

Siberian Larch

Larix sibirica

Also known as: Siberian larch, Russian larch.



WOOD TYPE Softwood

INTRODUCTION –

ENVIRONMENTAL Listed in the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species as LR – Lower Risk (least concern).
Not listed in CITES. Believed available from well-managed sources.

DISTRIBUTION The native distribution for *L. sibirica* extends across Siberia to Mongolia and northern China. In Siberia it is extracted from 'natural forest' and most of this timber is extremely slow grown material. In the eastern part of its range it hybridises with *L. gmelinii* and is known as *Larix x czekanowskii*. *L. sibirica* is also grown in plantations in Austria, Norway and Finland yielding more quickly grown material. It has been introduced into Canada and northern USA.

THE TREE This is a medium sized deciduous, coniferous tree ranging in size from 20m to 40m tall with a diameter of 1m or slightly more. In favourable situations a long, clean, cylindrical bole for two-thirds of its length can be achieved.

THE TIMBER The heartwood is pale reddish-brown to brick-red in colour, sharply defined from the narrow, lighter-coloured sapwood. It is a very resinous wood, with clearly marked annual rings. It has a straight grain, a fine, uniform texture and is rather heavy, weighing 590 kg/m³ when dried, it is likely that plantation grown *L. sibirica* and that grown in more southerly Europe is of lower density. Its heartwood is listed as moderately durable, and its narrow sapwood means a high proportion of heartwood can be recovered for use.

DRYING Difficult to dry due to its high resin content. Therefore it should be dried slowly to prevent checking and other drying defects.

STRENGTH Likely to be similar to European larch which is about 50% harder than Scots pine and slightly stronger in bending and toughness. The strength values for slow grown *L. sibirica* material are likely to be slightly higher than for faster grown plantation sourced material.

WORKING QUALITIES Similar to European larch in that it saws, machines and finishes well but it tends to split on nailing and therefore drilling is recommended particularly at board ends.

Durability	Slightly durable Moderately durable	Chemical Properties	–
Treatability	Extremely difficult	Colour(s)	Yellow brown (golden brown), Light brown, Reddish brown (pale)
Moisture Movement	Reported to be small	Use(s)	Cladding, Joinery - Exterior, Flooring, Decking
Density (mean, Kg/m³)	590 (Ranging from 570 to 650)		
Texture	Fine		