

WOOD FOR OUTDOORS – APPLICATIONS

Resistant or very resistant	Moderately resistant	Slightly or nonresistant
African Ebony Bald cypress (old growth) ¹ Catalpa Cedars Cherry, black Chestnut Cypress, Arizona Junipers Locust, black ³ Mulberry, red ³ Oak, bur Oak, chestnut Oak, Gambel Oak, Oregon white Oak, post Oak, white Osage-orange ³ Redwood Sassafras Walnut, black Yew, Pacific ³	Baldcypress (young growth) ³ Douglas-fir Honeylocust ² Larch, western Oak, swamp chestnut Pine, eastern white ¹ Pine, longleaf ¹ Pine, slash ¹ Tamarack	Alder Ashes Aspens Basswood Beech Birches Buckeye ² Butternut Cottonwood Elms Hackberry Hemlocks Hickories Magnolia Maples Oak (red and black species) ² Pines (most other species) ² Poplar Spruces Sweetgum ² Sycamore Willows Yellow-poplar

¹ The southern and eastern pines and baldcypress are now largely second-growth, with a large proportion of sapwood. Consequently, it is no longer practicable to obtain substantial quantities of heartwood lumber in these species for general building purposes.

² These species, or certain species within the groups shown, are indicated to have higher decay resistance than most of the other woods in their respective categories.

³ These woods have exceptionally high decay resistance.

MORE outdoor woods:

Aglaia	Chakte Viga	African Ebony
Curupay	Cypress	Cumaru
Goncalo Alves	Guajayvi	Genuine Mahogany
Iroko	Iroko	Ipe
Jatoba	Merbau	Jarra
Palo Maria	Purple Heart	Monkey Pod
Purple Heart	Sirari	Purple Heart
Volador		Teak

Fir is among the strongest of lumber, making it resistant to high winds. It is straight-grained and not prone to warping. It has a moderate amount of natural moisture resistance, but fir will oxidize and turn gray without some type of waterproofing. Fir is one of the only exterior woods that is graded for aesthetic purposes and can be purchased with few or multiple knots, and knots can be detrimental for weather applications. Fir will shrink causing knots to become loose and fall out.

American softwoods, the traditional choice

The three most widely available and suitable exterior lumber choices, not treated with chemical preservatives, include Western red cedar, redwood, and cypress. Your geographic location will determine the availability and cost of these materials. Redwood, for example, is widely available and used in the western United States. Western red cedar is commonly sold in the Midwest, and eastern U.S. cypress, which grows throughout the South and Southeast, often gets the nod in those locales due to its availability and economical price.

Western red cedar and redwood stock tend to appear straight-grained and are dimensionally stable and naturally decay resistant. Both, however, can split when driving fasteners. Also, both species bleed tannins that make using fasteners and painting more problematic. The tannins appear as stains around fasteners and can even show through painted surfaces. Proper prepping of the wood, however, lets it accept all wood stains and clear finishes.

The third major player, cypress, grows in swamps and has a conical base, with roots that seem to stand out of the water. Its sapwood is almost white, while the heartwood color varies from a light yellow brown to a reddish brown and dark

brown. Inland cypress has the lighter-colored heartwood. It features beautiful ash like grain patterns and accepts finish as readily as redwood or cedar

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Resistant or very resistant

African Ebony Bald cypress (old growth)¹
Catalpa
Cedars
Cherry, black
Chestnut
Cypress, Arizona
Junipers
Locust, black³
Mulberry, red³
Oak, bur
Oak, chestnut
Oak, Gambel
Oak, Oregon white
Oak, post
Oak, white
Osage-orange³
Redwood
Sassafras
Walnut, black
Yew, Pacific³

Moderately resistant

Bald cypress (young growth)³
Douglas-fir
Honeylocust²
Larch, western
Oak, swamp chestnut
Pine, eastern white¹
Pine, longleaf¹
Pine, slash¹
Tamarac

Slightly or nonresistant

Alder
Ashes
Aspens
Basswood
Beech
Birches
Buckeye²
Butternut
Cottonwood
Elms
Hackberry
Hemlocks
Hickories
Magnolia
Maples
Oak (red and black species)²
Pines (most other species)²
Poplar
Spruces
Sweetgum²
Sycamore
Willows
Yellow-poplar

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