



# TAINUO WOODS

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## Technical- Plywood History

**Plywood** has been made for thousands of years; the earliest known occurrence of plywood was in Ancient Egypt around 3500 BCE when wooden articles were made from sawn veneers glued together crosswise.

This was originally done due to a shortage of fine wood. Thin sheets of high quality wood were glued over a substrate of lower quality wood for cosmetic effect, with incidental structural benefits. This manner of inventing plywood has occurred repeatedly throughout history.

Most high quality English furniture makers working in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries (and since) have used veneering as a technique. In addition to making the most out of the highest quality materials available, it reduces prices and improves stability of construction. The irregularities of grain which confer decorative interest often result in uncontrollable warping and cracking if any attempt is made to use the wood in thicknesses much greater than those characterizing cabinet-making veneers (typically 1-2mm).

Modern plywood, in which the veneer is cut on a rotary lathe from softwood logs, is of relatively recent origin, invented by Immanuel Nobel. The first such lathes were set up in the United States in the mid 19th century. Plywood has been one of the most ubiquitous building products for decades. One of the earliest applications of mass-produced modern plywood manufacturing in the United States was recorded in Portland, Oregon by the Portland Manufacturing Company. The owner, Thomas J. Autzen helped develop a bonding technology, which greatly shortened the drying and manufacturing process. His early engineering contribution played an important role in making plywood one of the most abundant and affordable building products ever produced. In India, waterproof plywood is also known as "kitply". Though Kitply is a brand, it has become a generic designation, since the company that makes it pioneered the use of waterproof plywood in India.

The landscape historian John Stilgoe has theorized that the 4' x 8' dimensions of a standard sheet are due to the space required for moving a mule into a barn.