

# Bow Stave

## Split Stave

## Sapling

## Board

Desireable sapwood & healthy back  
ie: "White woods"

Desireable heartwood

Desireable heartwood-sapwood combo

damaged, unhealthy back  
- rot, bug damage, spalting

tension-strong, healthy sapwood

tension-weak

- See board-selection diagram  
- Choose straight-grained board with unviolated fibers across the back

### Natural Back

①

Bark is stuck (wintercut)

Bark slips off

Bark pops off during kiln drying (yew)

Remove outer bark & carefully remove inner bark. Scrape last bits of inner bark. Can leave little twin streaks.

Steam stave, throw in hot shower or add boiling water

Peel bark off. May have to seal back for some species.

### Chase a Growth Ring

②

Chase a heartwood ring

Chase a sapwood ring

### Violated Back

③

• Suitable for tension strong woods only, though all can take some amount  
• Common for yew and English hollyhaws

'Controlled' 'mistakes'

### Backing

#### Soft Backing

- rawhide, linen, plant fiber

#### Hard Backing

- Bamboo, wood

#### Sinew Backing

### Decrown

• typical for small diameter trees  
• Not necessary for tension-strong woods

good enough board

bark rejected boards

### Sawn Back

(unbacked board bow)

## The Back of the Bow

- 6 ways -

In case of a mistake...

Chase a growth ring

or Back the bow

or Let it be (mild cases only) - Violated Back -