

2 x 4 (aka tubafore) Contest Season

It's that time again – when woodworkers will be scouring the stacks of their local hardware stores for that perfect piece of dimensioned lumber for their entry in the annual 2 x 4 contest. The contest is popular around the world with woodworking groups – and also with publications and organizations dedicated to the career and/or hobby.

The rules differ from place to place and group to group, although many associations, like ours, hold to strict restriction of a single piece of dimensioned lumber (2" x 4" x 8' nominal), some allowing any additional adornment of a non-wood (metal, stone, glass, fabric, etc.) nature to make a piece of art or wonder. As most of us know, knotty and poorly structured dimensioned lumber is generally not something that most of us would use to make any presentation piece, but that's the whole idea, and challenge, isn't it?

Google "2 x 4 contest" and you'll find plenty of examples of innovative and creative woodworker submissions – I've collected a few below. My own discovery this month is that there are some open contests out there that offer pretty decent prizes, such as this year's first ever Canadian Woodworking 2x4 contest (sorry, closed on May 13) and the Instructables "One Board" contest. I may just submit to a few of these myself after learning about the nice prizes (not to mention the bragging rights) up for grabs.

Here are a few sights that I enjoyed and have curated for you to encourage your own innovation:



[Suncoast Woodcrafters Guild 2022 2x4 Contest](#) (you can also check out their 2018-2023 projects)



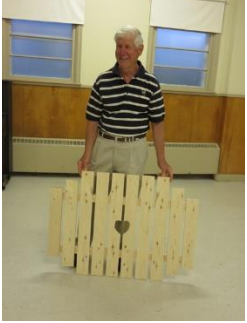









[The Patriot Woodworker 2014/2015 submissions](#)

[Autodesk Instructables One Board Contest](#)

[Canadian Woodworking 2 x 4 Challenge](#) (closed May 13, to be published Autumn 2024)

I think our own members hold their own with many of these woodworkers – here's proof (and hopefully encouragement) for you (please excuse the abundance of pics from my own submissions, it is what I've got handy):

			
Gary – Shoji screen	Gene – spice shelf	Walt - guitar	Bob – scale model

			
Stephen – sunglasses shelf	Doug - Trellis	Phil – gate?	Misc entries from 2018
			
Doug – garden pickets	Bill – tomato cages	Calum – garden trugs	Mary Elizabeth – book shelf/ books (winner, Taylor Timbr Mart contest)
			
Stephen - crates	Mary Elizabeth – quilt pattern hanging	Stephen – tablet stand	Stephen – “Tulip” magazine rack

I hope these references get your creative juices going – we would love to see some exciting entries in the AWA's 2024 2x4 Challenge this year. As we have done in years past, drawings for 2 \$25 Lee Valley gift certificates will be made from all entries this year. Good luck, and have fun!