in my [Powered Up](#) course includes tapered legs, giving the project a classic, sleek look.

There are a lot of different ways to make taper cuts on a table saw and they all require a special jig to make the cut. But that doesn't mean you have to spend money on a store-bought jig. They are easy to make and use, and they don't need to be overly complicated since it's not the kind of jig you'll need to use very often.

So here's my version – pretty much the simplest one you'll find. And it works great! Be sure to check out all of my [Essential Shop Jigs and download free plans](#).

More on the way!

Community Highlights

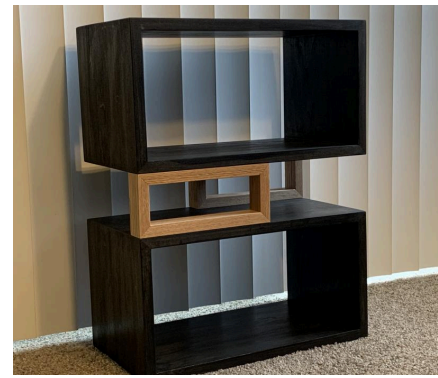
Pandemic Hobbies

Anil set a goal at the beginning of the pandemic to build his son a study table. After joining our woodworking community and watching many encouraging YouTube videos, his one-project goal became his new favorite hobby. He was even featured in an article in his local newspaper highlighting passions sparked by the pandemic.



Here are photos of two of his recent projects – a well-

designed clothes hamper and a beautiful bedside table. Keep up the great work, Anil!



This Month's Member Projects

Check out these creative projects built by a few of our [Weekend Workshop](#) and [Weekend Woodworker](#) members!



Chic Charging Station

This is a brilliant idea from Kara, a member of [The Weekend Woodworker](#) and [The Weekend Workshop](#). It's a stylish cabinet for charging all kinds of devices in one place.

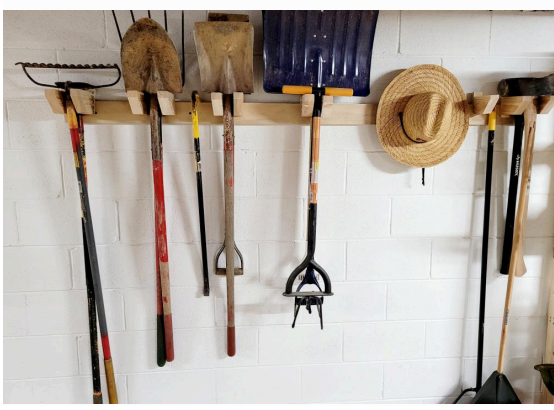
I love how it's customized to fit perfectly in this particular space. (Another benefit of DIY!) But most of all, I *love* the color! It somehow feels very retro, like an appliance from the 1950s, but filled with modern tech.



Springtime Scrap Project

Here's Adam's take on a great springtime garden project. A potting bench is something every gardener can use. It's got a dry sink for keeping soil and is especially handy for container gardening.

Plus, he only used materials he had on hand. Well done!



Handy Tool Storage

And finally, if you are looking for another fun spring project, how about organizing your garden tools? Sam combined a couple of [The Weekend Workshop](#) projects to come up with this sturdy and practical design.

Thanks for reading,

- Steve

P.S. If you are new this month, you can read last month's issue of Notes From the Shop [here](#).

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