

Lakeside Cabinets & Woodworking

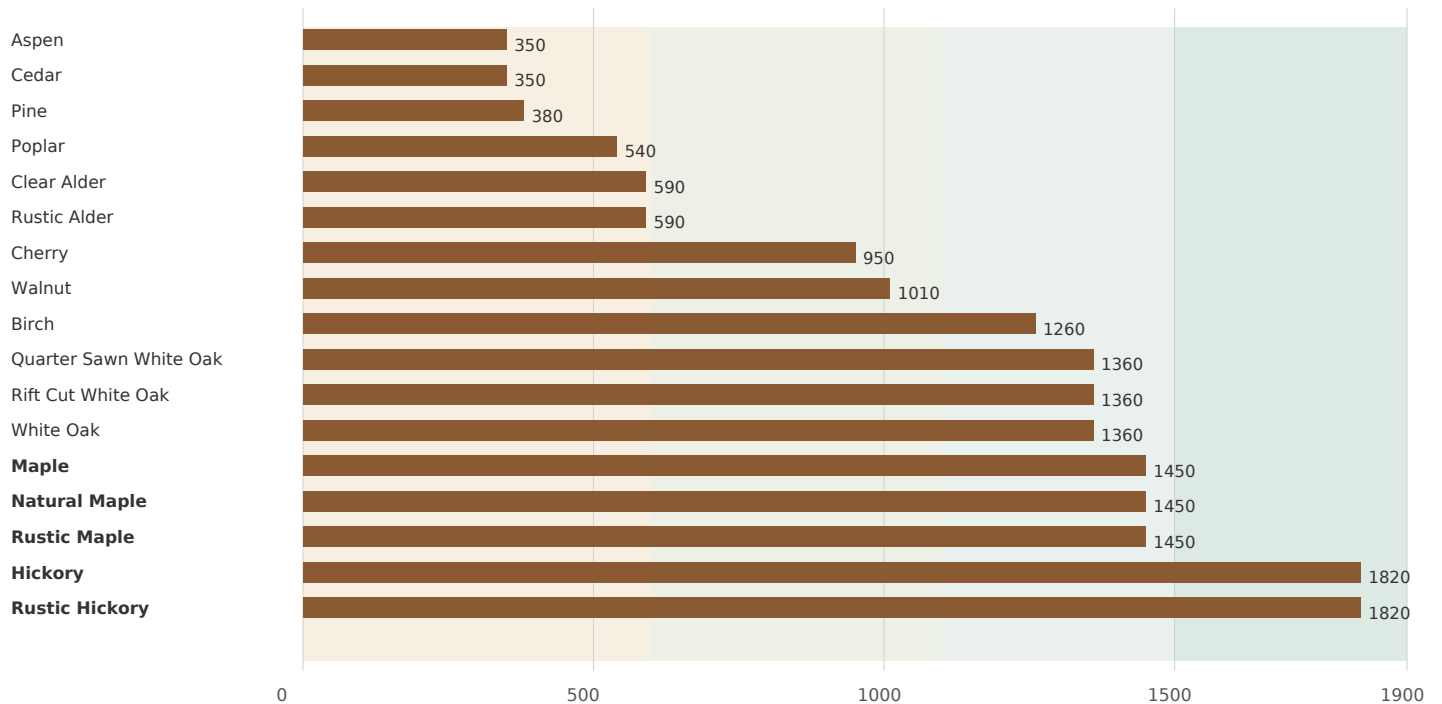
Wood Hardness Scale - Cabinet Species Quick Reference

Wood density and hardness affect how cabinets hold up in daily living. Harder woods usually resist dents, edge wear, and family traffic better, while softer woods can show character marks sooner. Density also affects weight, screw holding, machining, sanding, and how evenly stains and finishes absorb. Hardness is only one part of durability - finish quality, door style, moisture exposure, and daily care still matter.

Softer More likely to dent or compress. Great for rustic character or low-impact areas.	Medium Good everyday cabinetry with normal household care.	Harder Better dent resistance for busy kitchens, mudrooms, islands, and heavy-use spaces.
---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	----------------------------------------------------------------------	-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Hardness Scale - Softest to Hardest

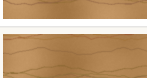
Janka hardness in pounds-force (lbf). Higher number = better resistance to denting/wear.



Important note: Rustic, clear, natural, rift cut, and quarter sawn descriptions usually change appearance, grain, or character. They do not normally change the base wood hardness rating. MDF Paint Grade is engineered and has no standard natural-wood Janka rating, but is included in the table as a common cabinet material.

Lakeside Cabinets & Woodworking

Wood Samples, Janka Ratings, and Daily-Use Guidance

Sample	Wood	Janka	Daily Living / Use
	Aspen	350	Very soft; shows dents quickly; best for low-abuse painted or hidden parts.
	Cedar	350	Soft and aromatic/character rich; dents easily; value depends heavily on cedar type.
	Pine	380	Soft, warm character; accepts wear as part of a rustic look.
	Poplar	540	Common paint-grade hardwood; moderate edge denting; not ideal for clear stain.
	Clear Alder	590	Softer hardwood; stains well; can dent in high-traffic family spaces.
	Rustic Alder	590	Same hardness as alder; knots add rustic character, not added dent resistance.
	Cherry	950	Medium hardness; beautiful aging/color change; good cabinetry with normal care.
	Walnut	1,010	Medium hardness; premium look; can show dents more than oak/maple/hickory.
	Birch	1,260	Durable cabinet hardwood; can blotch without proper finishing.
	Quarter Sawn White Oak	1,360	Same hardness as white oak; ray fleck and stable appearance from the cut.
	Rift Cut White Oak	1,360	Same hardness as white oak; straighter, cleaner grain from the cut.
	White Oak	1,360	Hard, durable, strong grain; excellent for busy homes.
	Maple	1,450	Hard, smooth, durable; great for painted or clear modern looks.
	Natural Maple	1,450	Same hard maple rating; clear/natural finish highlights light color variation.
	Rustic Maple	1,450	Same hard maple dent resistance with knots/mineral character.
	Hickory	1,820	Very hard; excellent dent resistance; high color/grain variation.
	Rustic Hickory	1,820	Same hickory hardness with more knots, contrast, and rustic movement.
	MDF Paint Grade	N/A	Engineered panel; no standard Janka rating. Smooth/stable for paint, but edges and water exposure need care.

Source note: Values are typical published Janka side-hardness figures for common North American cabinet woods. Actual boards vary by species subset, growth, moisture, and supplier. MDF is engineered and is listed without a standard natural-wood Janka rating. Representative swatches shown are small visual samples for quick comparison and are not a guarantee of exact color, grain, or finish appearance.