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The Nature of Wood

Wood shrinks and swells. No doubt you have experienced a closet door that sticks in the summer and opens easily in the winter or seen open joints in wood flooring in January that close in August. These occurrences result from wood's affinity for moisture in the form of relative humidity. When wood in products like cabinetry and flooring absorbs moisture from a high-humidity environment, it swells. Shrinkage happens when those products are exposed to a drier atmosphere. Every piece of wood is unique in structure. That variation gives wood its random, distinctive appearance which you see as its grain and color. As a result every part of wood in a cabinet door, for instance, shrinks and swells at a different rate which may cause warp. Among other problems that property can cause warp. For example, the shrinkage rate of the front of a cabinet door may differ from that of its interior surface. When exposed to cold, low humidity conditions during transport and installation, the door will typically cup. In most cases, this movement will reverse once the moisture content of the air in the kitchen returns to the 6 to 9 percent found in the typical U.S. home. To minimize problems like warp, Master Woodcraft Cabinetry uses lumber kiln dried to a moisture content of 6 to 9 percent. This practice reduces the range of absorption and desorption of moisture by interior wood products and thus the amount of potential shrinking or swelling. Always remember that wood is a natural creation. In exchange for its warmth and beauty, we cope with the certainty of its fickle properties. Master Woodcraft Cabinetry employs properly kiln-dried lumber and centuries old cabinetmaking practices to build high quality, well-built cabinets that will last a lifetime and beyond. Nevertheless, given wood's random structure, some warp may adversely affect the appearance or performance of a wood component like a cabinet door. If such severe warp occurs, Master Woodcraft Cabinetry will replace defective cabinet parts under our two-year warranty program.