

Technical Information > Timber Species Database

> Maple, Rock



Acer saccharum, *Acer nigrum*

Also known as: rock maple, hard maple, sugar maple, black maple

Wood type	Hardwood
Introduction	<p>The Aceraceae family includes some ten species of the genus <i>Acer</i> found in North America, but of these, only about five species are important sources of maple timber; two of these produce rock maple and these are given below.</p> <p><i>Acer saccharum</i> Marsh. produces rock maple, hard maple or sugar maple. <i>A. nigrum</i> Michx f. produces black maple, rock or hard maple.</p>
Environmental	Not listed in CITES. Believed available from well-managed sources. Check certification status with suppliers.
Distribution	Found generally in Canada and eastern USA.
The Tree	<p><i>A. saccharum</i> and <i>A. nigrum</i> grow to a height of 27m or more and a diameter of 0.5m to 0.75m.</p>
The Timber	<p>Hard maple is strong, heavy, hard, straight-grained and fine textured. The heartwood is light reddish-brown with deeper-coloured late-wood bands. The sapwood is white in colour, and furnishes the white maple prized for certain uses. It differs mainly from the soft maples in its greater density and firmer texture.</p>
Drying	All types dry without undue difficulty but rather slowly, particularly rock maple.
Strength	Compared with European beech, rock maple is about equal in bending strength and in compression along the grain. and some 15 to 20 per cent superior in hardness, resistance to shock loads and resistance to splitting.
Working Qualities	Medium - Hard maple is rather difficult to work, the timber tending to cause saws to vibrate, and for cutters to ride on the wood during planing. A reduction of cutting angle to 20° assists the finishing operation particularly when curly grain is present. The timber can be stained, polished and glued satisfactorily, but it is hard to nail or screw, although these are held firmly.
Durability	Slightly durable

Treatability	Difficult
Moisture Movement	Medium
Abrasions	Very Good
Density (mean, Kg/m³)	740
Texture	Fine
Availability	Regular
Price	Medium
Chemical Properties	High resistance to abbrasion
Use(s)	Sports goods, Furniture, Flooring
Colour(s)	White/cream