

Grades of Blackwood

Blackwood is available in two standard defined grades, Select (SEL) and High Feature (HF), and one industry grade, Black and White (B&W). Select grade timber is the most uniform in appearance. High Feature contain larger amounts of natural feature such as natural stains and knots. Black and White has uniform grain but features the dynamic colour combination of pale sapwood and darker heartwood.

Generally, dried and machined Blackwood for appearance applications is graded to rules set by Australian Standard AS2796.2–2006: “Timber–Hardwood–Sawn and Milled Products, Part 2: Grade description” as a minimum allowable quality. This Standard covers most milled hardwood products. The industry grade rules contain allowances outside those in this Standard. A summary of the standard and industry rules is reproduced overleaf.

Timber is generally graded on all faces. Select and High Feature Blackwood is usually sold free of sapwood. However the industry grading rules for Black and White Blackwood allow for unlimited sapwood so any sold or used in New South Wales and Queensland must have the sapwood preservative treated.

Burl features may be present, as there is no limitation on them in any of the grades. None of the grades contain timber with decay, compression failures, shakes, splits or other fractures.

All grades of timber are allowed the same amount of distortion; this is governed by product type rather than timber grade. Thus, a product of any grade can be expected to fit readily into its intended application. However, flooring or light decking of High Feature Grade may require knots or holes that approach the maximum size allowed to be trimmed out. A pack of timber of a particular grade will have a fair distribution of boards with the amount of feature allowed in that grade.



Select Grade (SEL)



High Feature Grade (HF)



Black and White Grade (B&W)




Select Grade (SEL)

Select Grade has a relatively even grain and figure that provides a rich but generally uniform texture and surface.

Feature	
Natural stain or discolouration	Slight.
Other discolouration	Not present.
*Bark Groove	One is permitted per board with a maximum length of 20mm and maximum width of 5mm.
Holes	Small holes up to 2mm in diameter may be present. For boards between 50 and 100mm wide, 5 holes are allowed in any 100mm with a total of 10 holes allowed in any 900mm length. For boards wider than 100mm, 8 holes are allowed in any 100mm length with a total of 16 holes allowed in any 900mm length.
Tight knots	Tight knots may be present, but they must be smaller in aggregate than 15mm measured across their largest dimension, or $\frac{1}{4}$ of the surface width for any 1m of board length.
Checks appearing on the surface	Small checks may be present, but they will each be less than 1mm wide and 250mm long.


* This requirement is not included in AS2796.2-1999 as it is a feature unique to Blackwood.



High Feature Grade (HF)

High Feature Grade Blackwood has the most distinct natural feature and provides a surface that is rich with a lively and vibrant character:

Feature	
Natural stain or discolouration	May be present.
Other discolouration	Not present, except if product is to be painted.
*Bark Groove	One is permitted per board with a maximum length of 20mm and maximum width of 5mm.
Tight knots	The largest dimension individually or in aggregate of any tight knots present in any 1m length of board will be lesser of 50mm or $\frac{3}{8}$ of the surface width.
Checks appearing on the surface	May be present, but each will be a maximum of 2mm wide.
Holes	Pinholes may be present. The maximum number of holes varies with the board width. For boards between 50 and 100mm wide, 16 holes are allowed in any 100mm with a total of 24 holes allowed in any 900mm length. For boards wider than 100mm, 24 holes are allowed in any 100mm length with a total of 36 holes allowed in any 900mm length. Up to 3 holes between 3mm and 10mm in diameter may be present in any 1m length of board.



Black and White Grade (B&W)

Black and White Grade Blackwood has the same relatively even grain and figure of Select Grade material but features paler sapwood colours. Combined with the darker tones of Blackwood heartwood in the same piece, this creates a dynamic and distinctive combination of colours.

Feature	
Natural stain or discolouration	May be present.
Other discolouration	Not present, except if product is to be painted.
*Bark Groove	One is permitted per board with a maximum length of 20mm and maximum width of 5mm.
Holes	Small holes up to 2mm in diameter may be present. For boards between 50 and 100mm wide, 5 holes are allowed in any 100mm with a total of 10 holes allowed in any 900mm length. For boards wider than 100mm, 8 holes are allowed in any 100mm length with a total of 16 holes allowed in any 900mm length.
Tight knots	Tight knots may be present, but they must be smaller in aggregate than 15mm measured across their largest dimension, or $\frac{1}{4}$ of the surface width for any 1m of board length.
Checks appearing on the surface	Small checks may be present, but they will each be less than 1mm wide and 250mm long.
**Untreated Sapwood	Unlimited. ** This allowance is outside the requirements of AS2796.2-1999. Any Black and White Blackwood sold or used in NSW and Qld must have the sapwood preservative-treated.

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Due to the printing process, the colours shown are indicative only.