



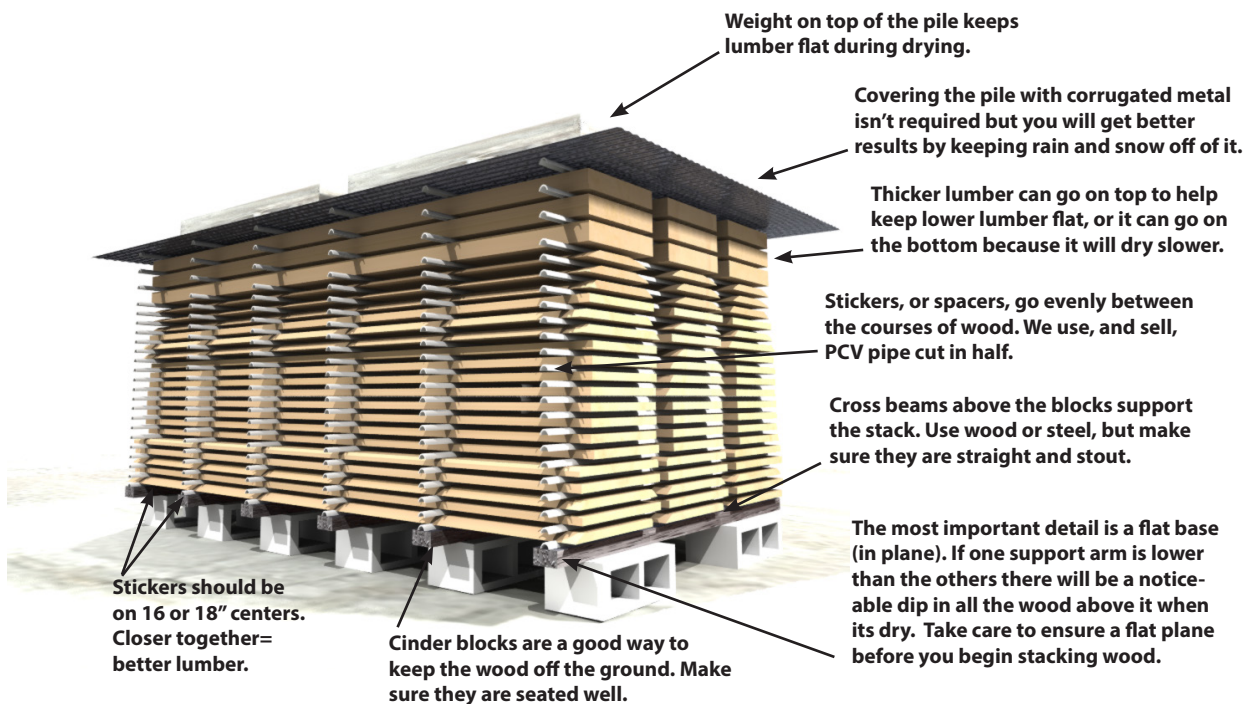
Air Drying Lumber

Quick reference guide for a good dry stack

Air dried lumber is a natural, inexpensive and energy efficient way to achieve quality lumber. Kilns are faster but often introduce stress in the lumber that makes it less desirable when working. Generally for hardwoods in our region it takes about 1 year per inch of thickness to dry wood. Some woods such as ash, elm and hackberry may be a bit faster than that but for walnut and oak, its about an inch per year. Two inch thick lumber = two years at least.

Essentially air drying is simply spacing out green (wet) lumber in such a way that moisture can diffuse from the inside of it, through the cell walls, and out into the atmosphere- ultimately achieving a balance with the ambient moisture of any given space (10-14%). The lumber wants to deform during this process so a nicely organized and weighted pile is the best chance you have at keeping your lumber flat during the drying process as its posture becomes defined.

Here are some pointers when setting up a stack.



A good solution for wood workers is to set up two to three dedicated stacks and cycle through them, sawing every few months to add wood where dry wood has been used on projects. If done this way there is only the initial waiting period for the first batch and then you will always have dry lumber to use.