

# Technical Information > Timber Species Database

## > Pine, Southern



*Pinus palustris*, *Pinus elliottii*, *Pinus echinata*,  
*Pinus taeda*

**Also known as:** American pitch pine, Gulf Coast pitch pine, long leaf pitch pine (UK, USA), southern yellow pine (USA), southern pine (USA), long leaf pine, short leaf pine, loblolly pine

<b>Wood type</b>	Softwood
<b>Introduction</b>	The structural species mix 'Southern pine' comprises longleaf pine ( <i>Pinus palustris</i> Mill.), slash pine ( <i>Pinus elliottii</i> Engelm.), shortleaf pine ( <i>Pinus echinata</i> Mill.), and loblolly pine ( <i>Pinus taeda</i> L.). The mechanical properties quoted are for this species mix.
<b>Environmental</b>	The <a href="#">IUCN Red List</a> of Threatened Species classifies <i>P. elliottii</i> , <i>P.echinata</i> and <i>P.taeda</i> as <b>LR</b> – Lower Risk (least concern) and <i>P.palustris</i> as <b>VU</b> - Vulnerable: at risk of extinction. Not listed in CITES. Believed available from well-managed sources. Check certification status with suppliers.
<b>Distribution</b>	<i>P. palustris</i> ranges from south-east Virginia to Florida and Texas occurring along the coasts of the Atlantic and Gulf of Mexico in a forest belt some 200 kilometres deep. <i>P. elliottii</i> occurs in the same area but is more restricted, ranging from South Carolina to Florida and along the Gulf to eastern Louisiana.
<b>The Tree</b>	Both species attain a height of 30m and a diameter of 0.75m or slightly more.
<b>The Timber</b>	The sapwood is narrow in the better grades, sometimes up to 50mm wide, lighter in colour than the heartwood which is yellowish-brown to reddish-brown. Both species are typical of the hard-pine class, being resinous, with the growth-rings usually well-marked by the contrast between the light-coloured early-wood, and the dense, darker-coloured late-wood, which produces a rather coarse texture in the wood, especially in fairly rapidly grown material with its wide growth-rings. The timbers weigh about 670 kg/m <sup>3</sup> on average when dried. The lower density

material of *P. palustris* and *P. elliotii* together with other species termed southern yellow pine, is lighter in weight, coarser in texture, inferior in strength, and usually has a wider sapwood, sometimes as wide as 150mm.

<b>Drying</b>	All these species dry well with little degrade.
<b>Strength</b>	The general strength properties of <i>P. palustris</i> and <i>P. elliotii</i> compare closely with those of 'Douglas fir'.
<b>Working Qualities</b>	Medium - Works moderately easily, but the resin is often troublesome, tending to clog saw-teeth and cutters, and to adhere to machine tables. Saws with teeth of fairly long pitch reduce the effect of resin. A good finish is obtainable, and the wood can be glued satisfactorily, takes nails and screws well, and gives fair results with paint and other finishing treatments.
<b>Durability</b>	Slightly durable
<b>Treatability</b>	Extremely difficult Easy (Sapwood)
<b>Moisture Movement</b>	Medium
<b>Density (mean, Kg/m<sup>3</sup>)</b>	670 (Density can vary by 20% or more)
<b>Texture</b>	Medium
<b>Availability</b>	Regular
<b>Price</b>	Medium
<b>Chemical Properties</b>	Denser material also known as longleaf pitch pine
<b>Use(s)</b>	Heavy structural use, Exterior joinery, Interior joinery
<b>Colour(s)</b>	Reddish brown