

# MAKING THE GRADE

## What to expect from Prime, Select, Character and Rustic Hardwood Flooring Grades

Expert Flooring wood flooring is sourced from many different countries, each having different grading rules and industry standards. So, to make it easier for you, we have established our own definitions. And, since oak is by far the most popular species, we use this as an example of exactly what you can expect when you buy wooden flooring from ourselves.

We show what is likely to be the “worst case” in terms of knot size and many individual planks will fall well within this. But please remember that, since they are usually selected by eye, there is always scope for an occasional board to fall outside of these parameters. Part of the beauty of wood is that each and every plank is unique, so our criteria is merely a guide, given in good faith and to the best of our knowledge.



### PRIME GRADE

Typically, prime grade has few, if any knots, and these will be of minimal size. There will also be a minimal amount of sapwood defects and filler, if any at all. Where filler is used its colour is carefully selected to complement the wood rather than to match it exactly, and the colour of the filler may vary from batch to batch. There will be a relatively small amount of colour variation in the timber itself.



### **SELECT/CLASSIC GRADE**

Known as either select or classic grade, typically this will have a mix of almost prime boards with other planks which have more knots. Slightly larger knots are allowed in this grade. Heartwood and colour variation in the timber should be expected and there may be some checks (cracks across the growth ring), sapwood and filler. The colour of the filler is carefully selected to complement the wood rather than to match it exactly and it may vary from batch to batch.



### **CHARACTER GRADE**

Typically, character grade will include both heartwood and sapwood and allows a wider range of colour variation. Knots are larger and you should expect checks (cracks across the growth ring) and possibly some end shake (cracks between the rings). Filler will be used, the colour of which is carefully selected to complement the wood rather than to match it exactly, and it may vary from batch to batch.

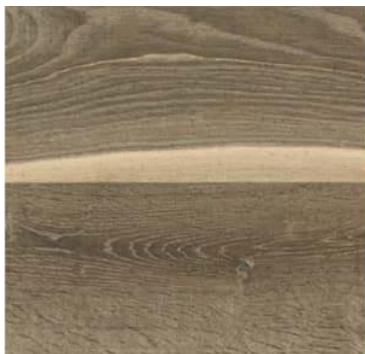


## NATURAL/RUSTIC GRADE

Known as either natural or rustic grade this allows a virtually limitless size and number of knots. Heartwood will be used, there will be colour variation, sapwood and filler; you should also expect checks (cracks across the growth ring) and possibly some end shake (cracks between the rings). The colour of the filler is carefully selected to complement the wood rather than to match it exactly and it may vary from batch to batch.

## SAPWOOD

Sapwood is the living part of the tree through which water and sap flow. It tends to be lighter in colour than the heartwood, and certain fuming, smoking and colouring processes emphasise it since it doesn't react to these treatments to the same degree. By definition sapwood contains more moisture, however this is no cause for concern since all Havwoods' timber has been carefully dried and its stability is ensured when supplied in an engineered form.



Smoked and White Oiled



Smoked



Natural Oiled

## KNOTS AND FILLERS

A knot is either the base of a side branch or a dormant bud around which the grain flows. A knot is sometimes replaced by filler and this may be of various colours: white, grey, brown and black are shown here.



## MEDULLARY RAYS, CHECKS AND SHAKES

These white, ribbon-like medullary rays are an indication that the plank has been crafted from quarter-sawn timber. Checks and shakes usually occur at the end of a board and may be cut off.

