

# Technical Information > Timber Species Database

## > Oak, American red



*Quercus* spp., *Quercus rubra*, *Quercus borealis*,  
*Quercus falcata*, *Quercus pagodaefolia*,  
*Quercus shumardii*

**Also known as:** American red oak, northern red oak (*Q. rubra*, *Q. borealis*), southern red oak (*Q. falcata*), Spanish oak (*Q. falcata*), swamp red oak (*Q. falcata*, *Q. pagodaefolia*), cherrybark oak (*Q. falcata*, *Q. pagodaefolia*), shumard red oak (*Q. shumardii*)

**Wood type** Hardwood

The Fagaceae family includes some fifty species of the genus *Quercus*, producing the true oaks of North America, but many of these are so small in size or found in such limited quantities that they are of no commercial importance. Some twenty species are important but since it is difficult to distinguish between the wood of individual species it is common practice to group them either as red or white oak.

### Introduction

Red oak timbers are characterised by the small, late wood pores larger and less numerous than in white oak. Large pores of the early-wood mostly open and free from tyloses.

**Environmental** Not listed in CITES. Believed available from well-managed sources. Check certification status with suppliers.

**Distribution** Eastern Canada and USA. In Canada it is more abundant than white oak, and covers a wider range.

**The Tree** The trees vary according to species but average about 18m to 21 m in height with a diameter of 1.0m.

**The Timber** The timber varies in colour from pink to pale reddish-brown, there is usually a reddish cast to the wood although sometimes it approaches white oak in colour. The large rays do not produce such an attractive figure as they do in white oak, and generally speaking, the wood is coarser in texture. The quality of red oak depends greatly on growth conditions, northern red oak. With its comparatively slow rate of growth, compares

favourably with northern white oak, while red oak from the southern States is generally of faster growth, and consequently more coarse and open in texture. Red oak weighs about 790 kg/m<sup>3</sup> when dried.

<b>Durability</b>	Slightly durable
<b>Treatability</b>	Difficult
<b>Moisture Movement</b>	Medium
<b>Density (mean, Kg/m<sup>3</sup>)</b>	790 ( )
<b>Texture</b>	Medium
<b>Availability</b>	Regular
<b>Price</b>	Medium
<b>Use(s)</b>	Interior joinery, Veneer, Furniture, Flooring
<b>Colour(s)</b>	Pink/pale red, Reddish brown