

THE THIRD SEARCH · SOLID VS ENGINEERED

WHICH WOOD BELONGS IN THIS HOUSE?



The substrate decides. The climate decides. The budget does not.

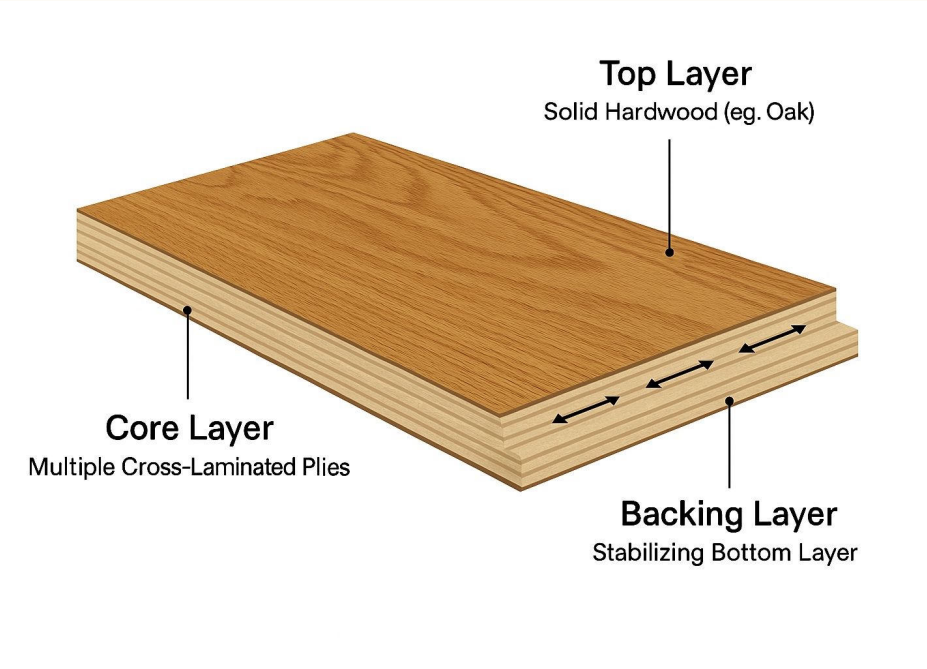


ECOWOODS

SEARCH NARRATIVE 03 · PRODUCT

BOTH ARE REAL WOOD. THEY ARE NOT THE SAME PRODUCT.

This is the query behind every condo listing, every Buffalo humidity thread, every “can I put hardwood in the basement” search. Solid is one piece of wood through its thickness. Engineered is a real hardwood wear layer over plies laid at ninety degrees. The face can look identical. The room they can live in is not.



Engineered construction — wear layer over a cross-ply core.

Solid hardwood

WHAT IT IS

A single plank, usually ¾" (19 mm). Nail-down over plywood on joists.

WHERE IT BELONGS

Above-grade rooms in houses. The traditional Toronto and Buffalo wood floor.

WHERE IT DOES NOT

Concrete slabs, most condos, radiant heat, wet basements.

REFINISH LIFE

Several cycles over decades if the floor is not oversanded.

WHY PEOPLE WANT IT

Maximum sanding life. The floor that was already in the pre-war house.

Engineered hardwood

WHAT IT IS

Real hardwood face over a cross-ply or composite core.

WHERE IT BELONGS

Condo slabs, glue-down over concrete, floating over radiant.

THE NUMBER THAT MATTERS

Wear-layer thickness. 2 mm is looks. 3–6 mm can take a refinish.

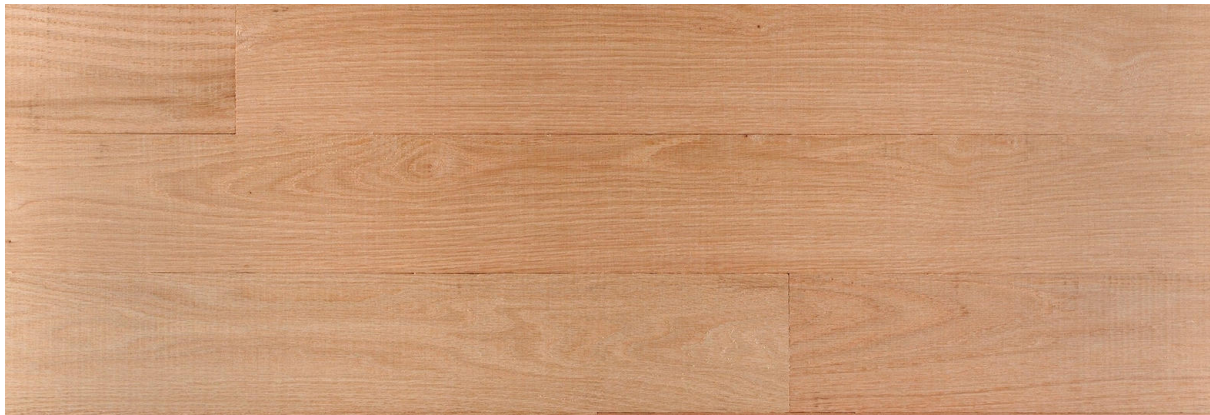
REFINISH LIFE

One to a few cycles — only as many as the face will give.

WHY PEOPLE WANT IT

Stability through the 18–60% RH year this corridor actually has.

MATCH THE PRODUCT TO THE ROOM, NOT THE SHOWROOM



House, plywood, above grade

Solid, nail-down. Or engineered if you want wide plank with less seasonal movement.



Condo or concrete slab

Engineered, glue-down after a moisture test. Solid on a slab is a future cupping claim.



Radiant heat

Engineered, usually floating, product approved for radiant. Solid is the exception, not the rule.



Basement / below grade

Only after the slab is tested. Engineered, conditional. Solid is not the product. Wet rooms want a different category.



THE CORRIDOR DOES NOT CARE WHAT YOU PREFERRED

Toronto and Buffalo share a hard year for wood. Indoor RH spends long stretches outside 35–55%. Wide solid planks move more than narrow ones. Engineered wide planks stay flatter because the core fights the face. That is construction, not marketing.

Acclimation

Minimum 72 hours in the conditioned space. Material moisture tested separately from the subfloor.

Expansion

½ inch (12 mm) at every wall and fixed object — not only the perimeter.

Wear layer

Ask for the millimetres. “Engineered” without a thickness is an unfinished sentence.

Formaldehyde / core

Composite cores answer to emissions rules (TSCA Title VI / CARB in the U.S.). Ask the supplier for the certificate by name.

White oak default

Closed grain takes stain evenly — a market observation, which is why it dominates GTA searches. Hardness: Janka 1,360.

SOLID VS ENGINEERED, ASKED IN SEARCH LANGUAGE

Is engineered real wood?

Yes. The face is hardwood. The core is why it stays flatter on a slab.

Which is better in a Toronto condo?

Engineered. The slab and the HVAC swings decide, not the lookbook.

Can I put solid in a Buffalo basement?

Not as the default. Test the slab. Engineered is the usual real-wood answer. Wet rooms are a different product.

Which lasts longer?

Solid has more sanding cycles. Engineered lasts as long as the assembly stays stable in that room. Longevity is not only thickness.

Can engineered look like wide-plank solid?

Yes. Stability is why wide engineered exists. Wide solid in this climate is a movement problem first.

What about laminate or vinyl?

Not hardwood. Fine products in wet rooms and rental turns. They cannot be sanded back to wood because there is no wood face.

Does engineered hurt resale?

In condos and on slabs, the opposite. Buyers in Forest Hill and Rosedale still read solid as the house standard — when the house can take it.

Who decides on an Ecowoods job?

The substrate and the moisture readings. Written. Before a deposit.



ECOWOODS

HARDWOOD FLOORING INC.

The correct product is the one that will still look and perform correctly in twenty years. The house specified the floor, not the budget.

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