

American Hardwoods by Design





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AMERICAN HARDWOODS

Choosing hardwoods for your home?

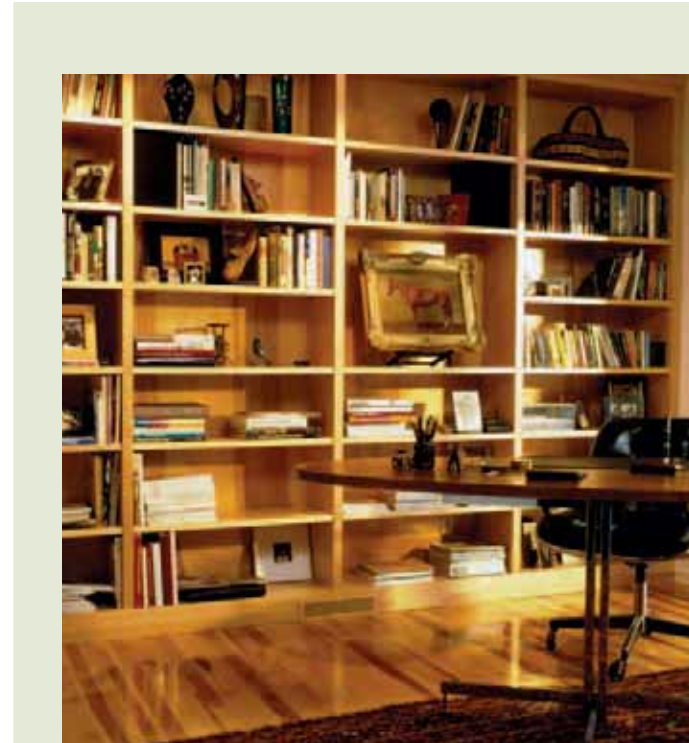
Wondering whether to mix – or match – wood tones in the furniture, floors, cabinets and trim?

We have an easy answer...

Relax! Today's top interior designers never try to find an exact match in wood tones because it's downright dull when everything's the same in a room.

Don't try to be a match-maker. Better to blend – or contrast – the colors and textures of various American hardwoods on your floors, furniture, cabinets and mouldings.

From ash, alder and birch to the oaks and maples, poplar, walnut and more, America's forests give you more trusted hardwood choices than any other temperate forest in the world. Consider an eclectic look, a harmonious mix of styles, hues, stains and finishes in the same space. Eclectic decorating is relaxed, sometimes informal, always inviting. It's easy and all about the way we like to live in the 21st century.



Hardwood expressions

As the room's focal point, this floor features ash, maple, red and white oak, poplar and walnut. For storage and display, the maple built-in shelving complements the multi-hardwood floor.

Defining space (below) In a small house, wainscoting, window trim, archway and columns – all crafted of American cherry – distinguish dining space from the seating area without actually closing off the rooms. The pattern inlaid in the ash flooring is echoed above in the double-helping of cherry mouldings on the ceiling.



Carolyn L. Bates (carolynbates.com) ("The Trim Idea Book" by Mary Ellen Poisson, Taunton Press, Publisher) Builder, Tom Moore



Harden Custom Homes

Wood tones in tune An easy mix of woods and tones make the inside scenery as interesting as the view through the window wall of this large family room (above). Against the expanse of floor with its medium-dark stain, the furniture is dramatically dark, while the cabinets and trim are lighter in tone. Maple flooring (right) bounces light from windows and lamps to make the small living room of a big city apartment look larger. Furniture is a medley of different woods in tones from light to very dark.

Hardwoods in Harmony



Everett Short



Interior Insights POINTERS FROM THE PROS

Florence Perchuk, CKD
*Designs by
Florence Perchuk,
New York*



I don't match, I blend. Would you want an outfit with the suit, shoes, stockings and bag all the same color?

What I'm looking for is *harmony* between the wood tones. The floors don't have to be the same wood tone, as long as they all blend harmoniously.

If the room is dark, I'd go lighter on the floor. If it's filled with light, then go darker. Remember, the floor holds everything together!



Wellborn Cabinet, Inc.



Photo: davidducanlivingston.com ("The Trim Idea Book" by Mary Ellen Polson, Taunton Press, Publisher)

Timeless blending Light-stained oak flooring (right) creates a border around the medium-stained center of this compact living room in a 1920s bungalow. Painted mouldings on the windows, doors and fireplace keep the room light, airy and modern. Large open spaces (above) can be subtly divided into different activity areas using custom built-ins like this floor-to-ceiling cabinet. Across the room, wood surrounds the fireplace to help unify the generous space. Always in style, blue and cream (left) impart traditional personality to a kitchen that's elegant enough to entertain in, with its Oriental rug, warm wood floors and personal accessories. The oak workstation is stained to echo the blue of the painted walls that frame the maple cabinets and set off their warm 'parfait' finish.



Jamie Drake

*Drake Design Associates,
New York*

Gone are the days when picking one species for cabinets and floors provided exciting results. What looks right today is to break out and show a little personality and style. Two – and even three – woods are often used in the most successful

kitchen designs, for example, medium tones such as oak for the perimeter cabinets, an island in color-glazed wood, and a stand-alone hutch in walnut.

If you are opting for one tone for the cabinets, contrast your floor color – either lighter or darker – to create impact and drama.



Interior Insights

POINTERS FROM THE PROS

Benjamin Noriega-Ortiz

BNO Design, New York

When I use wood for kitchen cabinets, I always like the floor that touches the lower cabinets to match the color of the cabinets themselves, even if they are a different type of wood. That way, you make the kitchen floor appear larger.

You can use another wood type and color for the center of the kitchen floor itself. And, of course, the upper cabinets can be a completely different wood, material or color.



Mary Jo Peterson, CKD

MJP Design, Inc. Brookfield, Connecticut

Mixing woods enhances the sense of furnishings in the space, rather than being just a room lined with cabinets. Like anything that adds character to a space, the mix must be done selectively and in balance with other details of the design.



Expressing Yourself with Hardwoods



Well-grounded (left)
Dark-stained maple flooring provides what designer Eric Cohler calls a 'grounding' for the lighter cabinets, the better to showcase the beauty of the wood. It's also the perfect setting for the dressy French furniture in the adjacent dining area.

Dark and light (right) Maple cabinets stained espresso play color counterpoint to the light work island and architectural detailing over the cooktop in a kitchen luxurious enough for an Oriental rug. Light floors and countertops also enhance the appealing balance between coffee and cream.

Classic Contrast



Wellborn Cabinet, Inc.

The closer the colors of your cabinets to your floors, the calmer the kitchen. The higher the contrast, the higher the energy-level.

The lighter the wood color on your floor, the more light bounce you get in your kitchen, where you need it most.



Interior Insights POINTERS FROM THE PROS

Eric Cohler

Eric Cohler, Inc., New York

Kitchen cabinets should not match the floor in color or tone. Different types of wood will act as catalysts to set off their rich play of textures and patina.

The darker tone on the floor prevents cabinets from “melting” into one another. This is a more interesting look – a classic that will endure for years to come.



Celerie Kembel

Kemble Interiors, Palm Beach

I use a darker stain on the flooring and a lighter one on the cabinets. This gives greater depth to the room and helps to optically ‘pull’ the floor down and ‘lift’ the cabinets.





Masterful mixing American hardwoods are naturally convivial, able to coexist beautifully with woods and other materials, including man-mades like glass, tile and metal (left). Burnished stainless steel gleams in this chic city kitchen by Clodagh. She routed the maple cabinets to add textural balance to the cool, hard steel, giving the kitchen a presence that's far larger than its square footage. (Right) An arc of stainless steel lends a graceful, contemporary touch to a cabinet door of bleached oak.



Daniel Aubry

Clodagh, the Irish-born, Design Hall of Fame honoree long known for her green designs and eco-friendly ideas says, "I never even think about matching wood species or wood tones. In fact, I don't try to match metals and other materials, either."

"Like fashion, interior design has changed. Where one used to match the hat, shoes and bag, now the idea is to be in harmony. For 22 years in my own kitchen, I've had an oak floor with ash veneers on the cabinet – I like the veining, the 'cathedral' in ash – and still other types of wood for my table and seating cubes."

Marriage of Materials



Oberto Gilli

Naturally modern

Laid on the diagonal, butternut floor strips (left) frame insets of the same stone Celerie Kembel uses on the countertops in the kitchen. Against all these naturals, stainless steel adds a bit of welcome flash to the mix.



Interior Insights POINTERS FROM THE PROS

Thomas Jayne

Thomas Jayne Studio, Inc., New York



A mixture of woods is often an asset. In a new kitchen and family room we recently designed, we chose a 4-inch-wide oak board to make the rooms relate. We laid the kitchen floor in a running design, and the family room floor in a herringbone pattern, then stained the whole a medium color, warm in tone.

We painted the kitchen cabinets a bone white with counters of oak, some inset with marble. In the family room, the cabinets are mahogany, stained close to the color of the counters in the kitchen, so the spaces relate. What distinguishes them are the different textures of the different woods.

Furthermore, we commissioned the dining table and chairs from American walnut. I like an interweave of subtle similarities and differences. With a combination of woods, the rooms have their own character, but they still relate.



Everett Start

Classic yet contemporary

Traditional hardwood trimmings turn tall windows (left) into architectural assets that easily can hold their own. In keeping with the light floor and garden-like mood of the room, the trim and wall paneling have been painted white and left beautifully bare. Trimmed with a reed detail (right) and centered with a decorative block called a keystone, a traditional arch frames a contemporary but classic room for dining. Laid to follow the room's contours, the flooring is designed to draw attention to the table.



Brian Vandén Brink ("The Trim Idea Book" by Mary Ellen Polson, Taunton Press, Publisher)

Trim

Tricks with Trimmings



Everett Short

Focal point

An ordinary window becomes extraordinary when it's accentuated with classic mouldings surprisingly applied on the inside. Painted sparkling white in clarion contrast with the dark walls, the window is now the bedroom's dramatic focal point.

The Magic of Hardwood Mouldings

Plain plaster and paint are only the beginning of any well-executed room. Add hardwood trim and you create new depth, personality and architectural presence. Just ask expert Mary Ellen Polson, who's written the last word on trim in "The Trim Idea Book" (The Taunton Press, 2005). She shares her insider ideas on making the most of hardwood trim:

- ▶ **Trim enhances room size.** It creates subtle shadows that add a sense of depth and trick the eye into seeing more space than really exists.
- ▶ **Wood trim is versatile.** You can have new trim made to match original pieces if you're restoring an old house, or you can replicate trim from a historic source. You can also combine several stock pieces to create custom-look trims that are the right style and size for your individual room.
- ▶ **Trim goes everywhere.** Around doors and windows and ceilings... across walls as chair rails and plate rails... into both traditional and contemporary interiors... in houses of monumental size and city apartments with rooms like small square boxes... trim makes a dramatic difference everywhere.
- ▶ **To stain or to paint?** It depends on the look you're after. If it's woodsy, earthy or contemporary, think stain – there's a wide variety, from clear to color-tinted. If you want a more traditional look, paint is great, especially white or cream. Just beware of creating too much contrast between the walls and the trim. Try tinting the trim paint with a little of the wall color, say, 20-30 percent, to soften the contrast.
- ▶ **'Trade-up' with trim.** Change-out standard builder trim – it's often thin and not rich-looking – for more substantial, interesting trim pieces that will give your house a custom-built quality look.
- ▶ **Revive Victorian elegance.** With today's ultra-high ceilings, picture rails are back. It's a nice way to bring that high ceiling down into context with the rest of the room.



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Zinger Color! Paint powers this kitchen/sitting room (left) from calm to totally cool. Never shy around color, designer Benjamin Noriega-Ortiz blends the wood tones on the cabinets and floor, then zaps the room to life with shocking pink columns from floor to ceiling. Floor painting is another way to infuse color. “Wood floors in a kitchen are my favorite because they’re softer underfoot than stone, and age beautifully – a well-worn kitchen floor shows such heart,” says designer Celerie Kembel. “Also, I’m a big fan of painted wood floors in a kitchen – stripes or geometric stenciled patterns.” Thanks to faux painting (below), this oak floor gives the illusion of featuring black marble borders and inset medallions.



Joshua McHugh

Wood Floors International, Inc.

Paint



Everett Shost

Dark = warm and cozy The deeper the colors, the smaller a space looks and feels, a neat trick when you want to create a cozy feeling in any room. Dark walls and dark-stained oak floors underscore the warmth that radiates through this small cottage living room. Wood trim on the mantel, doors and crown moulding, painted a rich ochre, enhances the come-hither mood.

Strokes of Genius

Paint is canned magic, a quick and inexpensive way to transform hardwood trim, furniture and floors from tired to terrific. Today's paints are highly durable and they're also eco-savvy: look for low- or no-VOC (Volatile Organic Compounds) ratings. For all that newness, painted furniture and floors also have a rich legacy that goes deep into the design traditions of many cultures.

- ▶ **What's your style?** In the hands of great 18th century designers like George Hepplewhite and Thomas Sheraton, painted furniture was fit for the fanciest ballroom. That's in contrast with painted rustic furniture from the South of France, the "Dutch" folk artists of Pennsylvania, and the back roads of the American countryside. Whatever the style, the *original paint* is key to the value of such pieces today.
- ▶ **Be prepared.** It's essential to any good paint job, so you might as well knuckle down and follow the steps to success: clean, repair, sand, and prime with care. Some wood furniture should also be stripped of any old, loose paint. Final step for floors: three to five coats of protective clear polyurethane.
- ▶ **Be creative.** Don't stop with a couple of coats of color. Individualize your furniture or floor with painted decorations. Stencils are traditional. Cut your own, or check out the craft store offerings.
- ▶ **Bordering on genius.** Frame your floor with a painted or stained border about 12-inches from the wall all around. Or paint a rug under a dining table or seating group. Sketch it out in advance, but do the painting freehand to achieve that authentic folk art look.
- ▶ **Paint with stains.** Colored stains are an easy way to add interest underfoot. You have a rainbow of different colors to choose among today, from deep green to pastel blues. Plus, you get to control the final effect.



Dramatic contrast Poplar is a popular hardwood for painted architectural details and mouldings. Painted white, the poplar mantle (left) is in striking contrast to the red oak floor. Three American hardwoods (above) flow together in this custom cabinet door that features two parts oak and one part each of ash and walnut in the bleached oak frame.

AMERICAN HARDWOODS

Environmentally Friendly

Green choices for home design

For centuries, American hardwoods have been prized for their beauty and authenticity, warmth, durability and lasting value. Now, eco-savvy consumers are adding “green and sustainable” to the reasons they choose floors, cabinets, furniture and trim made of American hardwoods.

In U.S. forests, we grow about twice as much hardwood as we harvest each year. What’s more, there is no need to replant them because hardwoods renew themselves on their own and in great abundance.



All hardwood forests in the continental United States are temperate – not tropical. They are home to the oaks, maples, cherry, ash, poplar and scores of other broad-leafed deciduous trees, many of which grow nowhere else in the world. The growing seasons in a temperate forest create the visible tree growth rings that give American hardwoods their distinctive character and figure.

In contrast to the evergreens (softwoods), most hardwood forests are in the eastern half of the country. Hardwood forests cover 269 million acres: the equivalent of hardwood trees covering every square inch of New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Illinois, Indiana, West Virginia, Virginia, Georgia, North Carolina and half of South Carolina.

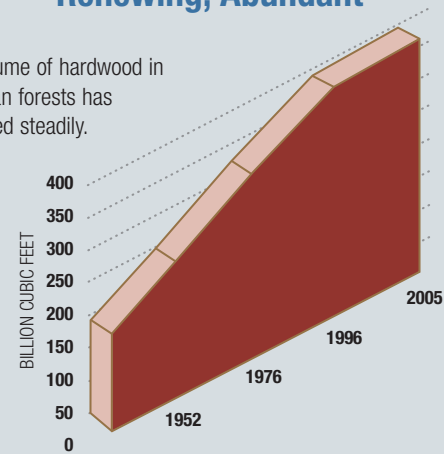
Sustainability is meeting today’s needs, without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs. With far more hardwood growth than there is harvesting, American hardwoods for flooring, furniture, cabinetry and millwork are the definition of environmentally friendly, green and sustainable, now and for future generations.



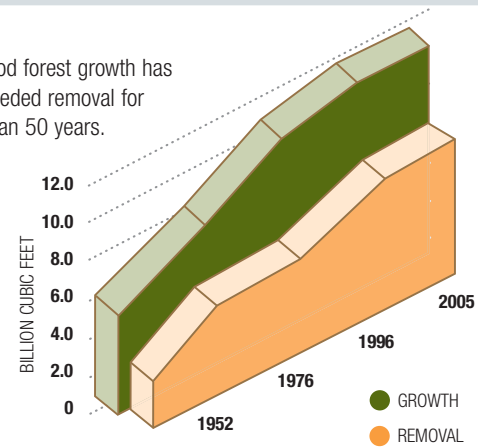
Unparalleled diversity American hardwood forests offer a greater number of species than any other temperate hardwood forest in the world. Each year, hardwood growth is much greater than the annual harvest. As a result, we have 90 percent more hardwoods today than we had 50 years ago.

American Hardwoods: Renewing, Abundant

The volume of hardwood in American forests has increased steadily.



Hardwood forest growth has far exceeded removal for more than 50 years.



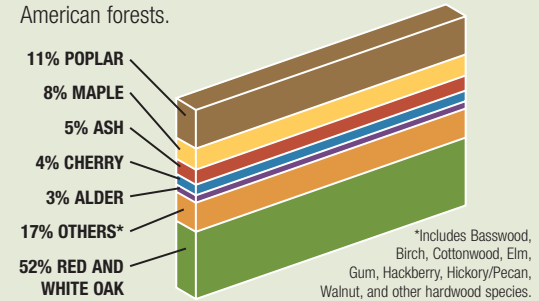
Source: U.S. Forest Service



Tripp Smith

What's Growing in the Forests?

American hardwoods renew and regenerate themselves abundantly. Some species have been and will continue to be naturally more plentiful than others. The oaks make up more than half of all hardwood trees in American forests.



Contemporary medley In another harmonious mix of American hardwoods, the slightly darker white oak floor showcases the lighter maple shelving and built-ins that line a hallway leading to the kitchen.



AMERICAN HARDWOOD INFORMATION CENTER

Visit www.hardwoodinfo.com to learn more about American hardwoods and to get advice on how to select and care for, decorate and remodel with American hardwood floors, cabinets, furniture and trim.



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