

# GLOSSARY OF VENEER TERMS



## **Architectural Wood Grade Veneer**

Utilizes top quality veneer and generally has special requirements for balancing, sequencing, component width, etc. "AA" is the highest quality grade in the wood working industry.

## **Balanced Match**

When two or more veneer components or leaves of equal size are used to make up a single face. The panel may have an even or odd number of leaves and distribution may change from panel to panel within a sequenced set.

## **Balanced Reverse Match**

When two or more veneer components or leaves of equal size are used to make up a single face, every other leaf is turned in reverse or upside down.

## **Barber Pole**

The noticeable color variation that occurs when a distortion of the grain is created by the knife blade. The knife blade, as it hits the wood, creates a "loose" side where the cells have been opened by the blade and a "tight" side. Because the "tight" and "loose" faces alternate in adjacent pieces of veneer in book matching (stripe effect), they also may accept stain differently.

## **Birdseye**

Rare figure due to small conical depressions in the outer annual rings, which appear to follow the same contour in subsequent growth rings probably for many years.

## **Blister**

A figure resembling an uneven collection of rounded, or blisterlike bulges caused by indented annual growth rings. Occurs mostly in West African reddish wood species such as Mahogany, Sapele and Makore.

## **Block Plank Match**

Creating the design aesthetic of wood flooring. Single species or multiple species are laid up on a sheet of veneer using multiple flitches and lengths of veneer faces.

## **Book Match**

Every other leaf is turned over as if they were facing pages in a book. The figure always matches at the joints. Most common match on plywood and veneer faces. Book Matching may be done with flat cut, quarter cut or rift cut.

## **Book and Butt Match**

(Four pieces matched) The veneer is matched as described for book matched, but the ends of the veneer are also matched (typically seen in burl veneer).

## **Burl**

A figure created by abnormal growth, or response to injury that forms an interwoven, contorted, or gnarly mass of dense woody tissue on the trunk or branch of the tree. Burls are generally small and characterized by eyelike markings surrounded by swirls and clusters of distorted tissues. Burl is also used to describe a characteristic in the grain of the wood.

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## Center Match

In a Center Balance Match an even number of equal width veneer leaves makes up the panel face. This produces horizontal symmetry.

## Ceruse/Whitewash

Ceruse is a type of decorative finish that involves using different colored pigments to highlight a wood's natural grain pattern. After brushing the wooden surface to open the pores, you'll spread on layers of stain and pigment, then strip away the excess to leave the wood with a muted coloring and beautiful contrasting veins.

## Cross Grain

Veneer sheet in which the grain of the wood runs vertically in the 4' direction. This is denoted as 8'x4'. Width is the measurement across the grain, while length is the measurement with the grain. The first number is always the width and the second is the length.

## Crotch

Crotch comes from the part of a tree below the point where it forks into two limbs. The grain is crushed and twisted, creating a variety of plume and flame figures, often resembling a wellformed feather. The outside of the block produces a swirl figure that changes to full crotch figure as the cutting approaches the center of the block.

## Curly

Figure which occurs when the fibers are distorted producing a wavy or curly effect in the veneer. Primarily found in Maple or Birch (also see Wavy).

## Dead Flitch Sample

A memo sample used for basic grain and color reference.

## End Match

End matching is used to extend the clear length of available veneer for high wall panels and long conference tables. With end matching the sheet on top will be reversed 180°. For example, the top of sheet (#1) end matches to the top of sheet (#2).

## Face

Name is the way the flitches or leaves are laid on the face to produce the desired appearance of the face (sheet).

## Fiddleback

A line, strong, even, ripple figure as often seen on the backs of violins or fiddles. The figure is found principally in Black Bean, Douka Mahogany, Maple, Makore, Hawaii Koa and English Sycamore, but occurs sometimes in other wood species, but not in all wood species (see RealTec®).

## Figure

The patterns produced in a wood surface by annual growth rings, rays, knots, deviations from natural grain such as interlocked and wavy grain and irregular coloration.

## Flitch, Block or Cant

The complete bundle of thin sheets of veneer after cutting, laid together in sequence as they were sliced or sawn.

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## Flake

Flake figure is developed only in those species (Oaks mostly – Red, White and Queensland Oak (Lace-wood), which have very heavy medullar ray growth. When the saw or knife cut is directly on or near the radial, it is close to parallel with the medullar ray and therefore passes in and out of the uneven growth to develop the flake effect.

## Flat Cut (FC) (a/k/a Plain Sliced, Crown Cut or Cathedral Pattern)

Plain sliced veneer produces the most popular flat cut grain appearance. A grain figure resulting from slicing or sawing across a half or quarter of a log. This results in the oval or crown grain effect in the center of the sheet, or flitch, of veneer with straighter grain along the edge.

## Grain

The direction, size, arrangement and appearance of the fibers in wood or veneer.

## Ghost Figure

The term generally applied to any cross figure which is not at all prominent but is noticeable from certain angles and may show up to some extent under finish only.

## Herringbone

A pattern made up of rows of parallel lines which in any two adjacent rows slope in opposite directions. RealTec® veneer book matched can produce a degree of up and down effect creating a Herringbone pattern.

## Knotty Character

Sound knots appear in only a part of veneer cut and in intermittent fashion (mismatch face), most common species in Knotty Pine, Knotty Cedar and Knotty Oak.

## Leaf

Sliced sheet of a veneer flitch.

## Live Flitch Sample

Actual leaf sample of veneer that will be used in the production of an order.

## Mottle (Block Mottle)

Broken wavy patches across the face of wood that give the impression of an uneven although smooth surface, caused by a twisted interwoven grain with irregular cross figure, which is the mottle. The effect is due to reflected light on the uneven arrangement of the fibers. Other terms used to describe variations include BeesWing, Fiddle, Peacock, Plum, Ram, Black and Stop Mottle. Most common species of Mottle is Mako-re, BeesWing is most common in Sapele, Bubinga, Satinwood and Black Bean.

## Oxidize/Oxidation

Wood veneer color changes due to air/oxygen and light hitting the face of the veneer. In most species the color darkens the wood veneer; however, there are a few species that lighten due to the oxidation process. Oxidation typically occurs in the first six months to one year after wood veneer wallcovering has been installed then drastically slows. Color change is extremely subtle and typically goes undetected by the naked eye. This process occurs in all natural wood products.

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## **Pleasuring Match**

Recons are unable to end match due to the manufacturing process. At the horizontal seam/joint the sheets are stack matched creating a soft pleasuring match at the seams (close match at seams).

## **Pommele**

A trade term for a “blister” or “quilt” figure most common in Bubinga, Mahogany, Makore and Sapele.

## **Quarter Cut (QC) or Quarter Sawn**

The slice cut of a log as near to true radial as possible, which results in the stripe effect of one type or another. Produces a uniform, straight vertical grain. Because the cant is a quarter of a log or a quarter of the tree trunk the veneer leaf size may be narrower than that of a plain sliced veneer. Quarter cutting is done with a stationary knife on a log that moves on a sled.

## **Quilted**

Highly figured folds or waves, somewhat resembling the appearance of rectangular blisters.

## **Random Match**

Leaves are placed next to each other in a random order and orientation, producing a boardbyboard effect. Conscious effort is made to mismatch the grain at joints.

## **RealTec®**

RealTec® Technically Enhanced Wood Veneer is manufactured using a unique, proprietary process that physically alters standard, readily available, quartercut wood veneer. The “fiddleback” figure cannot be sanded out, nor will staining or dyeing affect the distinctive appearance.

## **Rift Cut**

This description of figure or grain character is most applied to veneer or lumber cut from those species having a heavy medulla ray growth. The effect in veneer is straight grain and no flake, most common species Red Oak, White Oak and Queensland Oak (Lacewood). Rift cutting uses a quarter log that is mounted in a lathe at 15° to 17° offset from quarter sliced veneer. The veneer knife is stationary.

## **Rotary Cut**

A method of cutting in which the log is placed on a large lathe and turned into the knife, so that continuous cut is made round and round the log, parallel always to the growth ring. The result is a wild, variegated, grain effect. Rotary cutting is used largely in commercial veneer production except in certain figured logs for fine face veneer such as Birch, Maple and Bubinga.

## **Running Match**

In a Running Match each panel face is assembled from as many veneer leaves as necessary so that the widths and numbers of matching veneer leaves are not needed.

## **Sap**

The outer cell layer of the wood between the bark and heartwood. The supply of water and nutrients to the tree is only through the outer row of sap cells. The remaining layers of cells in the sapwood only serve to store water. Color is offset in sapwood. Typically in “AA” architectural grade veneer the sapwood is cut away in veneer.

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## Sequenced

Sequencing refers to a set of veneer sheets that have been produced in order from the same log. The number of sheets per sequence can be limited by species, cut, grainorientation and yield.

## Sketch Face

In this procedure the layout of veneer follows a sketch or design.

## Slip Match

Consecutive leaves are slipped out side by side. They are not turned over or changed end by end. This pattern will have no grain match at the joints. Quarter cut and rift cut are most commonly used. It is easier to achieve a uniform color with Slip Matching because all the leaves have the same light refraction.

## Stacked Match

Sheets are stacked on top of each other (not reversed as we would do with end matching). Stack matching typically occurs with slip matched, Recon patterns and RealTec® veneers. Sheet “2” is stacked on top of sheet “1”, so the top of sheet 1 is touching the bottom of sheet 2 in the installation process.

## Stripe

Stripe figure is a ribbon grain.

### 1. Plain Stripe

Alternating darker and light stripes running continuously along the length of a piece, due to cutting wood with definite growth rings on the quarter.

### 2. Broken Stripe

A modification of ribbon stripe. The figure markings taper in and out, due to twisted or interlocked grain, so that the ribbon stripe is not continuous as it runs the full length of the flitch.

(a) **Roe (also called Roey)** – short broken ribbon, or stripe, figure in quarter sliced or sawn wood, due to spiral formation of the fibers, or interlocked grain, in the growth rings. The irregular growth produces alternate bands of varying shades of color and degrees of luster.

(b) **Raindrop** – when the waves in the fibers occur singly or in groups with considerable intervals between, the figure looks like streaks made by drops striking a windowpane at slant and is called raindrop.

### 3. Ribbon Stripe

In some woods with interwoven grain, such as Mahogany, wide unbroken stripes can be produced by cutting on the quarter.

## Swing Match

(Also called Reverse Slip Match) Every other leaf is turned end for end. This type of match breaks up the marching pattern across the face of the panel.

## Wavy

Curly grain with large undulations. Sometimes referred to as “Finger Roll” when the waves are about the width of a finger (also see Curly).