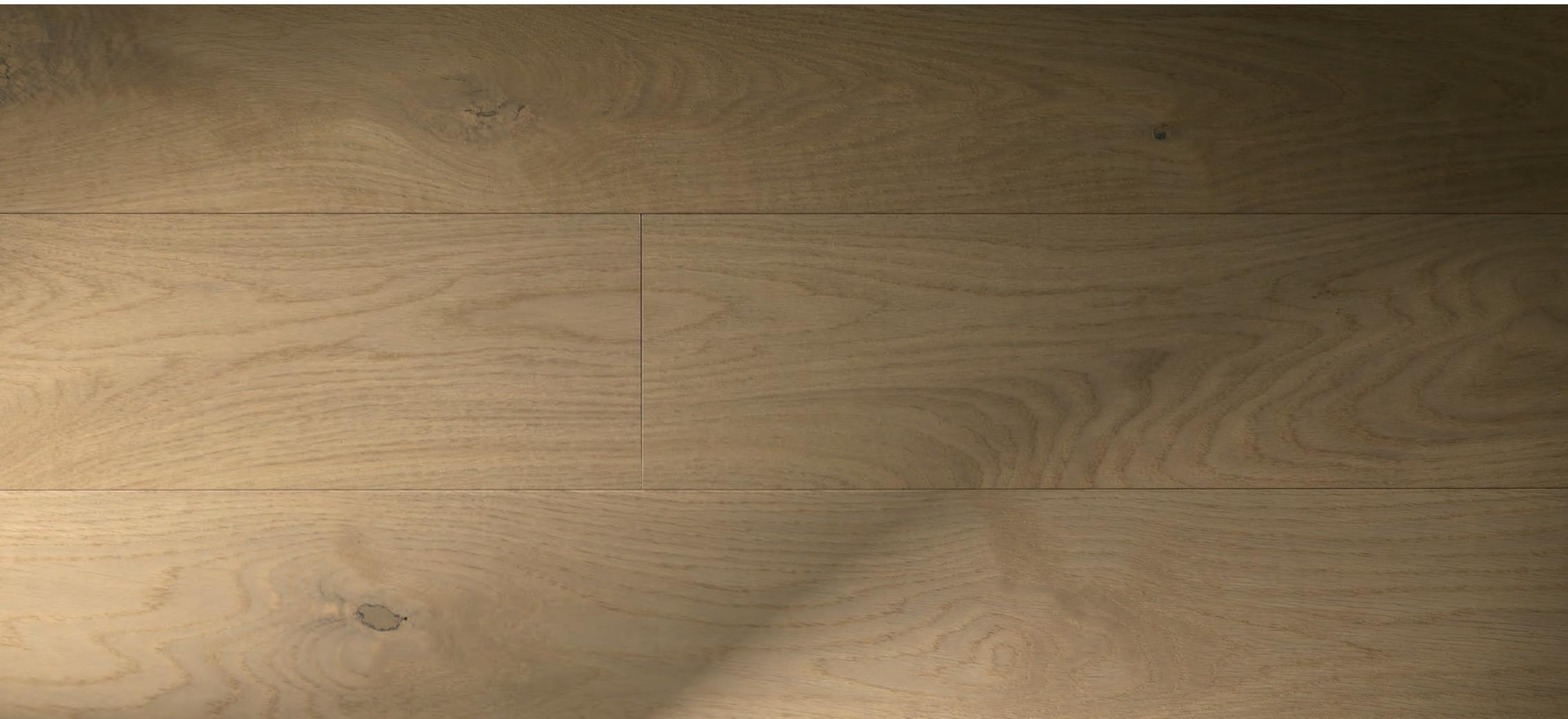




GRADE GUIDELINES



Important notice

MERCIER's mission is to walk consumers through the process of choosing a new floor. In this Grade Guidelines, you'll find all the characteristics of each grade and species of wood in the Mercier product line.

Note that the images appearing in this guide are for illustrative purposes only. A printed brochure can never accurately reproduce all the variations and subtleties of wood colors and textures, so please always refer to natural samples.



THE **original** PREFINISHED WOOD FLOORING

Mercier is the pioneer in manufacturing prefinished wood flooring.

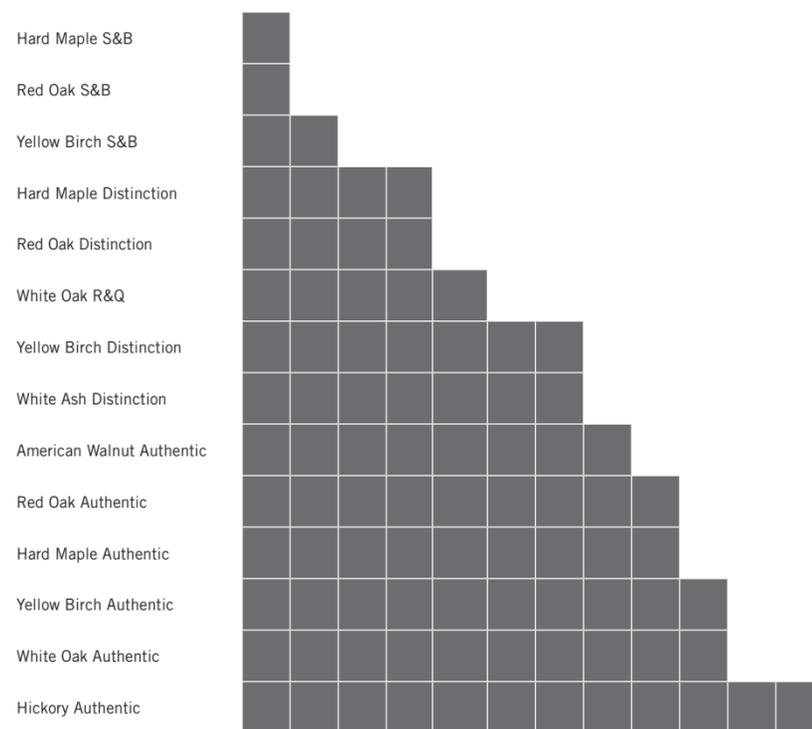
Our goal, which stemmed from a visionary and practical need to eliminate on-site finishing of wood floors, was the springboard to our culture of innovation. Dust from sanding, drying times and emissions in the home are now inconveniences of the past thanks to the bold, creative drive that transformed the industry over four decades ago. It is thanks to this culture of innovation, which permeates throughout everything Mercier does, that we have developed a renowned mastery of wood itself, the science of surface finishing, and wood flooring design. Mercier's relentless pursuit to offer the very best of wood and our uncompromising reverence for it—from its inherent properties, nobility and authenticity—is what has enabled us to carve an enviable legacy that can never be equalled.

There can only be one original. Mercier.

Grade selection

The grade classifies the wood boards based on their APPEARANCE. As each board is unique, we group them according to the color variations and character marks that determine the appearance of your floor.

If you prefer a clean, uniform appearance with little variation and very few character marks, you will most likely opt for the Select & Better grade. If you prefer pronounced color variations, the Authentic grade will definitely be your first choice. If moderate variations are more to your taste, the Distinction grade will be your best option.



It should be noted that a product of the same grade and species may have more important character marks in size and number according to the increase of its width.

Table of contents

Species	Collections
Red Oak	White Ash
Select & Better 11	Distinction 45
Distinction 13	Authentic 47
Authentic 15	Yellow Birch
Herringbone Collection 17	Select & Better 51
	Distinction 53
Hard Maple	Authentic 55
Select & Better 21	American Walnut
Distinction 23	Authentic 61
Authentic 25	
Herringbone Collection 27	Origins Collection 67
	Design+ Collection 69
White Oak	Naked Collection 71
Authentic 31	Atmosphere Collection 73
R&Q (rift and quarter sawn) 33	Elegancia Collection 75
Herringbone Collection 35	Element Collection 77
	World Attraction Collection 83
Hickory	Herringbone Collection 85
Authentic 41	
	Hardwood Flooring platform 88
	Glossary 90
	Types of cuts 91

Red Oak





Red Oak

Latin name : Quercus rubra

Grain and color

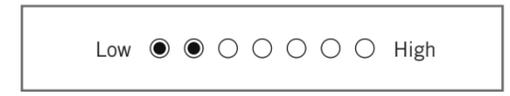
Red Oak is an open grain, ring-porous species that's characterized by visible, well defined growth rings. Tones range from pinkish beige to reddish brown.

Wood oxidation

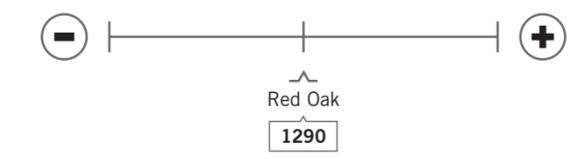
Red Oak moderately changes color over time, acquiring a slightly amber hue.

Grades

- Select & Better page 13
- Distinction page 15
- Authentic page 17
- Herringbone Collection page 85



Janka hardness





Red Oak

Grade

Select & Better

Light, even appearance with slight color variations between boards.
This grade showcases the sapwood's natural tones, from pinkish beige to light brown.
Pronounced contrasts in the same board are not allowed in this grade.



Knots

Sound pin knots are accepted.
Limited in number.

Splits and checks

Splits and checks are not accepted.



Streaks

Small mineral streaks are accepted. Limited in number.

Length

Random lengths
Minimum 12" (305 mm)



Red Oak

Grade

Distinction

This grade's rich appearance and moderate contrasts are the result of a balanced selection of the species' natural tones, ranging from pinkish beige to medium brown. Light to moderate variation between boards.



Knots

Small sounds and repaired knots are accepted. Limited in number and diameter.

Splits and checks

Splits are not accepted in this grade. Occasional surface checks are accepted.



Streaks

Small mineral streaks of any length are allowed. Limited in number.

Length

Random lengths
Minimum 12" (305 mm)



Red Oak

Grade

Authentic

The contrasting appearance of this grade represent a mix of the species' natural full-bodied tones. Moderate to pronounced variation between boards.



Knots

Sound knots and knots filled with wood putty (including slight openings or depressions) are accepted without limitation. Openings in and around knots are accepted.

Splits and checks

Surface splits and checks and end splits are accepted in this grade.

Length*

Random lengths
Minimum:
6 1/2" : 16" (406 mm)
8 1/8" : 18" (457 mm)

* May occasionally include 12" (305 mm) boards.



Streaks

Mineral streaks are accepted without limitation.

Other characteristics

Varnish cracks around character marks are accepted in this grade.

Hard Maple





Naked Collection Hard Maple Authentic 8 1/8"



Hard Maple

Latin name : Acer saccharum

Grain and color

Hard Maple has a fine and even-textured grain. Growth rings are narrow and lightly contrasted. Color variations range from the sapwood's whitish beige to a full-bodied brown, making it the lightest-toned hardwood species.

Wood oxidation

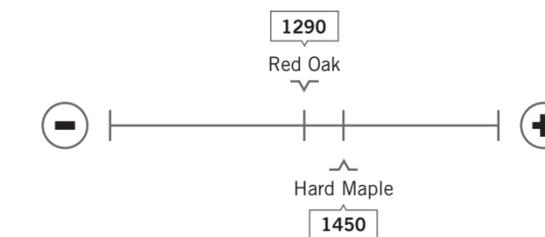
Hard Maple undergoes a moderate change in color over time, acquiring a golden hue.

Grades

- Select & Better page 23
- Distinction page 25
- Authentic page 27
- Herringbone Collection page 86

Low ●●●○○○ High

Janka hardness





Hard Maple

Grade

Select and Better

Light, even appearance, with slight color variations between boards.
This grade showcases the sapwood's natural tones, ranging from creamy white to very light brown.
Pronounced contrasts within a single board are not allowed in this grade.



Knots

Sound pin knots are accepted.
Limited in number.

Splits and checks

Splits and checks are not accepted.



Streaks

Small mineral streaks are accepted. Limited in number.

Length

Random lengths
Minimum 12" (305 mm)



Hard Maple

Grade

Distinction

This grade's rich, moderately contrasted appearance is the result of a balanced selection of the species' natural tones, ranging from creamy white to medium brown. Light to moderate variation between boards.



Knots

Small sound and repaired knots are accepted. Limited in number and diameter.

Splits and checks

Splits are not accepted in this grade. Occasional surface checks are accepted.



Streaks

Small mineral streaks of any length are allowed. Limited in number.

Length

Random lengths
Minimum 12" (305 mm)



Hard Maple

Grade

Authentic

This grade is high in contrasts, reflecting the full range of vivid natural tones found in the species. Moderate to pronounced variation between boards.



Knots

Sound knots and knots filled with wood putty (including slight openings or depressions) are accepted without limitation. Openings in and around knots are accepted.

Splits and checks

Surface splits and checks and end splits are accepted in this grade.

Length*

Random lengths
Minimum:
6 1/2" : 16" (406 mm)
8 1/8" : 18" (457 mm)



Streaks

Mineral streaks are accepted without limitation.

Other characteristics

Varnish cracks around character marks are accepted in this grade.

* May include some 12" (305 mm) boards.

White Oak





White Oak

Latin name : Quercus alba

Grain and color

White Oak has an open grain and is ring porous, with visible, well-defined growth rings, similar to Red Oak. The tones range from creamy light beige to greyish brown.

Wood oxidation

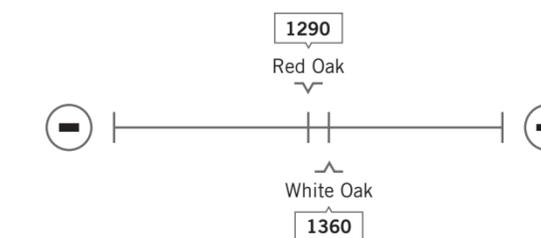
White Oak undergoes a moderate change in color over time, acquiring an amber hue.

Grades

- Authentic page 33
- R&Q (rift and quarter sawn) page 35
- Herringbone Collection page 87

Low High

Janka hardness





White Oak

Grade

Authentic

This grade's rich, moderately contrasting appearance is the result of a balanced mix of all the species' natural tones, from creamy beige to vivid brown. Moderate variation between boards.



Knots

Sound knots and knots filled with wood putty (including slight openings or depressions) are accepted without limitation. Openings in and around knots are accepted.

Splits and checks

Surface splits and checks and end splits are accepted in this grade.

Length*

Random lengths
Minimum:
2 1/4", 3 1/4", 4 1/4"
and 5": 12" (305 mm)
6 1/2": 16" (406 mm)
8 1/8": 18" (457 mm)



Streaks

Mineral streaks are accepted without limitation.

Other characteristics

For 6 1/2" and 8 1/8" boards only: varnish cracks around character marks are accepted in this grade.

* May include some 12" (305 mm) boards.



White Oak

Grade

R&Q (rift and quarter sawn)

Uniform and with slight contrasts, the R&Q grade features a linear single grain, which is distinctive to quarter sawn wood. The coloration is a balanced blend, ranging from cream to golden brown, Light variation between boards.



Knots

Sound knots and knots repaired with wood putty are accepted in limited amounts. Limited in number.

Splits and checks

Splits are not accepted in this grade. Occasional surface checks are accepted.



Streaks

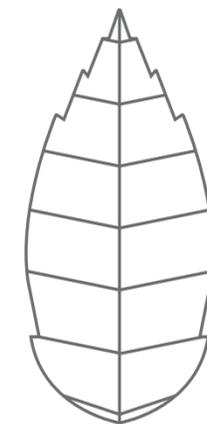
Small mineral streaks of any length are allowed.

Length*

Random lengths
Minimum 16" (406 mm)

* May occasionally include some 12" (305 mm) boards.

Hickory





Hickory

Latin name : Carya spp.

Grain and color

Hickory is a dense, closed-grain wood with visible growth rings. Its color is characterized by a wide range of tones and variations, from golden beige to an intense blackish brown. Prominent character marks give it a rustic, natural look.

Wood oxidation

Hickory undergoes a slight change in color over time, acquiring a golden hue.

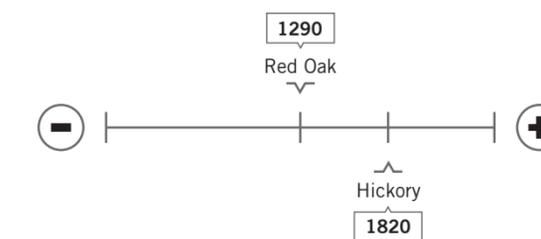
Grade

Authentic

page 41

Low High

Janka hardness





Hickory

Grade

Authentic

This grade is high in tonal contrasts, showcasing the full range of vivid natural colors found in the species. Pronounced variation between boards.



Knots

Sound knots and knots filled with wood putty (including slight openings or depressions) are accepted without limitation. Openings in and around knots are accepted.

Splits and checks

Surface splits and checks and end splits are accepted in this grade.

Length*

Random lengths
Minimum:
2 1/4", 3 1/4", 4 1/4"
and 5": 12" (305 mm)
6 1/2": 16" (406 mm)

* May include some 12" (305 mm) boards.



Streaks

Mineral streaks are accepted without limitation.

Other characteristics

Varnish cracks around character marks are accepted in this grade.

White Ash





Elegancia Collection White Ash Distinction 3 1/4" Sandstone



White Ash

Latin name : Fraxinus americana

Grain and color

White Ash is ring porous, with visible, well-defined growth rings. Its rich spectrum of colors ranges from creamy white with golden undertones to an intense dark brown.

Wood oxidation

Ash undergoes a moderate change in color over time, acquiring an amber hue.

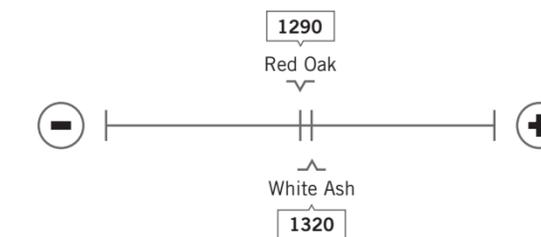
Grade

Distinction

page 47

Low ●●●○○○ High

Janka hardness





White Ash

Grade

Distinction

This grade's rich, high-contrast appearance showcases the species' full range of natural tones, from creamy white to dark brown. Moderate to pronounced variation between boards.



Knots

Sounds and repaired knots are accepted. Limited in number and diameter.

Splits and checks

Splits are not accepted in this grade. Occasional surface checks are accepted.



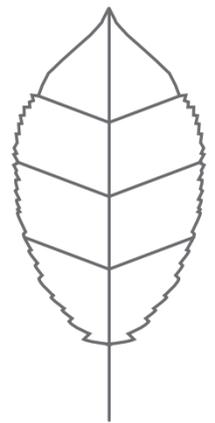
Streaks

Small mineral streaks of any length are allowed. Limited in number.

Length

Random lengths
Minimum 12" (305 mm)

Yellow Birch





Collection Elegancia Yellow Birch Distinction 3 1/4" Volcano Dust



Yellow Birch

Latin name : Betula alleghaniensis

Grain and color

Yellow Birch is straight grained and even textured, with fine, lightly contrasting growth rings. Colors range from the creamy, sometimes pinkish white of the sapwood to an intense reddish brown.

Wood oxidation

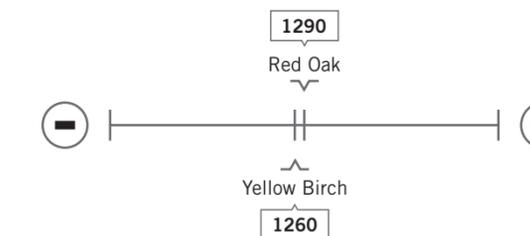
Yellow Birch undergoes a moderate change in color over time, acquiring a slightly amber hue.

Grades

- Select & Better page 53
- Distinction page 55
- Authentic page 57

Low High

Janka hardness





Yellow Birch

Grade

Select & Better

Clear and even in appearance, with slight to moderate color variation between boards. This grade showcases the sapwood's natural tones, ranging from creamy beige to a pink-tinged light brown. Pronounced contrasts within a single board are not allowed in this grade.



Knots

Sound pin knots are accepted. Limited in number.

Splits and checks

Splits and checks are not accepted.



Streaks

Small mineral streaks are accepted. Limited in number.

Length

Minimum 12" (305 mm)



Yellow Birch

Grade

Distinction

This grade's rich, high-contrast appearance showcases the species' full range of natural tones, from creamy beige to reddish brown. Moderate to pronounced variation between boards.



Knots

Small sound knots and repaired knots are accepted. Limited in number and diameter.

Splits and checks

Splits are not accepted in this grade. Occasional surface checks are accepted.



Streaks

Small mineral streaks of any length are allowed. Limited in number.

Length

Random lengths
Minimum 12" (305 mm)



Yellow Birch

Grade

Authentic

This grade is high in contrasts, reflecting the full range of the species' natural, full-bodied tones. Pronounced variation between boards.



Knots

Sound knots and knots filled with wood putty (including slight openings or depressions) are accepted without limitation. Openings in and around knots are accepted.

Splits and checks

Surface splits and checks and end splits are accepted in this grade.

Length

Random lengths
Minimum: 12" (305 mm)



Streaks

Mineral streaks are accepted without limitation.

Other characteristics

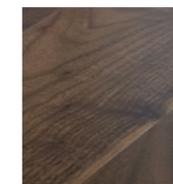
Varnish cracks around character marks are accepted in this grade.

American Walnut





Origins Collection American Walnut Authentic 6 1/2" Natural



American Walnut

Latin name : Juglans nigra

Grain and color

American Walnut has a fine, straight grain. It's characterized by uncommonly deep, rich colors ranging from beige to almost white in the sapwood and light to chocolate brown in the heartwood.

Wood oxidation

Walnut undergoes a moderate change in color over time, turning a lighter, more even golden brown.



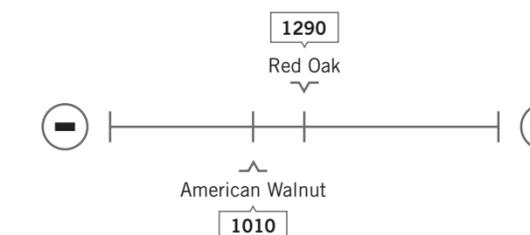
Grade

Authentic

page 63

Low ● ● ● ○ ○ ○ High

Janka hardness





American Walnut

Grade

Authentic

This grade's rich appearance and moderate contrasts reflect the species' wide range of natural colors, from the beige of the sapwood to chocolate brown. Pronounced variation between boards.



Knots

Sound knots and knots filled with wood putty (including slight openings or depressions) are accepted without limitation. Openings in and around knots are accepted.

Splits and checks

Surface splits and checks and end splits are accepted in this grade. Splits filled with wood putty are accepted.

Length*

Random lengths
Minimum:
16" (406 mm)

* May occasionally include some 12" (305 mm) boards.



Streaks

Mineral streaks are accepted without limitation.

Other characteristics

Varnish cracks around character marks are accepted in this grade. The beige coloration of the sapwood is allowed without limitation.



Atmosphere Collection Red Oak Authentic 6 1/2" Haze

Introduction of the collections

Each of our collection has its own personality.

Browse our collections to find the floor that suits your lifestyle.

- Origins
- Elegancia
- Design+
- Element
- Naked
- World Attraction
- Atmosphere
- Herringbone



Origins Collection White Oak R&Q 6 1/2" Natural

Origins

COLLECTION

Pure and natural

A selection of North American species.
Stain-free, natural wood.

Grades

For a detailed description of grades,
please refer to the list opposite.

Red Oak

- Red Oak Select & Better page 13
- Red Oak Distinction page 15
- Red Oak Authentic page 17

Hard Maple

- Hard Maple Select & Better page 23
- Hard Maple Distinction page 25
- Hard Maple Authentic page 27

White Oak

- White Oak Authentic page 33
- White Oak R&Q page 35

Hickory

- Hickory Authentic page 41

Yellow Birch

- Yellow Birch Select & Better page 53
- Yellow Birch Distinction page 55
- Yellow Birch Authentic page 57

American Walnut

- American Walnut Authentic page 63



Design+

COLLECTION

Customized flooring never looked this good

A floor created especially for you among a selection of the finest colors offered on Hard Maple and Red Oak. Choose the species, the grade, the color, the finish, the gloss, and board width.

Grades

For a detailed description of grades, please refer to the list opposite.

Red Oak

Red Oak Select & Better page 13

Red Oak Distinction page 15

Red Oak Authentic page 17

Hard Maple

Hard Maple Select & Better page 23

Hard Maple Distinction page 25

Hard Maple Authentic page 27



Naked

COLLECTION

The true color of wood

Thanks to Mercier unique finishing process, the original color of raw wood is sealed and kept in its simplest expression.

Color oxidation

The effect of oxidation on the boards is very slight, producing a more saturated version of the original tone.

Grades

For a detailed description of grades, please refer to the list opposite.

White Oak

White Oak Authentic page 33

White Oak R&Q page 35

Hard Maple

Hard Maple Distinction page 25

Hard Maple Authentic page 27

Hickory

Hickory Authentic page 41

American Walnut

American Walnut Authentic page 63



Atmosphere

COLLECTION

Organic beauty in transparency

Atmosphere's light neutral shades blend with natural highlights to showcase wood's awe-inspiring texture and grain.

Color oxidation

The effect of oxidation on the boards is very slight, producing a more saturated version of the original tone.

Grades

For a detailed description of grades, please refer to the list opposite.

Red Oak

Red Oak Distinction page 15

Red Oak Authentic page 17

Hard Maple

Hard Maple Distinction page 25

Hard Maple Authentic page 27

White Oak

White Oak Authentic page 33

White Oak R&Q page 35

Hickory

Hickory Authentic page 41



Elegancia Collection White Oak Authentic 5"

Elegancia

COLLECTION

Refined innovation

With its stylish colors and looks, Elegancia pays tribute to the nobility and beauty of wood.

Grades

For a detailed description of grades, please refer to the list opposite.

White Ash

White Ash Distinction page 47

White Oak

White Oak Authentic page 33

White Oak R&Q page 35

Hickory

Hickory Authentic page 41

Yellow Birch

Yellow Birch Distinction page 55

Yellow Birch Authentic page 57



Element Collection White Oak Authentic 5"

Element

COLLECTION

Rich and reactive contrasting nuances

Element stuns with color variations that make each board unique thanks to a process that reacts with the tannins in the wood.

Color oxidation

The color change is pronounced for Yellow Birch and Hard Maple and is moderate for American Walnut and Hickory. The color takes on a more golden, and saturated tone.

Grades

For a detailed description of grades, please refer to the list opposite.

White Oak

White Oak Authentic page 33

Hard Maple

Hard Maple Distinction page 25

Hard Maple Authentic page 27

Hickory

Hickory Authentic page 41

American Walnut

American Walnut Authentic page 63

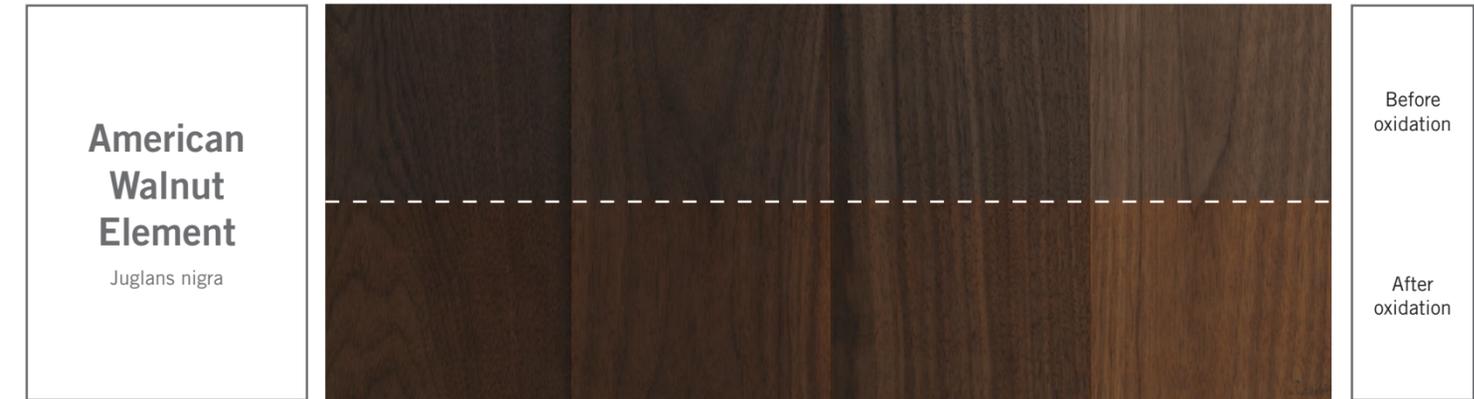
Element

COLLECTION



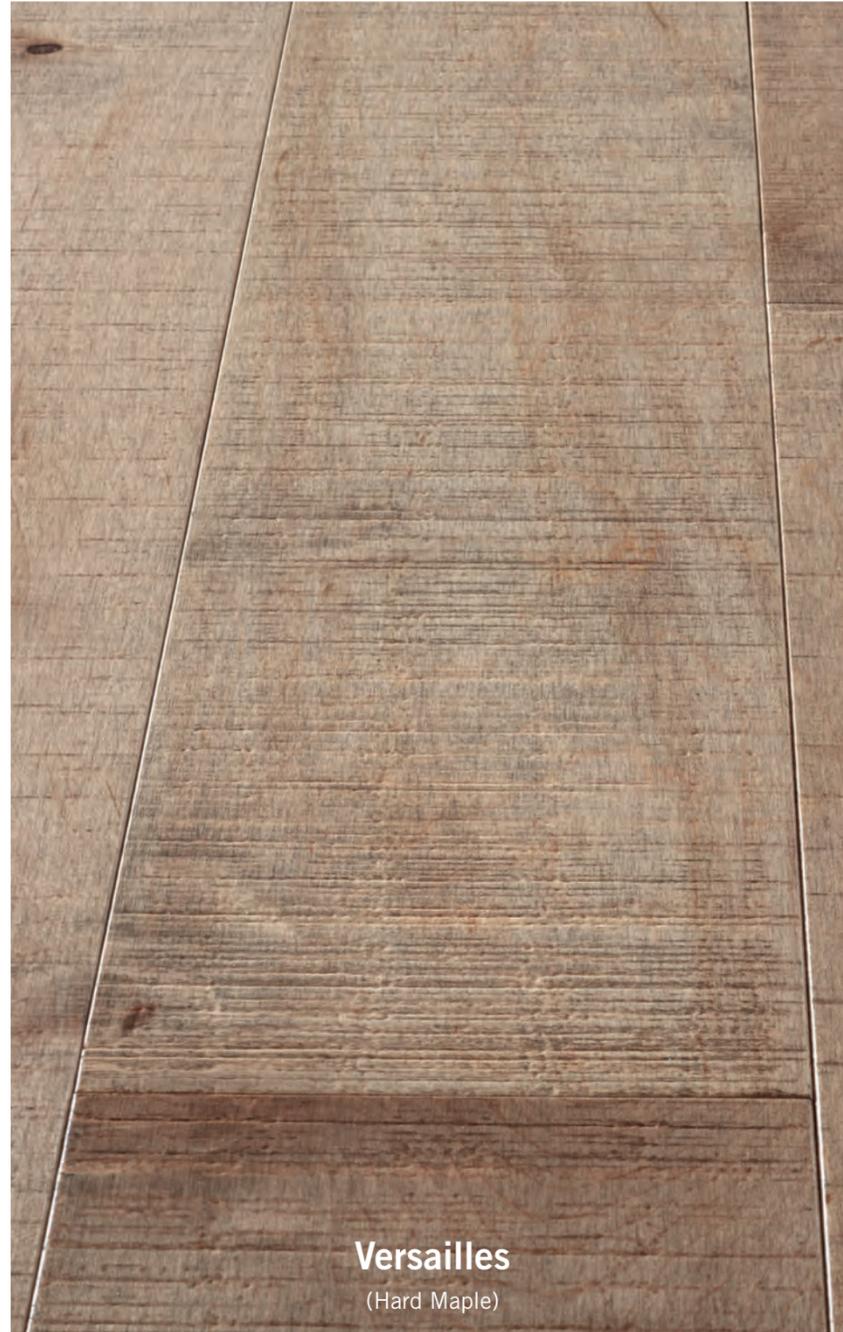
Element

COLLECTION





Taj Mahal
(Red Oak)



Versailles
(Hard Maple)

World Attraction

COLLECTION

Textured surfaces

Light saw marks are applied onto the wood's surface to create a rugged look—perfect to hide wear and scuffs.

Grades

For a detailed description of grades, please refer to the list opposite.

Red Oak

- Red Oak Distinction page 15
- Red Oak Authentic page 17

Hard Maple

- Hard Maple Distinction page 25
- Hard Maple Authentic page 27



Herringbone

COLLECTION

Timeless herringbone pattern

A timeless classic with panache, Herringbone pattern brings a graphical touch and depth to any space.

Red Oak

Grades

Grade

Distinction

Refer to the product chart for the complete product availability.



Knots

Small sounds and repaired knots are accepted. Limited in number and diameter.

Splits and checks

Splits are not accepted in this grade. Occasional surface checks are accepted.



Streaks

Small mineral streaks of any length are allowed. Limited in number.



Herringbone

COLLECTION

Timeless herringbone pattern

A timeless classic with panache, Herringbone pattern brings a graphical touch and depth to any space.

Hard Maple

Grades

Grade

Distinction

Refer to the product chart for the complete product availability.



Knots

Small sounds and repaired knots are accepted. Limited in number and diameter.

Splits and checks

Splits are not accepted in this grade. Occasional surface checks are accepted.



Streaks

Small mineral streaks of any length are allowed. Limited in number.



Herringbone

COLLECTION

Timeless herringbone pattern

A timeless classic with panache, Herringbone pattern brings a graphical touch and depth to any space.

White Oak

Grades

Grade

Distinction

Refer to the product chart for the complete product availability.



Knots

Small sounds and repaired knots are accepted. Limited in number and diameter.

Splits and checks

Splits are not accepted in this grade. Occasional surface checks are accepted.



Streaks

Small mineral streaks of any length are allowed. Limited in number.



Hardwood floor platform

			
	SOLID (Solid wood)	ENGINEERED (Engineered wood)	
		1/2"	3/4"
NATURE OF MATERIAL	100% Hardwood	Top layer: hardwood Base: hardwood plywood	Top layer: hardwood Base: hardwood plywood
TYPES OF INSTALLATION	Nailed and stapled	Nailed, glued, stapled* and floating**	Nailed, glued, stapled* and floating**
INSTALLATION IN THE BASEMENT OR ON CONCRETE	Not recommended	Possible	Possible
SANDING	Yes: 3 to 5 times	Yes: 3 to 5 times	Yes: 3 to 5 times
SPECIES	Hard Maple Hickory Red Oak White Ash White Oak Yellow Birch	American Walnut White Hard Maple Hickory Red Oak White Oak	American Walnut Hard Maple Hickory Red Oak White Oak

* Refer to technical bulletin # 9

** Excluding Hickory and the 8 1/8" (206 mm)

			
	SOLID (Solid wood)	ENGINEERED (Engineered wood)	
		1/2"	3/4"
GRADES (ACCORDING TO THE SPECIES)	Select & Better Distinction Authentic	Select & Better Distinction Authentic R&Q	Distinction Authentic R&Q
THICKNESS AND WIDTH (ACCORDING TO THE SPECIES)	2 ¼ in (57 mm) x ¾ in (19 mm) 3 ¼ in (83 mm) x ¾ in (19 mm) 4 ¼ in (108 mm) x ¾ in (19 mm)	3 ¼ in (83 mm) x ½ in (12,7 mm) 5 in (127 mm) x ½ in (12,7 mm) 6 ½ in (165 mm) x ½ in (12,7 mm)	5 in (127 mm) x ¾ in (19 mm) 6 ½ in (165 mm) x ¾ in (19 mm) 8 ½ in (206 mm) x ¾ in (19 mm)
LENGTHS	Random	Random	
HERRINGBONE AVAILABILITY	Not available	Refer to the product chart for the availability of the product Hard Maple Red Oak White Oak	

Glossary & characteristics

1 Sapwood: The part of the tree located near the outside of the trunk, between the heartwood (duramen) and the bark. It is usually of a lighter color than the heartwood.

2 Heartwood: The part of the tree between the pith and the sapwood. It is usually darker than the sapwood.

3 Hardwood: Generally, one of the botanical groups of deciduous trees that have broad leaves in contrast to the conifers of softwoods. The terms have no reference to the actual hardness of the wood.

4 Annual growth ring: The layer of wood growth, including spring and summerwood, formed on a tree during a single growing season

5 Janka hardness: A hardness test measuring the force required to drive a 0.444" (11.3 mm) steel bearing half its depth into the wood. The more force required, the harder the wood. Red Oak is the industry benchmark for comparing the relative hardness of different wood species.

6 Split: A lengthwise separation of fibres resulting from natural, environmental and/or mechanical pressures. May be at the end of a board or on the surface.

7 Check: A short, narrow, shallow separation of the wood, perpendicular to the annual growth rings. May be located in the centre or at the ends of boards.

8 Grade: The classification of flooring strips based on the natural color and character marks in the wood (mineral streaks, knots, etc.). The grade refers to the appearance of the product.

9 Relative humidity: The ratio of the amount of water vapour present in the air to the amount of water that can be held by that air at a given temperature.

10 Gloss: The gloss level or luster of a surface is determined by the amount of light it reflects. A glossy surface reflects more light than a matte surface.

11 Character marks: Natural "imperfections" in the wood such as mineral streaks, knots and coloration that give the product its unique appearance.

12 Wood oxidation: A natural phenomenon by which the color of wood changes after exposure to air and ambient light. This change varies depending on the species.

13 Micro V-joint: The 45° angle at the junction between the surface and the side of the flooring strips when they are laid side by side. The result is a small "V" shape, whence the name "V-joint."

14 Pith: The soft-surfaced core of a tree trunk or branch.

15 Knot: The portion of a branch embedded in the wood. There are several types of knots, including sound and open knots.

16 Pin knot: A tiny sound knot, less than 1/8" (3.2 mm) in diameter.

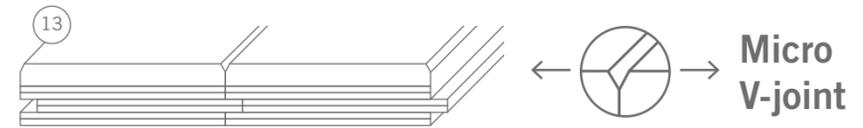
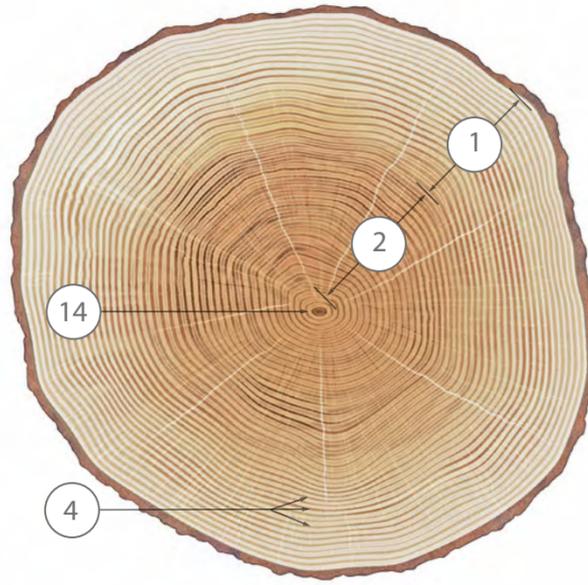
17 Open knot: A knot that is open in the centre; it is often filled with wood putty.

18 Engineered wood flooring: A floor made up of a hardwood surface bonded to a substrate.

19 Rays: The cellular structure of the tree extending from the outer part of the tree toward the centre (perpendicular to the annual growth rings).

20 Mineral streak: A general term describing a pigmentation in the wood. This coloration appears in the form of a streak or stain ranging from greenish brown to jet black.

Types of cuts



Flat sawn:
The most common sawing method. It results in a wide variety of colors, with straight and curved patterns, so that each board sawn this way has a unique appearance.



Quarter and rift sawn:
A sawing method in which the annual growth rings form a 45° or 90° angle with the surface of the board. This creates a straight-line pattern along the length of the board. When the angle is close to 90°, the result is the wavy perpendicular patterns characteristic of R&Q (rift and quarter sawn) boards.





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