



Dave's Firewood Tips

Smoke-free fire master, Dave Pullen from the New Zealand Home Heating Association shares his top picks for the best firewood to burn a warmer, cheaper, smoke-free fire.

Plantation Pine, Douglas Fir and Blue Gum are widely available from [Canterbury Good Wood merchants \(find-a-merchant\)](#) and are the best woods to use and mix to get your fire just right.



1. Plantation Pine

Great for Kindling

One of the most common firewoods used throughout New Zealand as it comes from pine plantations and burns very cleanly. Thin compact bark.

Smooth grained wood, mostly free of knots, light coloured.

Drying time (ready to burn) 1 to 2 years.

Moisture content - 15 - 20%.





2. Douglas Fir/Oregon

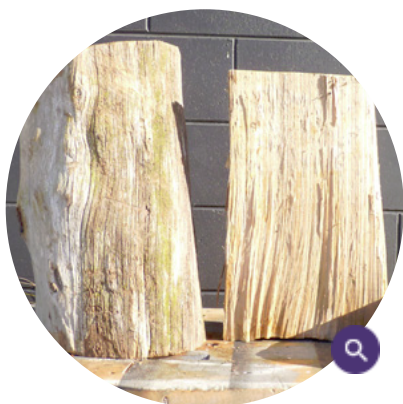
Great for Kindling

Normally taken from plantations when 25 - 30 years old. Light smooth bark.

Has distinctive orange centre with whitish ring towards the bark. Ideal for splitting to make kindling. Very few knots & light in weight.

Drying time (ready to burn) 1 to 2 years.

Moisture content 15 - 20%.



3. Blue Gum

Great for Long Burn

In the hardwood category, light coloured smooth bark. When aged shows radial cracking, which indicates low moisture. Heavier than pine.

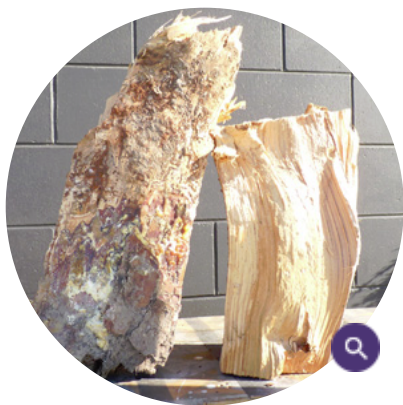
Light to dark in colour.

Normally smooth grained wood with no knots.

Drying time (ready to burn) 5 to 6 years.

Moisture content 15 - 20%.





4. Old Man Pine

Normally cut from farm shelter belts - 40 to 50 years old, very thick heavy bark. Tends to smoke a lot when lighting & refuelling.

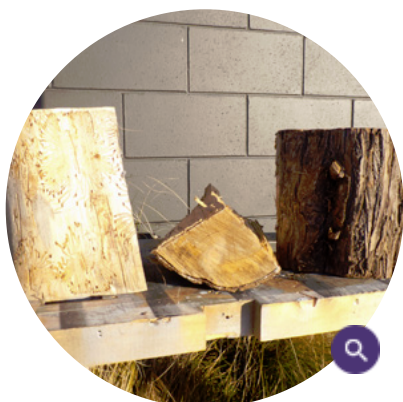
Medium colour, lots of knots and gum.

Drying time (ready to burn) 2 to 3 years.

Moisture content 15 - 20%.

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If you have any Old Man Pine, we recommend you turn this to kindling to limit the amount of smoke.



5. Macrocarpa

Usually cut from farm shelter belts. Similar to old man pine but with thin bark.

Brownish dark colour with knots showing and little gum. Heavier than pine.

Drying time (ready to burn) 3 to 5 years.

Moisture content 15 - 20%.

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6. TeaTree/Manuka

Normally cleared from farmland as scrub. One of our heavier hardwoods. Stringy light bark.

Deep brown in colour. Shows small knots. Clean grained wood.

Drying time (ready to burn) 3 to 5 years.

Moisture content 15 - 20%.



7. Pohutukawa

Grown on coastal properties. Usually only used as firewood from pruning or trees blown over from coastal high winds. Light stringy bark. Heavy in weight.

Medium brown with knots present.

Drying time (ready to burn) 3 to 5 years.

Moisture content 15 - 20%.





8. Willow

Normally grown on the side of waterways and only used when dead and still standing. In this state it becomes a light greyish colour, very thin bark. Can be washed down rivers and end up on beaches and, if found above high water line, could be used. Very light in weight.

Very light in colour. Smooth grained with no knots or gum. The cleanest of firewood to work with.

Drying time (ready to burn) - as it is only used when dead, has extremely low moisture content and can be used immediately.



Next steps

- ➔ Learn to stack and burn your good wood(demos)
- ➔ Helpful links(helpful-links)

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