

• TIMBER SPECIES DATASHEET •

SAPELE

(*Entandrophragma Cylindricum*)



★ Wood Type	Hardwood
★ Durability	Class 2 - Durable
★ Average Service Life	15-25 years (without treatment)
★ Treatability	Moderately difficult
★ Moisture Movement	Moderate
★ Density (mean, Kg/m³)	640-700
★ Texture	Fine to medium
★ Use(s)	Cabinetry, Fine Furniture, Millwork, Flooring, Veneer
★ Colour(s)	Reddish-brown with an attractive grain pattern

Environmental

Sapele wood is not listed on the IUCN Red List and is typically available from well-managed sources. It is essential to check the certification status with suppliers to ensure sustainable and responsible harvesting.

The Tree

Sapele trees are large and can reach heights of 45 to 60 meters. They have a straight, cylindrical trunk with minimal buttressing, making them suitable for timber production. The leaves are compound, and the tree is known for its reddish-brown bark.

Strength

Sapele wood is known for its strength and durability. It is a robust and stable wood that can withstand various stressors, making it suitable for both structural and decorative applications.

Working Qualities

Sapele wood is moderately difficult to work with due to its interlocked grain, which can result in tearout. However, with sharp tools and proper techniques, it can be machined, sanded, and finished to achieve a beautiful, polished surface. It takes stains and finishes well, producing a stunning, rich appearance.

Distribution

Sapele wood comes primarily from West Africa, with countries like Nigeria, Cameroon, and Ivory Coast being significant sources. The sapele tree, part of the mahogany family, is cultivated for its valuable timber.

Drying

Sapele wood can be challenging to dry due to its interlocked grain, which may lead to some surface checking or warping. Careful drying practices are essential to minimize these issues.

The Timber

Sapele wood is renowned for its attractive reddish-brown to dark reddish-brown color with a beautiful, lustrous grain pattern. The wood has a fine to medium texture and a straight to interlocked grain. It is moderately heavy and hard.