

## The Older the Tree, the Harder the Wood

It may come as a surprise to learn how many different types of wood are used in furniture making, each one with their own specific properties, weight, density and grain.

The hardwood Teak comes from the Teak (*Tectona*) tree, which grows in southern Asia. The teak is a 30 to 40 ft deciduous tree (its leaves fall off during the winter months). Hardwoods are those which have a high number of pores and a high density. In general hardwoods resist decay better than their softwood counterparts which makes them very suitable for outdoor and patio furniture. Much like cedar and cypress wood, teak has its own natural resins that protect it from damage from extreme weather conditions, especially damp rot. A common problem faced by woods is termite damage and teak is particularly resistant against these pests.

There are three different types of teak tree: the *Tectona grandis* (the common teak), the *Tectona philippinensis* (Phillippine teak) and the *Tectona hamiltoniana* (Dahat teak). The Dahat and Phillipine teak are now endangered and therefore the vast majority of teak furniture is crafted from the common teak tree.

Teak has been popular in furniture making for hundreds of years due to its attractive look and all round durability and was in great demand in the 1950's and 60's when the rise of the Danish Modern style arose. The wood is typically a rich golden brown, but can vary from very pale to dark terracotta red. However, like any other type of wood it can be stained, treated or painted to change its colour yet still look natural. Although not needed with teak, treated wood has the additional advantage of further protection against weather conditions. Its grain is straight, and the wood oily yet grainy.

Although teak wood does have remarkable qualities that protect it against harsh weather, it is not limited to being used as outdoor furniture. It is commonly used as a veneer and is a fixture inside the home as flooring and general teak furniture like closets, tables and chairs.

The older the teak tree, the harder and denser the wood, which means it doesn't split as easily as young trees. Although more expensive, older trees are more desirable in furniture making. Joining teak wood is relatively difficult due to its density, so these details are important to take into consideration when complicated furniture pieces such as chairs and plant boxes are made. Despite this, manufacturers of teak are experts in the profession and ensure the highest quality safety for the furniture that they make.

Teak can be used to make almost any type of patio furniture including chairs, tables, planters, pergolas, loungers, storage boxes, benches and rocking chairs. Its tropical look makes it great for use in the summer and look especially attractive placed near or directly on grass.

As an extremely durable hardwood, teak makes an attractive and sensible choice for the furniture that is placed in a back garden, patio or deck and after spanning many centuries, still remains a popular choice.

Source: <http://www.articlecircle.com>

### About the Author

Ben Meyer, author and furniture retailer provides the largest selection of teak furniture, Adirondack chairs, and [Teak Garden Furniture](#) on the internet. Read more for great furniture ideas for you patio.