

# Hardwoods

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# Basswood



- **Distribution:** Eastern North America
- **Color/Appearance:** Pale white to light brown color, with sapwood and heartwood sections not clearly defined. Growth rings tend to be subtle, and color is mostly uniform throughout the face grain of the wood. Knots and other defects are uncommon.
- **Grain/Texture:** Grain is straight, with a fine, even texture and moderate natural luster.
- **Common Uses:** Carvings, lumber, musical instruments (electric guitar bodies), veneer, plywood, and wood pulp and fiber products.

# Beech



- **Distribution:** Eastern United States
- **Color/Appearance:** Beech is typically a pale cream color, sometimes with a pink or brown hue. Veneer tends to be slightly darker colored, as slicing the veneer usually requires the wood to be prepared with steam, which gives the wood a more golden tone.
- **Grain/Texture:** Grain is straight, with a fine to medium uniform texture. Moderate natural luster.
- **Common Uses:** Lumber, veneer, flooring, crates/pallets, railroad ties, musical instruments, furniture, turned objects, and other small wooden objects.

# Cherry



- **Distribution:** Eastern North America
- **Color/Appearance:** Heartwood is a light pinkish brown when freshly cut, darkening to a medium reddish brown with time and upon exposure to light. Wide sapwood is a pale yellowish color. It is not uncommon for boards to contain at least some sapwood portions along the outer edges.
- **Grain/Texture:** The grain is usually straight—with the exception of figured pieces with curly grain patterns. Has a fine, even texture with moderate natural luster.
- **Common Uses:** Cabinetry, fine furniture, flooring, interior millwork, veneer, turned objects, and small specialty wood items.



# Oak, Red



- **Distribution:** Northeastern United States and Southeastern Canada
- **Color/Appearance:** Heartwood is a light to medium brown, commonly with a reddish cast. Paler sapwood is not always sharply demarcated from the heartwood. Quartersawn sections display prominent ray fleck patterns
- **Grain/Texture:** Grain is straight with a coarse uneven texture. The pores are so large and open that it is said that a person can blow into one end of the wood, and air will come out the other end: provided that the grain runs straight enough.
- **Common Uses:** Cabinetry, furniture, interior trim, flooring, and veneer.

# Oak, White



- **Distribution:** Eastern United States
- **Color/Appearance:** Heartwood is a light to medium brown, commonly with an olive cast. Paler sapwood is not always sharply demarcated from the heartwood. Quartersawn sections display prominent ray fleck patterns
- **Grain/Texture:** Grain is straight, with a coarse, uneven texture.
- **Common Uses:** Cabinetry, furniture, interior trim, flooring, boatbuilding, barrels, and veneer.

# Ash



- **Distribution:** Eastern North America
- **Color/Appearance:** The heartwood is a light to medium brown color. Sapwood can be very wide and tends to be a beige or light brown; not always clearly or sharply demarcated from heartwood.
- **Grain/Texture:** Has a medium to coarse texture similar to oak. The grain is almost always straight and regular, though sometimes moderately curly or figured boards can be found.
- **Common Uses:** Flooring, millwork, boxes/crates, baseball bats, and other turned objects such as tool handles.

# Sassafras



- **Distribution:** Eastern United States
- **Color/Appearance:** Heartwood is a medium to light brown, sometimes with an orange or olive hue. Color tends to darken with age.
- **Grain/Texture:** Grain is straight, with a coarse uneven texture.
- **Common Uses:** Utility lumber, fence posts, boatbuilding, and furniture.



# Maple, Hard



- **Distribution:** Northeastern North America
- **Color/Appearance:** Unlike most other hardwoods, the *sapwood* of hard maple lumber is most commonly used rather than its heartwood. Sapwood color ranges from nearly white, to an off-white cream color, sometimes with a reddish or golden hue. The heartwood tends to be a darker reddish brown.
- **Grain/Texture:** Grain is generally straight but may be wavy. Has a fine, even texture.
- **Common Uses:** Flooring (from basketball courts and dance-floors to bowling alleys and residential), veneer, paper (pulpwood), musical instruments, cutting boards, butcher blocks, workbenches, baseball bats, and other turned objects and specialty wood items.

# Maple, Spalted



- **Botanical Designation:** Not a distinct species of maple; spalting is a fungal discoloration caused by partially decayed wood.
- **Distribution:** Primarily temperate regions in the Northern Hemisphere.
- **Other Comments:** Maple is a common lumber seen with spalting, as the light colored sapwood provides good contrast for the spalting.



# Hickory



- **Distribution:** Eastern United States
- **Color/Appearance:** Heartwood tends to be light to medium brown, with a reddish hue; sapwood is a paler yellowish brown. Boards with contrasting heartwood and sapwood create a somewhat rustic appearance that's sometimes marketed as Calico Hickory.
- **Grain/Texture:** Grain is usually straight, though occasionally wavy, with a medium texture.
- **Common Uses:** Tool handles, ladder rungs, wheel spokes, flooring, etc.

# Walnut



- **Distribution:** Southern Mexico, Central and South America
- **Color/Appearance:** Heartwood tends to be darker than temperate walnut species, with a deep chocolate brown color, sometimes with a purplish hue. May also contain streaks of lighter-colored wood mixed throughout the heartwood, which can sometimes be extensive and result in a high degree of waste. Grain figuring such as curl seems to be much less common than other walnut species.
- **Grain/Texture:** Grain is usually straight but can be irregular. Has a medium to coarse texture and good natural luster.
- **Common Uses:** Furniture, cabinetry, veneers, flooring, musical instruments, and interior trim.



# Birch



- **Distribution:** Northeastern North America
- **Color/Appearance:** Heartwood tends to be a light reddish brown, with nearly white sapwood. Occasionally figured pieces are available with a wide, shallow curl similar to the curl found in Cherry. There is virtually no color distinction between annual growth rings, giving Birch a somewhat dull, uniform appearance.
- **Grain/Texture:** Grain is generally straight or slightly wavy, with a fine, even texture. Low natural luster.
- **Common Uses:** Plywood, boxes, crates, turned objects, interior trim, and other small specialty wood items.

# Poplar



- **Distribution:** Eastern United States
- **Color/Appearance:** Heartwood is light cream to yellowish brown, with occasional streaks of gray or green. Sapwood is pale yellow to white, not always clearly demarcated from the heartwood.
- **Grain/Texture:** Poplar typically has a straight, uniform grain, with a medium texture. Low natural luster.
- **Common Uses:** Seldom used for its appearance, (except in the case of *Rainbow Poplar*), Poplar is a utility wood in nearly every sense. It's used for pallets, crates, upholstered furniture frames, paper (pulpwood), and plywood.