

G R A D I N G
R U L E S

for

**MFMA Northern
Hard Maple**

Parquet Flooring
(*Acer saccharum*)



The Sports Flooring Authority

maplefloor.org

MFMA Northern Hard Maple Flooring

MFMA Northern Hard Maple is a dense, strong, remarkably hard and supremely durable product. MFMA Northern Hard Maple offers a wide range of uses and color possibilities. MFMA Northern Hard Maple is close-grained, hard-fibered, free from slivering and splintering, and polishes well under friction. MFMA Northern Hard Maple flooring has a natural beauty when given a transparent finish and is suited for a variety of uses.

Because wood is a natural product, it is subject to color variations resulting from differing growing conditions. The color of maple heartwood is brownish — the sapwood is much lighter. Consistency of color cannot be controlled in the manufacturing process, and color variation is not a grading defect.

Hard maple has an unusual ability to resist pointed pressure without abrasion. It is easily covered with attractive finishes.

General Rules

Moisture Control

MFMA parquet products are manufactured at between 6% and 9% average moisture content. Upon receipt of shipment, proper moisture controls must be exercised to maintain proper moisture content.

Characteristics

Because of the nature and methodology of the manufacturing process with respect to individual slats or pickets, most of the pieces in a panel will be an edge-grained product. This provides a more stable and attractive finished appearance that is more desirable in certain applications.

About MFMA

Founded in 1897, the MFMA is the only authoritative source of technical information about hard maple flooring. The Association publishes grade standards, guide specifications, floor care recommendations, and specifications for athletic flooring sealers and finishes. Copies of all publications are available from MFMA headquarters.

MFMA members consult with architects, contractors, school officials, and maintenance personnel to answer questions about the specification, use and care of MFMA maple flooring. When you need assistance or information, contact the MFMA Sport Floor Contractor Member nearest you, or contact the Maple Flooring Manufacturers Association headquarters office at the address listed on the back of this booklet.

PURPOSE

MFMA provides these Flooring Grading Rules, including proposals on care, as a guide to specifiers, architects, end users, and other professionals. MFMA, its members and employees do not warrant the information contained herein as proper under all conditions. MFMA reserves the right to revise these Parquet Flooring Grading Rules as necessary.

Kiln Drying

The lumber from which **MFMA-PQ** Northern Hard Maple flooring is manufactured must be properly kiln dried. Otherwise, the flooring shall not be considered of grade.

Bundling

The bundling/packaging of multiple panels, square feet per unit, is at the discretion of the individual MFMA manufacturer.

Standard Measurements

MFMA-PQ Northern Hard Maple flooring is manufactured in square and rectangular panels in a variety of dimensions. Individual picket widths range from 3/4" to 1-1/8", and picket lengths range from 5 1/2" to 12". Minimum thickness of **MFMA-PQ** Northern Hard Maple flooring is 5/16".

Assembly Process

Individual pickets, assembled into panels, shall be joined by either wire, mesh, strapping or tape on the back of the panel, or paperface on the front of the panel.

Beech and Birch Flooring

These rules also apply to beech (*Fagus grandifolia*) and Birch (*Betula alleghaniensis*) flooring.

How to Specify MFMA—PQ (Parquet) Northern Hard Maple Flooring

MFMA-PQ (Parquet) flooring is specified in the same manner as **MFMA-RL** (Random Length) and **MFMA-FJ** (Finger Jointed) Northern Hard Maple flooring. For example, when ordering, requesting or specifying **MFMA-PQ** (Parquet) Northern Hard Maple flooring, specify as “**MFMA-PQ**” and list the grade, required species, thickness and picket size. A typical specification should appear as follows:

2.1 Materials

Flooring shall be **MFMA-PQ** Second and Better Grade Northern Hard Maple, 5/16” thick; with pickets in 1-1/8” wide x 12” long dimension; fastened together in panels using mesh backing; grade marked and stamped as produced by an MFMA member manufacturer.

MFMA-PQ (Parquet) Northern Hard Maple Flooring Grading Rules

MFMA-PQ (Parquet) First Grade Northern Hard Maple

This grade is generally not produced for **MFMA-PQ** Northern Hard Maple flooring.

MFMA-PQ (Parquet) Second and Better Northern Hard Maple

This grade of **MFMA-PQ** maple is an ideal choice for gymnasiums, handball and racquetball courts, multipurpose rooms, cafeterias, retail shops, offices, commercial, residential, and industrial applications. With the use of some finishes, slight shadows and color variations may appear.

MFMA-PQ Second and Better Northern Hard Maple allows no surface defects, but admits distinct color variations; numerous dark green or black spots or streaks — provided they do not occur in combination with predominately dark heartwood; and slight imperfections which cannot be wholly removed by the ordinary method of smoothing the floor when it is laid. This grade is not selected for tone or color. The wood must be live and sound.

While these and similar features are admissible, sufficient attention is given to appearance to make this grade desirable and satisfactory for use where color variations and blemishes are not a factor of consideration.

MFMA-PQ (Parquet) Third and Better Northern Hard Maple

This grade of **MFMA-PQ** maple is comprised of a mixture of all other grades of **MFMA-PQ** Northern Hard Maple. The lowest grade admissible shall not be less than **MFMA-PQ** Third Grade Northern Hard Maple. **MFMA-PQ** Third and Better Grade Northern Hard Maple is suited for nearly any application where variations in appearance are not an aesthetic concern. This grade can be produced as a mill run product provided it contains a maximum of 40% **MFMA-PQ** Third Grade Northern Hard Maple. It can also be produced by mixing 60% **MFMA-PQ** Second and Better Grade Northern Hard Maple and 40% **MFMA-PQ** Third Grade Northern Hard Maple. This grade allows defects as described in other grades of **MFMA-PQ** Northern Hard Maple flooring.

MFMA-PQ (Parquet) Third Grade Northern Hard Maple

This grade of **MFMA-PQ** maple must be of such character as will lay properly and give a good, serviceable floor. This grade is an ideal choice for gymnasiums, multipurpose rooms, cafeterias, offices, commercial buildings and residences.

MFMA-PQ Third Grade Northern Hard Maple gives excellent performance where a unique floor is desired and where good wearing qualities are required with medium cost and appearance. This grade may contain defects common to maple including: slight splits and checks; closed knots (1/2" and smaller); heavy mineral streaks; imperfections which will fill and finish satisfactorily; and wane no more than 1/8" from the back of any individual picket in a panel. The maple pickets must be serviceable and firm.

This grade will not admit voids on edges or ends; shake; heart check; badly split ends or imperfections in manufacture which materially impair the serviceability of the floor for the purpose intended. This grade is not selected for tone or color.

Rules Governing Reinspection

Even the most experienced inspectors will occasionally misgrade some pieces. Therefore:

Shipments shall be considered to be the grade invoiced if, upon inspection by an official inspector of the Maple Flooring Manufacturers Association, 95% or more, in feet, is found to be of grade invoiced. Where the degrades are in excess of 5%, in feet, of the shipment, the degrades in excess of the 5% shall be the property of the manufacturer of the flooring.

The quality of the flooring in the condition in which it leaves the manufacturer is held to govern the grade, as subsequent lack of care and improper treatment in laying, sanding, or finishing are not chargeable to the manufacturer.

In the event that the amount below grade is found to be 5% or less, in feet, of the total amount of the item, the cost of reinspection shall be borne by the complainant. If more than 5% in feet, the expense shall be borne by the manufacturer of the flooring.

For dispute resolution contact MFMA. Specific "Guidelines for Reinspection" are available upon request. In any dispute involving the grade of the flooring material where an MFMA reinspection is requested, the determination of the MFMA inspector shall prevail.

Care of Flooring After Delivery

MFMA-PQ Northern Hard Maple flooring is made from lumber kiln-dried to the proper moisture content. After kiln drying, the lumber is air-cooled and cut into parquet pickets, accurately milled, carefully graded, bundled, and stored in a dry, well-ventilated warehouse.

As a valuable product, it deserves from the dealer, trucker, and floor layer the same care in handling accorded by the manufacturer. TO ENSURE the most satisfactory results in the finished floor, observe these simple precautions:

- ◀ Don't unload, truck, or transfer flooring in rain or snow. If atmosphere is foggy or damp, cover with a tarpaulin.
- ◀ Don't store flooring in leaking or open enclosures.
- ◀ Don't unload flooring outside of a shelter at the jobsite.
- ◀ Don't overlook providing protected ventilation to keep relative humidity at a minimum.
- ◀ Don't store or lay flooring in a cold, damp building or directly on a concrete slab. Wait until plastering and cement work are thoroughly dried and woodwork and trim are installed.
- ◀ Flooring should be delivered to the premises a minimum of seven days prior to installation, or as required for proper acclimation. All flooring shall be placed in the area into which it is to be installed to assure proper acclimation to the environmental conditions of the facility.



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