

## Tips for County Fair Exhibitors

When you enter a woodworking exhibit at the county fair, you'll be showing the public, and the judge, what you've learned in the project. Make your exhibit the best it can be. Here are some tips.

1. Construction
  - a. Should be constructed of the proper kind of wood for the intended use of the item.
  - b. Article should be sturdy for intended use.
2. Workmanship
  - a. Pieces should be cut and assembled accurately. Saw cuts should be square.
  - b. Joints should be strong and fit properly. Exposed joints should be sealed with wood sealer before finish coat is applied.
  - c. Nails and screws (especially on indoor articles) should be properly countersunk and the holes filled with wood filler. Other wood fasteners should be used properly.
  - d. Wood filler used to fill nail or screw holes or end joints should be colored to match the wood. Wood should be free of hammer marks.
  - e. Drawers should be sanded smooth, with a minimum of one coat of finish. (Makes it easier to keep drawer clean and helps prevent splinters or snagging.) Drawer glides should be waxed so they slide freely.
  - f. Hardware, such as hinges and fasteners, should fit and work smoothly.
3. Finish
  - a. Surface should be prepared for type of finish applied. Articles should be properly cured and dried. Articles with wet paint or tacky finishes may be disqualified (varies with the county fair).
  - b. Finish should be suited to the particular item.
    - If intended for indoor use, item should have a smooth-hard finish (varnish or shellac) or smooth-soft finish (wax). These items should be smooth to the touch.
    - Utility and outdoor items should have durable finish for preservation of the wood.
  - c. Any finishes (varnish, shellac, stain, linseed oil, sealant, wax or paint) should be properly applied. The item could be left natural as well.
4. General Characteristics
  - a. Should be attractive and well proportioned.
  - b. Should serve purpose for which intended.
  - c. "Creative" use of wood should be more than stamping of a pattern on wood, or building a shelf or similar item without a pattern.