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HARDWOODS AND HIGH QUALITY SOFTWOODS

Utile Timber Merchants ([click here to visit our website](http://www.timbersource.co.uk))

## What is West African Utile?

**West African Utile** timber is a 'sister' species to Sapele but usually has a more interesting grain and gives a better 'finish', albeit at a higher price. Widths and lengths may be a little smaller than Sapele.

**Latin name** Entandrophragma utile

**Also known as** sipo (Ivory Coast), assié (Cameroons)

**Utile Environmental** Listed in the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species as as VU – Vulnerable: at risk of extinction. Not listed in CITES. Available from well-managed sources.

**Distribution** Utile has a wide natural distribution in tropical Africa. It occurs in the Ivory Coast, in the Cameroons, and in Liberia, Gabon and Uganda. The tree grows chiefly in the moist, deciduous high forest.

## West African Utile Properties

**The Tree** The tree may be up to 45m tall and 2m in diameter above the base. The bole is straight, cylindrical, and free of buttresses, and may be 21m to 24m long.

**Utile The Timber** The heartwood and sapwood are distinct; the heartwood is pale pink when freshly cut, darkening on exposure to reddish-brown. It closely resembles the related sapele, both in appearance and properties, but is more open in texture due to the larger pores, and generally lacks the cedar-like odour of sapele. The interlocked grain produces a broad ribbon-stripe, often wider and more irregular than that of sapele. It weighs about 660 kg/m<sup>3</sup> when dried.

**Drying** Utile dries moderately slowly with a distinct tendency for distortion in the form of twist to occur, and original shakes to extend. In general, however, distortion is not severe.

**Strength** Its strength properties are similar to those of American mahogany.

**Working Qualities** Medium - Works rather well, but with a slight blunting effect on cutting edges. A cutting angle of 15° will reduce the tendency for the interlocked grain to tear during planing and moulding. Takes stain and glue well, and polishes well after filling.





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## HARDWOODS AND HIGH QUALITY SOFTWOODS

**Durability** Moderately durable. Heartwood is moderately resistant to attack by decay, fungi and termites. Sapwood is liable to attack by powder-post beetle. Heartwood is extremely resistant to treatment; sapwood is easy to treat.

**Treatability** Extremely difficult

**Utile Moisture Movement** Medium

**Density (mean, Kg/m<sup>3</sup>)** 660

**Physical Properties** Moderate hardness and weight. Medium bending and crushing strengths, not recommended for steam bending. Wood bending difficult. Kiln-dries satisfactorily, usually with only slight degrade. Air-dries at a slow moderate rate with a slight to marked tendency to end-check and warp. Movement in service is rated as medium.

**Texture** Medium

## Working with West African Utile

**Utile Use(s)** Joinery - Exterior, Joinery - Interior, Furniture, Decking, Cabinetwork, Boat Construction

**Colour(s)** Reddish brown

## What is FAS Grade

The FAS grade, which derives from an original grade "First and Seconds", will provide the user with long, clear cuttings - best suited for high quality furniture, interior joinery and solid wood mouldings. Minimum board size is 6" (152mm) and wider and 8' (2.44m) and longer. The FAS grade includes a range of boards that yield from 83.3% (10/12ths) to 100% clear-wood cuttings over the entire surface of the board. The clear cuttings must be a minimum size of 3" (76mm) wide by 7' (2.13m) long or 4" (102mm) wide by 5' (1.52m) long. The number of these cuttings permitted depends on the size of the board with most boards permitting one to two. The minimum width and length will vary, depending on species and whether the board is green or kiln dried. Both faces of the board must meet the minimum requirement for FAS.

Timbersource are a leading online hardwood timber merchant in the UK, supplying Utile timber to the joinery, carpentry, construction and building trade at competitive prices. To Contact Us click [HERE](#)

