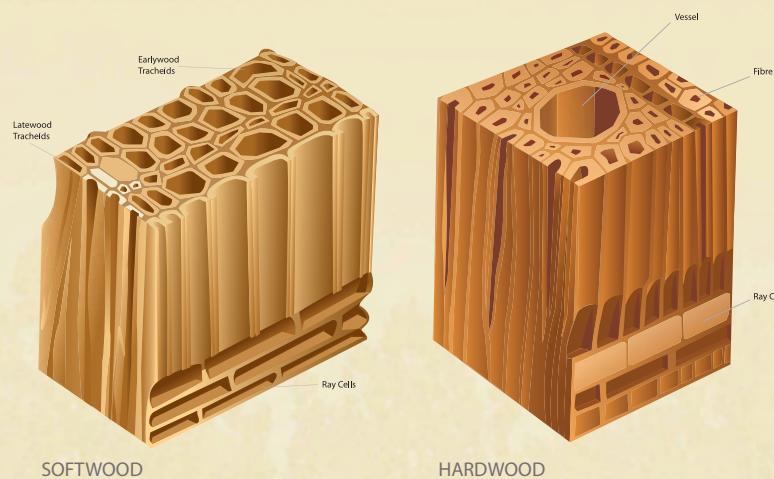


Timber Teaser

Soft or Hard?

Softwood and hardwood are terms that refer to the water-conducting cells in a living tree from which timber comes, and not to the hardness or softness of the wood itself.

You can see the differences between the different cells when you look at wood samples through a microscope.



Just as doctors can identify us from our cells, wood identification depends on cellular structures, revealed under a microscope.

Although features such as colour, odour and texture can help identify the timber, they can vary and therefore are not reliable.

Sap or Heart?

Two kinds of wood are found in mature trees.

Heartwood

The central part of the cross-section is heartwood. Heartwood consists of dead material that helps support the tree.

Sapwood

Around the heartwood, in a broad ring, lies the paler sapwood. Sapwood is made up of living cells that carry water and nutrients upwards from the roots.

