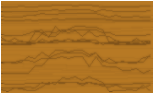


HARDWOOD COMPARISON GUIDE



A practical guide to common hardwood species stocked by W Burton & Sons. Information is aligned with standard timber reference guidance and intended to support species selection, not replace project-specific advice.

Species	Appearance	Typical Use	Durability (Exterior)	Workability	Finish Suitability	Maintenance / Buying Note	Price Level
 Iroko	Golden orange to brown, darkening with age. Coarse, even texture with interlocked or irregular grain.	Exterior joinery, gates, doors, windows, boatbuilding, marine work, worktops and furniture.	Very High ★★★★★	Machines satisfactorily, but natural deposits and interlocked grain can blunt cutters. Use sharp tooling.	Excellent with oils and exterior finishes. Wipe with methylated spirits before finishing to improve adhesion.	Naturally oily/durable timber. Pre-drilling and careful surface preparation recommended.	£££
 Idigbo	Pale yellow-brown to light brown, sometimes oak-like. Straight to slightly interlocked grain with medium to coarse texture.	Painted exterior joinery, windows, doors, gates, furniture and general joinery.	High ★★★★■	Generally works well and is stable in service. Interlocked grain may pick up when planing.	Excellent for painted joinery. Use aluminium primer or stain blocker as tannins can leach through paint.	Good value exterior joinery timber where a painted finish is planned.	££
 American White Oak	Pale yellow-brown to biscuit brown, often similar to European oak, with attractive silver grain/ray figure.	Furniture, cabinetmaking, flooring, staircases, worktops, joinery and quality interior work.	High ★★★★■	Variable by growth rate. Generally machines well; can be hard on tools. Pre-boring advised for fixings.	Excellent with oils, waxes, stains, lacquers and clear finishes.	Use non-ferrous or galvanised/stainless fixings outdoors to reduce staining risk.	£££
 European Prime Oak	Light tan to biscuit brown, usually straight grained, with distinctive medullary rays and traditional oak figure.	Premium joinery, furniture, staircases, worktops, doors, frames, thresholds and traditional work.	High ★★★★■	Hard, tough and slower drying. Moderate to severe blunting effect; sharp cutters recommended.	Excellent with oils, waxes, stains, liming, fuming and polishing treatments.	Avoid ordinary steel/iron contact where staining matters. Allow for natural movement.	£££
 American White Ash	Cream to pale brown, generally straight grained and coarse but even textured.	Furniture, stair parts, handles, sports goods, cabinet work and interior joinery.	Low to Moderate ★★■●●	Works satisfactorily with hand and machine tools. Good strength, toughness and shock resistance.	Glues, stains and polishes well. Good for paint, stain and clear finishes.	Best treated as an interior hardwood unless the design and finish protect it well.	££
 Sapele	Medium to dark reddish-brown, often with ribbon stripe on quartered faces. Fine texture; interlocked or wavy grain.	Doors, windows, quality joinery, shopfitting, furniture, cabinetmaking, worktops and flooring.	Moderate to High ★★★★■	Can be difficult where grain is interlocked, but nails, screws and glues well. Excellent polished finish.	Excellent with oils, varnishes and lacquers. Takes a smooth polished finish.	Use sharp cutters and care when staining to avoid uneven absorption on interlocked grain.	££
 Dark Red Meranti	Medium to dark red-brown with interlocked grain and fine to medium texture; occasional resin streaks.	Interior and exterior joinery, doors, windows, mouldings, panelling, shopfitting and furniture.	Moderate ★★★●●	Works well with hand and machine tools. Glues, stains and polishes well. Stable in service.	Good for paint, stain, polish and clear finishes.	Suitable for many joinery uses; exterior performance depends on detail, finish and maintenance.	£
 Tulipwood	Creamy white to pale yellow-green or light brown, sometimes with mineral streaks. Fine, even texture.	Paint-grade joinery, mouldings, cabinetry, furniture, shelving and interior decorative work.	Low ★●●●●	Very easy to machine, cut and mould. Ideal for detailed interior work.	Excellent painted finish; also takes stains and varnish, though often chosen for paint-grade work.	Not recommended for exposed exterior use. Best for interior or fully protected applications.	£
 Western Red Cedar*	Pinkish to reddish brown with marked colour variation; straight grained, coarse textured and aromatic.	Cladding, shingles, screening, fencing, planters, fascias, soffits and lightweight exterior work.	High ★★★★■	Works easily with little blunting. Nails and screws well; use suitable corrosion-resistant fixings.	Excellent with oils and exterior finishes. Can also be left to weather naturally to silver-grey.	Technically a softwood, included because it complements the hardwood range for exterior projects.	££

Notes: Durability ratings are general exterior guidance and assume sound design, ventilation, drainage, suitable fixings and appropriate maintenance. Natural timber colour and grain vary from board to board. *Western Red Cedar is botanically a softwood, but is included because it is commonly selected alongside hardwoods for exterior applications.

Price level is indicative only: £ = lower relative cost, ££ = mid range, £££ = premium.