



LOG SPLITTER **BUYING GUIDE**

SEE THE
FAQs

Find the log splitter that is right for you.

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WHICH LOG SPLITTER IS RIGHT FOR YOU?

As the seller of thousands of log splitters, we have found this to be the most difficult to answer. The ease with which timber can split is dependent upon many factors including:

- Size of the Timber
- Age of the Timber
- Species of Timber
- Location of the Timber

SIZE

Evidently, the diameter of the log plays a role in which log splitter to select. The role it plays however is less significant than the three listed below.

AGE OF THE TIMBER (SEASONED)

As a general rule, timber cuts better when fresh, but splits better when aged. It should be cut into lengths that can fit on the deck of your splitter.

To correctly season your timber, stack the freshly cut timber in a covered and dry location with good airflow to both ends of the log. We recommend it sit for a period of 6mths - 2 years (size and species dependent) to enable efficient splitting and longer burning.

Once seasoned, Radiata Pine for example requires approximately half as much splitting force compared to freshly cut logs. Red Gum requires 20% less force when seasoned. Even if your splitter does split fresh cut timber, it burns hotter and for longer if it is seasoned.

So it's best to plan ahead as much as possible, and prepare your timber early.

SPECIES OF TIMBER

The most important consideration for which splitter to select is the species of timber you are hoping to split.

The most basic separation between species is hardwood and softwood. The definition can be misleading. A tree is actually categorised by its seed structure. Whilst most hardwoods are denser than softwoods, this is not always the case.

For the purposes of splitting, a more important factor is between straight or slope/interlocked grain.

Some of the easiest timbers to split are Pine and Cedar. Both are softwoods with straight grains. On the opposite end of the scale, Brush Box and Spotted Gum are hardwoods with interlocked grain.

A log splitter that can easily split a seasoned 45cm pine log, may struggle with a 15cm spotted gum.

LOCATION OF THE TIMBER

Timber within the one species and even from the same tree can differ in splitting force required.

Timber at the base of a trunk can require up to 15% more force to split than a similar size further up the trunk. The hardness around branch unions also increases by 5-10%.

Trees within the same species can also vary between +/- 10% depending upon where in Australia the tree is grown.

CONCLUSION

Due to the variations noted above, it is difficult to provide a definitive answer as to which splitter is best for you. Our recommendation is to buy the best one to suit your budget and storage space. The larger the splitter, the more you can split.

Smaller splitters

- Good for soft woods with straight grains.
- Limited storage space required.
- Good on a tight budget.

Larger splitters

- Able to tackle a wider range of species.
- Great for splitting large volumes.
- Greater mobility on larger properties.

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APPENDIX

Provided below is a chart outlining numerous timbers grown in Australia.

The Janka hardness test measures the resistance of a sample of wood to denting and wear. It measures the force required to embed an 11.28mm (.444 in) steel ball into wood to half the ball's diameter.

Whilst this is not directly related to force required to split timber, it is provided as an indicator of the density of timber.

NAME	CATEGORY	GRAIN	JANKA* RATING - FRESH CUT	JANKA* RATING - SEASONED
Pine	Softwood	Straight	4.0	2.2
Cedar	Softwood	Straight	4.1	2.7
Ash	Hardwood	Straight	6.0	4.9
Tasmanian Oak	Hardwood	Straight	6.1	4.9
Australian Cypress	Softwood	Straight	6.3	4.7
Maple	Softwood	Interlocked	6.6	4.5
Cypress Pine	Softwood	Straight	8.0	6.8
Radiata Pine	Softwood	Straight	8.0	5.0
Mountain Ash	Hardwood	Straight	10.3	6.8
Victorian Ash	Hardwood	Straight	10.4	6.5
Blackbutt	Hardwood	Straight	11.0	9.0
Yellow Stringybark	Hardwood	Interlocked	11.0	8.7
River Red Gum	Hardwood	Interlocked	11.3	9.0
Turpentine	Hardwood	Interlocked	11.3	9.3
Spotted Gum	Hardwood	Variable	11.5	9.5
Brushbox	Hardwood	Interlocked	11.6	9.0
Grey Gum	Hardwood	Interlocked	12.4	10.8
Grey Ironbark	Hardwood	Interlocked	16.7	14.1
Aust. Buloke	Hardwood	Variable	23.0	21.2

* Numbers above were acquired from numerous sources and offered as a guide only.