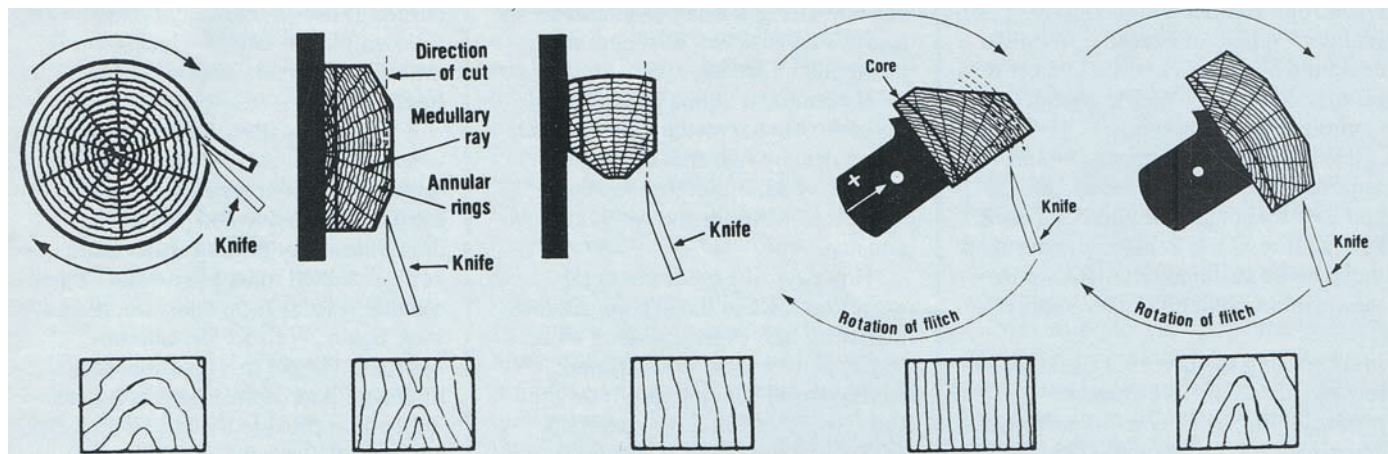


Decorative hardwood veneers

Types of veneer cuts

The method in which veneers are cut is an important factor in producing the various visual effects. Two logs of the same species, but with their veneers cut differently, will have entirely different visual characteristics. In veneer manufacturing, five principle methods of cutting are used:



Rotary

The log is mounted centrally in the lathe and turned against a razor sharp blade, like unwinding a roll of paper. Since this cut follows the log's annular growth rings, a bold variegated grain marking is produced. Rotary cut veneer is exceptionally wide.

Flat slicing

The half log, or flitch, is mounted with the heart side flat against the fitch table of the slicer and the slicing is done parallel to a line through the centre of the log. This produces a variegated figure.

Quarter slicing

The quarter log or flitch is mounted on the fitch table so that the growth rings of the log strike the knife at approximately right angles, producing a series of stripes, straight in some woods, varied in others.

Rift-cut

Rift-cut veneer is produced in the various oak species. Oak has medullary ray cells which radiate from the centre of the log like the curved spokes of a wheel. The rift or comb grain effect is obtained by cutting at an angle of about 15% off the quartered position to avoid the flake figure of the medullary rays.

Half-round

A variation of rotary cutting in which segments or flitches of the log are mounted off-centre in the lathe. This results in a cut slightly across the annular growth rings, and visually shows modified characteristics of both rotary and plain sliced veneers.

Figure characteristics of veneers

The grain pattern and figure on the face of the veneer are of the utmost importance to the designer and architect, since the whole character of the completed installation may be determined by the choice of veneer to be used. Veneer men, in discussing figure in the wood, usually describe the characteristics of the 'movement' in the wood, whether it has wide heart, narrow heart, cathedral, crossfire, or is highly figured.



Cherry
Flat-sliced 2-piece,
book matched

Oak, white
Flat sliced

Mahogany
Quarter sliced
2-piece,
book matched

Oak, white
Rift-cut

Walnut, American
Wide heart,
flat sliced