

WINTER CARE INSTRUCTIONS

PREVENT CRACKING AND WARPING

NOTE: These instructions do NOT apply to very humid climates such as parts of Asia.

PROTECT YOUR FURNITURE

- At time of delivery
- At time of inhabitation (such as holiday home)
- Throughout the winter

One of the greatest care concerns for any solid wood product, particularly in the winter time, is thermal shock. Thermal shock can cause cracks or warping and can occur any time there is an extreme change in the environment such as:

DELIVERY

Your furniture has been kept in cold conditions (cargo container, warehouse, delivery vehicle, etc) for between 2 to 8 weeks and needs to slowly adjust to a warmer environment to prevent thermal shock.

INHABITING HOLIDAY HOMES

When a holiday home is uninhabited, the home may get quite cold, and when the home is reinhabited, the heating is turned on, dramatically changing the environment.

NOTE: Thermal shock can happen quickly, within hours.

Solid wood furniture has numerous aesthetic and performance related benefits, and these qualities need to be nourished by the proper care of the furniture.

TIME OF DELIVERY OR INHABITATION - FIRST TWO WEEKS

1) LOWER INTERIOR TEMPERATURE (IF YOU HAVE NOT ALREADY)

At time of delivery, make sure the room where the furniture will be kept is fairly cool, no warmer than 17° Celsius (63° Fahrenheit). Keep radiators and underfloor heating low and consistent.

Your furniture needs to be kept in a fairly cool room at the beginning because the furniture has been kept in cold conditions for 2-8 weeks (cargo container, warehouse, delivery vehicle, etc) and needs to slowly adjust to a warmer environment.

2) SLOWLY INCREASE TEMPERATURE OVER 2-WEEK PERIOD

Over a two-week period, you may gradually increase the interior temperature. This will allow the furniture to adjust to its new environment. Aim to gradually bring the temperature up to 20°C (68°F), never exceeding 26°C (79°F).

3) USE AN RH HYGROMETER

Monitor the humidity in the room using an RH hygrometer. This low cost device is widely available, and can be purchased from reputable firm Wagner Meters <https://www.wagnermeters.com/shop/th-200-thermo-hygrometer/>.

The ideal humidity for your furniture is 50%.

4) USE A HUMIDIFIER (IF NEEDED)

If the humidity in the environment falls below 35%, keep a humidifier next to the piece of furniture, to increase the moisture in its environment. Alternatively, if a humidifier is not available, place a bucket filled with water near the piece of furniture, as this will add humidity to the room as the water evaporates.

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WINTER CARE INSTRUCTIONS

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DAY TO DAY - LIVING WITH SOLID WOOD FURNITURE

Keep an eye on the relative humidity throughout the product's life, and alter its environment as needed to achieve ideal conditions of 50% relative humidity at 20°C/68°F.

MEASURE HUMIDITY

The simplest way to measure the humidity in the environment is by using an RH Hygrometer. Hygrometers are low cost and can be purchased widely with a digital or analogue display. A reputable firm is Wagner Meters <https://www.wagnermeters.com/shop/th-200-thermo-hygrometer/>. If the humidity in the environment falls below 35%, keep a humidifier next to the piece of furniture to increase the moisture in its environment. Alternatively, if a humidifier is not available, place a bucket filled with water near the piece of furniture, as this will add humidity to the room as the water evaporates.

UNDERFLOOR HEATING

If you have underfloor heating, we recommend turning it to a low setting and maintaining the temperature for extended periods of time. Short bursts of extreme heat followed by cold are detrimental to the furniture.

REAPPLY WAX REFRESHER OR OIL - OILED FINISHES ONLY

If your furniture has an oil finish, keep plenty of Wax Refresher on hand (for Danish oil or white oil finishes) or Black oil on hand (for black oil finishes) for reapplications. Wax Refresher and black oil can be purchased through De La Espada. The frequent application of wax or oil will keep the wood as sealed as possible, providing a protective barrier against the environment. NOTE: If you have a lacquered finish on your timber, do NOT apply wax or oil.

PROTECT FROM DIRECT HEAT AND SCRATCHES

Please ensure that direct contact with hot objects is avoided by using tablemats. Prevention is the best protection from surface scratches. Always use table mats, coasters and tablecloths to ensure a beautiful long lasting surface. Do not place your solid wood furniture next to direct sources of heat or cold such as radiators or air conditioning ducts.

PROTECT FROM BRIGHT LIGHT/DIRECT SUNLIGHT

Timber is a natural material and the colour/tone can bleach, fade and shrink, causing cracks if the table is exposed to UV light, and this process is accelerated the more intense the exposure. You may wish to limit exposure to sunlight such as by closing curtains when the room is not in use. Additionally you may wish to consider installing ultra-violet (UV) filtering film on windows to limit the fading and discolouration caused by UV rays. Boards can crack or open on glue lines in response to factors including prolonged exposure to direct sunlight and/or hot spot lights.

SPILLAGES

Any spillages should be wiped clean immediately. Once the immediate spillage is cleared, ensure that the whole surface is wiped clean with a damp cloth. Do NOT use any corrosive products such as bleach anywhere near the timber.

PROBLEM SOLVING

If cracks appear in your furniture, please do not be alarmed. This is a natural response of the timber to the changing environment. Follow one or more of the following procedures to rectify the issue.

CONTROL RELATIVE HUMIDITY

The ideal conditions for the furniture are 50% relative humidity at 20°C/68°F.

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Work to achieve these conditions by controlling the temperature and the humidity.

Measure the humidity in the environment by using an RH Hygrometer. We recommend purchasing from a reputable firm such as Wagner Meters <https://www.wagnermeters.com/shop/th-200-thermo-hygrometer/>. If the humidity in the environment is lower than 35%, keep a humidifier next to the piece of furniture to increase the moisture in its environment to 50%. Alternatively, if a humidifier is not available, place a bucket filled with water near the piece of furniture, as this will add humidity to the room as the water evaporates.

LIMIT SUN EXPOSURE

If relevant, move the furniture away from direct sunlight, cover it with a tablecloth, install blinds, or use UV filters on glass.

RESTORE MOISTURE WITH A WET CLOTH - OILED FINISHES ONLY

Wipe all exposed areas of the timber with a wet cloth twice daily for two weeks. The cloth should be slightly wetter than damp, so when you wipe it across the surface you can see a glaze of water across the timber, but no puddles. Wipe all exposed surfaces with special concentration on edges (end grain) as this is where most of the moisture escapes. Every 2-3 days, lock in the moisture by applying Wax Refresher (for Danish or white oil finishes) or black oil (for black oil finishes) to the end grain (edges of the timber planks).

This wet cloth procedure will affect the surface finish, raising the grain, so at the end of the two weeks, we recommend that you restore the beauty of the finish by sanding down the item to a smooth finish, then applying Wax Refresher (for Danish or white oil finishes) or black oil (for black oil finishes). Find sanding and application instructions on Vimeo at vimeo.com/delaespada

FILL CRACKS WITH SOFT WAX

If cracks remain after following all of the above advice, you may wish to fill them with a cosmetic repair wax in a matching colour. The wax will temporarily fill the crack, then when conditions are more humid and the timber naturally swells to regain its original shape, the wax will push out as the crack closes and can be removed easily.

MORE INFORMATION

Every care has been taken in manufacture to stabilise the wood and to allow for expansion and contraction of the timber without problems. However, it is essential that you care for your solid wood furniture by normalising its living conditions as much as possible. Though the finishes we use minimise the effect of environmental conditions, they do not remove the effects completely.

Wood is a living, breathing material and will continue to react to its environment throughout its lifetime. It is very important that you provide a stable environment for your furniture.

Care instructions for oiled furniture can be found on Vimeo at vimeo.com/delaespada