

The Colonial Woodsmyth

Common Name: Wenge

Botanical Name: Millettia laurentii



Other Common Names: Awoung, Dikela, Mibotu, Bokonge, Tshikalakala, Nson-so, Palissandre du congo, Wenge

Common Uses: Flooring, Heavy construction, Mine timbers, Shipbuilding, Boat building, Cabinetmaking, Musical instruments, Joinery, Furniture, Bedroom suites, Building construction, Building materials, Cabin construction, Canoes, Chairs, Chests, Concealed parts (Furniture), Construction, Desks, Diningroom furniture, Domestic flooring, Dowell pins, Dowells, Drawer sides, Drum sticks, Excelsior, Factory construction, Factory flooring, Fine furniture, Floor lamps, Furniture components, Furniture squares or stock, Hatracks, Kitchen cabinets, Lifeboats, Living-room suites, Office furniture, Organ pipes, Parquet flooring, Piano keys, Pianos, Radio, stereo, TV cabinets, Rustic furniture, Sounding boards, Stools, Sub-flooring, Tables, Utility furniture, Violin, Violin bows, Wardrobes, Xylophones



Region: Africa

Country: Cameroon, Congo, Gabon, Zaire

Distribution: The natural growth range of the species is reported to be the open forests of Zaire, Cameroon, Gabon, the southern regions of Tanzania, and Mozambique. It is also found in the swampy forests of the Congo region.

Tree Data: The tree is described as medium sized, and attains a height of 50 to 60 feet (15 to 18 m) and a trunk diameter of 30 to 36 inches (75 to 100 cm).

Sapwood Color: The sapwood is pale yellow or whitish in color, and is clearly demarcated from the heartwood.

Heartwood Color: The heartwood is dark brown, mostly black, with fine, closely spaced, very dark veins and white lines. The combination of white bands against the dark wood with black streaks gives Wenge a very attractive appearance. Color variation between boards is reported to be moderate.

Light & Air-Induced Changes: Exposure lightens the dark color of the wood, and lumber is reported to be occasionally left in the sun on purpose to lighten the color (sometimes requested by importers of Wenge).

Grain: The grain is fairly straight to slightly roey. The appearance of the wood has been described as expressive.

Texture: The wood is medium to coarse in texture.