

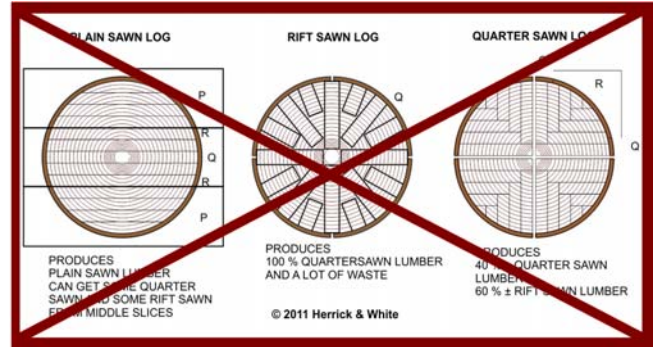


## SAWN LUMBER PLAIN, QUARTERED, RIFT

Understanding the technical aspects of how a log is processed and how the lumber is categorized can be confusing. **WHAT** do those diagrams mean?

“**Plain**”, “**quartered**” and “**rift**”: these words describe how the wood is cut, but more importantly they describe characteristics of the lumber. Ultimately, your three primary concerns are:

1. **WHAT** it looks like = **CHARACTER**
2. **HOW** it acts = **STABILITY**
3. **HOW** much? **WHAT** is the **COST**



Let’s first clarify the terms used to describe the process of cutting wood: “**Sawn**” and “**cut**” are typically used when referring to boards. “**Sliced**” is used primarily in reference to veneers. These terms describe the ways wood is cut, not its appearance.



**Plain Sawn Lumber** is the most common (aka Flat Cut)

- **CHARACTERISTICS:** face grain varies widely from large cathedrals and wavy grains to tighter, straighter grains.
- **STABILITY:** least stable of the three cuts.
- **COST:** lowest; yields the widest boards with the least waste.

**Quarter Sawn Lumber**

- **CHARACTERISTICS:** mostly straight grain with slight movement across board width creating V-like patterns when matched. Can expose a desirable cross-grain characteristic called fleck (aka flake or figure).
- **STABILITY:** considered most stable of the three cuts.
- **COST:** high; this cut creates a lot of waste and yields few narrow boards.

**Rift Lumber:**

- **CHARACTERISTICS:** very similar face grain to quarter sawn with smaller flecks in species like red and white oak.
- **STABILITY:** straight grain makes it more stable than plain sawn, but less stable than quarter sawn.
- **COST:** highest, requiring more labor to yield fewer boards with the most waste of the three.

