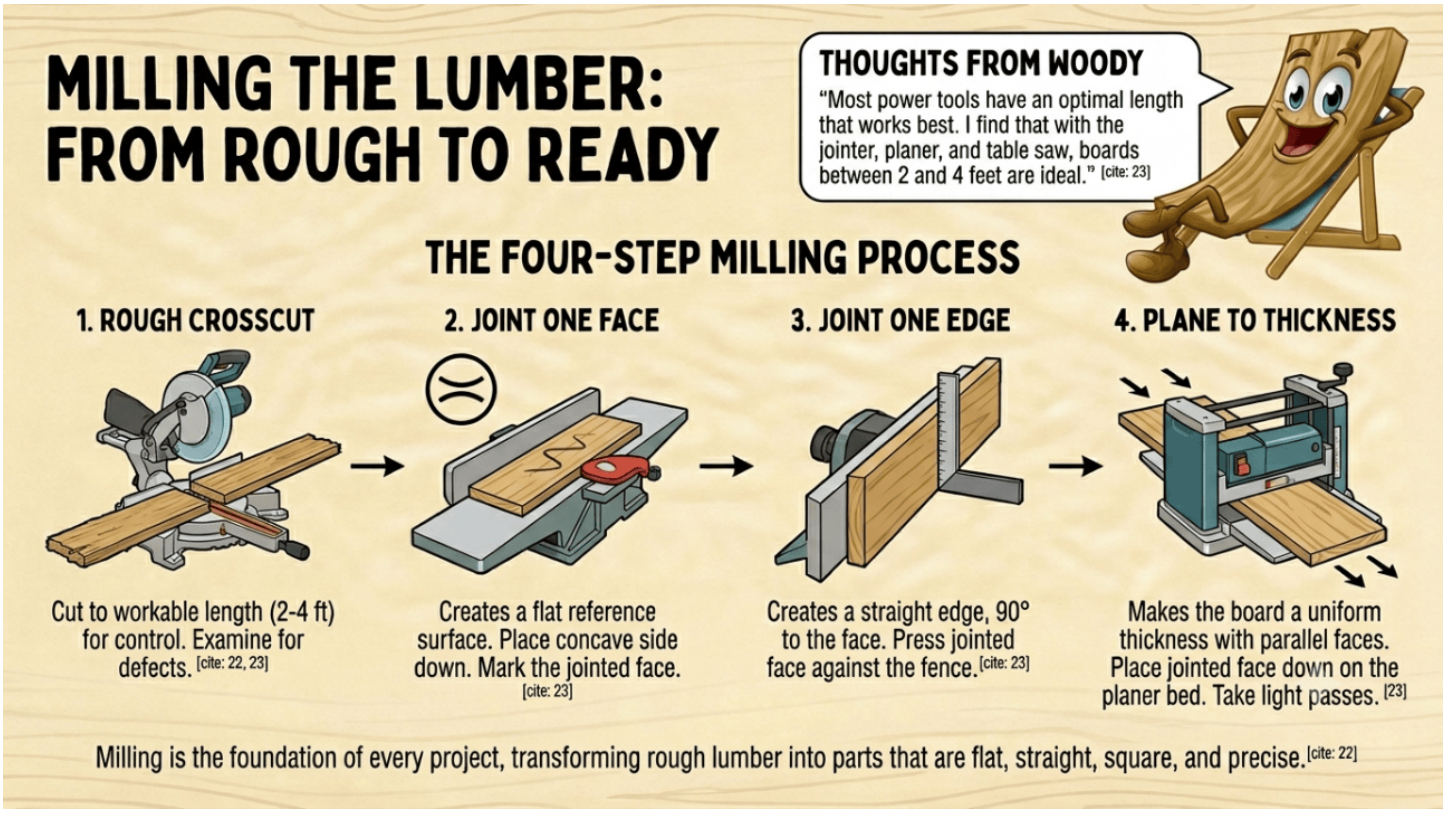
Milling Lumber: Rough to Ready

Skills · https://thejoinery.club/docs/skill-milling-lumber/

The four-step process that turns a rough board into a part you can build with.

Rough lumber is neither flat nor uniform. Even “surfaced” lumber from a big box store has been run through machines quickly, without regard for accuracy. Furniture needs parts that are flat, straight, square, and precise. Milling is how you get there, and it is the step beginners are most tempted to skip.



The short version

- **1. Rough crosscut** — break boards down to workable lengths, generally two to four feet. Short boards are hard to control; long ones are unwieldy.

- **2. Joint one face** — this is your reference surface. Concave side down, light cuts, until the whole face shows fresh marks.
- **3. Joint one edge** — jointed face against the fence, giving you an edge square to that face.
- **4. Plane to thickness** — jointed face down, light passes, until the board is a uniform thickness with parallel faces.

Where you will use it

Every project on the ladder starts here. See What to Build Next.

Stuck?

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