The Basics of Hardwoods

Lumber is measured in Quarters:

One of the most confusing aspects of buying lumber is figuring out the terminology for thickness. Rough lumber (which has not been milled or surfaced) is sold in "quarters". Each quarter represents ¼" of the thickness in its rough state. So, four-quarter lumber (written as 4/4) is 1" thick in its rough state; 5/4 is 1-1/4" and so on. When the lumber is surfaced and straight lined by the mill it loses thickness and width. That's why 4/4 lumber is 13/16" thick when its surfaced and measures ½" wider than it is when calculating board feet.

Called	Rough Thickness	Finished Thickness	Math
1/2*	1"	1/2"	(Length in **INCHES** × Width in Inches × 1) ÷ 144 or (Length in **FEET** × Width in Inches × 1) ÷ 12
4/4	1"	13/16"	(Length in **INCHES** × Width in Inches × 1) ÷ 144 or (Length in **FEET** × Width in Inches × 1) ÷ 12
5/4	1-1/4"	1"	(Length in **INCHES** × Width in Inches × 1.25) ÷ 144 or (Length in **FEET** × Width in Inches × 1.25) ÷ 12
6/4	1-1/2"	1-1/4"	(Length in **INCHES** × Width in Inches × 1.5) ÷ 144 or (Length in **FEET** × Width in Inches × 1.5) ÷ 12
8/4	2"	1-3/4"	(Length in **INCHES** × Width in Inches × 2) ÷ 144 or (Length in **FEET** × Width in Inches × 2) ÷ 12
10/4	2-1/2"	Sold Rough 2-1/2"	(Length in **INCHES** × Width in Inches × 2.5) ÷ 144 or (Length in **FEET** × Width in Inches × 2.5) ÷ 12
12/4	3"	Sold Rough 3"	(Length in **INCHES** × Width in Inches × 3) ÷ 144 or (Length in **FEET** × Width in Inches × 3) ÷ 12
16/4	4"	Sold Rough 4"	(Length in **INCHES** × Width in Inches × 4) ÷ 144 or (Length in **FEET** × Width in Inches × 4) ÷ 12

*1/2" material is sold by the **SQUARE FOOT (SF)**: thickness is calculated as 1.