

Douglas Fir



The timber from Douglas Fir is the strongest of all our home grown softwoods and has been used in everything from structural beams, cladding to building aircraft!

It has light reddish brown heartwood when dry but is vibrant pinky-orange when first cut. The sapwood is a very contrasting creamy white. The grow rings are also very prominent making for some very attractive grain patterns. Its average weight when dry is 530 Kg/m³.



Douglas Fir was discovered by the Scottish physician Archibald Manzie and later introduced to the UK in 1872 by the famous Scottish botanist David Douglas.

Both are commemorated in the tree's naming. Douglas Fir can grow to massive heights and it currently holds the record for the tallest tree in the UK at 66.4m!

This towering tree can be found in Reelig Glen near Inverness, less than an hour's drive from Logie.



Workability

- Easy to work with (Machine)
- Causes blunting effect on cutters
- Glues and Finishes well
- Stains well

Common Uses

- Veneer
- Plywood
- Structural lumber
- Construction lumber

Drying

Although the timber tends to dry fairly easily care needs to be taken when drying lesser quality boards that have more knots or twisted grain to avoid surface checking and splitting around knots.

Strength

Compared with European redwood, Douglas Fir is some 60% stiffer, 40% harder and more resistant to suddenly applied loads. It is also 30% stronger in bending and in compression along the grain.

Working Qualities

Douglas Fir is certainly at the better end of the scale of softwood timber and is enjoyable to work with. It machines nicely and leaves a good quality finish.

Mythology And Symbolism

The bark of Douglas Fir is non-flammable giving it great protection from wild fires.

An old Native American myth said that mice hid in the cones to escape the raging fires and the unusual three-pronged, papery bract that overlay the cone scales were the tail and two hind legs of mice.

The Tree

The bark on young trees is a grey-green often covered with blister pockets of highly scented and sticky resin. As the tree matures the bark becomes thick, corky and heavily fissured. The needle-like leaves are soft to touch with two greeny-white stripes on the underside. Douglas Fir is an evergreen tree so its features are evident all year round.

Douglas Fir can be found in a variety of habitats including open forest with plenty of moss and rainy conditions. It thrives in western areas of the UK, where rainfall is higher.

Because the trees are so long-lived, they provide deadwood cavities, in which birds and bats can shelter. Being tall, they also make suitable nesting sites for larger birds of prey, such as buzzards and sparrowhawks. The seeds of Douglas Fir are eaten by finches and small mammals and in Scotland, Douglas Fir forest provide habitats for the red squirrel and pine marten.

[TREE PARTS PDF](#)



Durability : Moderately durable, Slightly durable (homegrown)

Treatability : Extremely difficult – difficult with sapwood

Moisture Movement : Small

Density (mean, Kg/m³) : 530

Availability : Readily available

Price : Cheap

Uses : Joinery -Exterior, Joinery – Interior, Cladding, Structural use, Flooring

Colours : Reddish brown, Light brown

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