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## Technical Help

Category: Picture Framing Underpinners

Title: What is the difference between softwood and hardwood underpinner wedges (Vnails)?

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### **What is the difference between softwood and hardwood underpinner wedges (Vnails)?**

#### **Softwood Wedges**

Softwood wedges are sharpened along one edge, which allows them to cut through the grain of softwoods, hence the crunching sound normally heard during pinning. Most framers in the UK use softwood wedges all of the time, only switching to hardwood wedges when they encounter a particularly hard moulding.

#### **Hardwood Wedges**

Hardwood wedges are sharpened along both edges which allows the wedge to follow the grain of the timber during the pinning process. Depending on the species of wood, the grain may be straight or curved. When working with a curved grain the path of the wedge will also follow the curve and so care must be taken to place the wedge away from the edges of the moulding to avoid breakout. Because of this it is not normally possible to stack wedges in hardwood. Hardwood wedges do not generally work well in softwood mouldings.

Both types of wedges are glued on the sharpened side, so are inserted glue side up into the underpinner.