

# Timberpride – The UKs’ leading Oak Specialist.

*Technical Information - PDF.*

## *Air dried and Kiln dried timber - What is the difference?*

All our Oak is air dried, much of it however is then kiln dried. Oak must be air dried for minimum 1 year per 25mm of thickness, this brings the moisture content down close to the equilibrium for the place it is stored (typically 12 to 18%). More importantly it helps to release many of the tensions that are always present in timber.

Kiln drying should be used to artificially lower the moisture content of air dried timber to the levels you expect to find in today’s insulated and heated house. Successful kiln drying can only be achieved using air dried stock, without prolonged air drying the resulting timber is wracked with tension and often suffers from internal drying splits called case hardening or collapse.

Oak over 80mm thick cannot be kiln dried, many people have tried, all have failed. The ratio of surface area to volume makes it impossible to extract water from the centre of a 100mm board without the surface splitting. Kiln dried 100mm will either be wet in the middle, case hardened or drilled through the centre.

Oak cannot be hurried; it is now possible to dry 80mm boards in 6 months where it would traditionally take 3 years, but this does not mean the finished boards will be of any use to the joiner. The characteristics and working qualities of Oak have been understood for centuries. So it must also be understood a minimum amount time is necessary.

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