

Today's Consumer Products

Americans use more wood – some 5,000 to 10,000 products – than all other industrial materials combined. The average American uses 200 board feet of lumber, 160 square feet of wood panels and 650 pounds of paper each year – the equivalent of a 100-foot-tall tree.

About 75% of the wood used is softwood (such as pine), which is used for home construction, furniture and other products. Pennsylvania forests are mostly hardwoods, which are used to produce higher quality products, such as fine furniture, cabinets, flooring and crafts.

Sawlogs: 95% of the timber harvested in Pennsylvania is for sawlogs, or whole logs, which yield the highest value and usually are derived from trees at least 12 inch dbh (diameter at breast height). Sawlogs are used to make solid wood products such as:

- ☞ boards
- ☞ decking
- ☞ fence posts
- ☞ timbers, including mine timbers
- ☞ cabin logs
- ☞ utility poles
- ☞ railroad cross ties
- ☞ veneer (1/4 inch or less thin sheets of wood)
- ☞ pallets (lumber and plywood shipping containers)
- ☞ piling, which is treated with creosote and used in bridge, docks, wharves, foundations and other general construction
- ☞ plywood (combined sheets of veneer)
- ☞ cooperage (material used for barrels, baskets and boxes)

Pulpwood: Pulpwood, usually derived from smaller or lesser value trees, is chipped to make pulp for papermaking. Wood chips and sawdust also are used to make pulp.

To obtain the maximum value from each tree, today's industry is almost "wasteless." Virtually every part of the tree has some economic value.

Many of today's wood products, such as particleboard, are "engineered" from what was once considered waste. Bark and sawdust are recycled and used as landscaping mulch and animal bedding, respectively.

Other common wood products are:

- ☞ cardboard boxes
- ☞ firewood
- ☞ toothpicks
- ☞ clothespins
- ☞ flooring
- ☞ siding
- ☞ moldings
- ☞ shingles
- ☞ books
- ☞ magazines
- ☞ newspapers
- ☞ furniture
- ☞ ceiling tile
- ☞ musical instruments
- ☞ baseball bats
- ☞ foods, such as nuts and syrup

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Today's Consumer Products (continued)

Less obvious products, many of which rely on the cellulose in the wood as a thickener, are:

- ☞ diapers
- ☞ rayon cloth
- ☞ paint thinner
- ☞ photographic film
- ☞ shampoo
- ☞ soaps
- ☞ chewing gum
- ☞ cosmetics
- ☞ cellophane
- ☞ imitation leather
- ☞ medicines
- ☞ adhesives
- ☞ goggles
- ☞ football helmets
- ☞ inks
- ☞ toothpaste
- ☞ cellulose acetate