

THE **CONRAN** SHOP

Care and Maintenance



Solid Wood and Veneered Furniture

General Care of Solid Wood and Veneer Furniture

Introduction

This guide is divided into sections which detail long term care guidelines for specific finishes. Please consult the relevant section for advice on care and repair which is specific to your product. If you are unsure what type of finish has been applied to your product, please visit our online Help Centre: <https://customerservices.conranshop.com/hc/en-gb>

A distinct characteristic of producing furniture in wood is that it can handle wear and aging well, if treated with proper care and attention. This guide will give detailed instructions on caring for, and using your product in a manner which ensures it maintains its beauty and function over a long period of time.

Wood is a living material that is affected by multiple factors during the various stages of its life. This includes while it is growing, being processed and during its life as a product. We aim to select the most premium boards and veneers for the production of our furniture however, some small variation in grain pattern, colour, and surface finish are unavoidable, especially while adhering to sustainable production practices. We believe these small variations give life and character to our products and in many cases can be visually striking and unique. All these factors mean no two items will be exactly alike, and some variation is to be expected.

Environment

Our products are carefully designed with certain environmental factors in mind, however, it is advisable to observe the following guidelines in order to ensure your product enjoys an extended lifespan.

While every effort is made to maintain a product's form, a small amount of warping and swelling may occur. This is generally only noticeable on larger sections of timber such as dining tables however, it is true for all wood. This is due to changes in environmental factors. The ideal relative humidity for solid wood products is between 30% and 60%. We recommend ensuring that the relative humidity where the product is being kept does not fluctuate beyond these values and that any variation in heat or humidity does not occur too frequently or in quick succession. This is particularly important from season to season, when changes in environment is most noticeable.

We also recommend keeping solid wood furniture away from heat sources such as wood-burning stoves or radiators. This can dry the wood out and cause cracking and splitting. Hot plates and cups can also cause changes to the surface colour and texture. For this reason we recommend always using table mats, coasters and trivets.

Please note that excessive exposure to certain types of artificial light and sunlight can cause a change in the wood's colour over time. Regardless of light exposure, all wood will experience changes in colour over time. Lighter coloured woods tend to darken with age whereas darker woods can become more muted. This is a natural process and will not affect the integrity of the product.

All solid wood products are intended for indoor use only, unless otherwise specified.

Everyday Care and Cleaning

Our wood furniture is hard wearing and durable, however, day to day maintenance is essential to ensuring a long life for your product. Wood products should be regularly dusted and wiped down with a slightly damp cloth. Care must be taken not to use abrasive cloths or sponges, or aggressive cleaning products.

Do not expose wood products to liquids for extended periods or in excessive quantities. Avoid contact with fabrics which may bleed or seep, especially on lighter woods. Strong skin lotions may also affect the wood's colour. These conditions must be monitored on a daily bases as certain factors which would not ordinarily affect the wood, could become problematic with prolonged exposure. Some products will require different or more specific treatment, please see the relevant section for more detailed advice on everyday care and cleaning.

Spillages, Stains, Scratches and Minor Damage

While we make every effort to ensure our wood products are well protected with quality finishes, damage may occur as a result of spillages or scratches.

Wood is easily affected by large quantities of liquid. Spillages of any liquid must be wiped dry immediately in order to avoid discolouration, swelling and stains.

The repair of stains and scratches varies from finish to finish and the relevant section must be consulted below. In any instance of a stain or scratch we advise using professional service rather than attempting to remove it yourself. Doing so could cause further damage to your product.

Oiled Solid Wood:



Overview

Using oils on solid wood furniture, soaks into the pores of the timber and protects the surface from dirt, spills and changes in moisture and temperature while still allowing the timber to breathe. Clear oils will deepen the colour of the wood while white pigmented oils will maintain the “raw” colour of unfinished wood. The benefit of using this finish is that minor repairs are simple as the wax is easily reapplied and often only requires some light buffing.

This type of finish requires a small amount of regular care and maintenance to keep the product protected and looking good. The procedure is easy and very effective in the long term. For best results, we recommend that you oil your furniture one to two times a year. This may be more or less depending on the environment. As a rule, wood will become slightly dry and rough when oiling is required. The following page details the recommended oiling procedure.

Oiling Procedure

- To begin, ensure your furniture is cleaned thoroughly following the steps described below in "Everyday Care and Cleaning". The wood must be left to dry completely before proceeding.
- Lightly rub the surface of the furniture with a sanding sponge or sandpaper which has a grit of 240 or finer. Always rub in the direction of the wood grain, never against it.
- Apply light amounts of oil to a clean white cloth or a sponge. Do not pour the oil directly onto the wood.
- Using the cloth or sponge, rub the oil into the wood. This must also be done in the direction of the wood grain. Apply a thin even layer to every visible wood surface of the product.
- Edges showing end-grain may need more oil than other areas to prevent any cracking or checking.
- Allow the oil to dry for about two hours, and then remove any excess oil with a clean dry cloth. Always check that the oil is completely dry before using.

Please Note:

The uneven release of moisture from the wood may cause unnecessary cracks and warping of the table top, which is why we recommend the same treatment for both the top and underside of the furniture.

Take extra care when applying oil to products that feature other materials such as fabric, leather, metal, paper cord, glass, etc.

Oiled furniture legs can cause floor stains or marks. Do not place freshly oiled furniture directly onto carpets, rugs or soap treated wood flooring until one to two weeks after being oiled.

Do not place steel objects on oiled wood surfaces for long periods of time, certain timbers may experience a chemical reaction in the presence of steel, causing permanent black marks.

CAUTION: Cloths or sponges which have been used to oil the furniture are flammable and can ignite spontaneously. They must always be kept in an airtight container even if being disposed of.

Everyday Care and Cleaning

For daily cleaning, use a soft, damp cloth to wipe down the wood and then a dry cloth to remove any moisture. Cleaning should not be concentrated on one particular part of the surface as this could cause uneven wear or discolouration. If the grain becomes raised or rough, implement the steps above to smooth and re-oil the timber.

Do not use any cleaning agents, chemicals, or spirits on oil treated furniture.

Spillages, Stains, Scratches and Minor Damage

Oiled wood is especially affected by liquid. Spillages of any liquid must be wiped dry immediately in order to avoid discolouration, swelling and stains. In any instance of a stain or scratch we advise using professional service rather than attempting to remove it yourself. Doing so could cause further damage to your product.

Never use any detergents or spirits on oiled furniture. Small stains may be removed by light buffing with either a clean dry cloth or, for stubborn stains, a slightly damp cloth. Once the stain is removed, ensure to apply oil to the entire product. For larger stains you may follow the steps described above in the "Oiling Procedure". It is important to perform this procedure to the entire product, not just the affected area. Failing to do so can cause difference in colour and warping. Before attempting to clean any stain, it is advisable to test the effect of the cleaning method on a small hidden surface of the wood, to ensure it will not damage the finish.

Small scratches can be evened out by buffing the affected area with a clean dry white cloth. Larger scratches can be removed by gently sanding back and re-oiling the wood as described above in the "Oiling Procedure". Again, it is important to perform this procedure to the entire product, not just the affected area. Failing to do so can cause difference in colour and warping. For deeper scratches or dents, furniture wax filler sticks can even out the surface. Make sure to use the same colour tone as the wood grain to allow the wax to blend in. Note: using wax on an oiled wood surface can seal the pores of the timber. This can cause the affected area to take on a noticeably different colour to the rest of the product.

Lacquered and Varnished Solid Wood:



Overview

Lacquer completely seals the pores of the wood, meaning furniture with a lacquered finish is much more resistant to stains, changes in moisture and scratches. Lacquered furniture is hard wearing, however, damage is not as easily repaired. Because the surface is sealed, repair involves sanding back the entire finish and re-applying the lacquer to the whole piece. For the treatment or repair of any serious damage - including large scratches, dents, stains, or discolouration - we recommend using a professional service. Maintenance on lacquered furniture is less involved than traditional finishes like oil or wax, but still essential.

Everyday Care and Cleaning

Regularly maintaining lacquered surfaces is easy and straightforward. For everyday cleaning, use a soft, damp cloth to wipe down the wood and then a dry cloth to remove any moisture. For stubborn marks or dirt, a mild detergent may be used. Lacquer is less affected by cleaning products however we still recommend avoiding any aggressive cleaning agents such as bleach, chemicals, or spirits on lacquer treated furniture.

Cleaning should not be concentrated on one particular part of the surface as this could cause uneven wear or discolouration. Do not clean furniture with damaged or worn lacquer as moisture can penetrate into the wood and cause discolouration and warping. Wipe away any remaining liquid with a clean dry cloth after cleaning, in order to avoid water marks. NOTE: any stored components such as table extensions or desk drawers must be completely dry before packing away.

As the lacquer seals the surface of the wood, the furniture will not be affected by daylight in the same way as oil treated furniture. However, the furniture will still darken with time. Take care not to leave your furniture in direct light for long periods of time as this can cause uneven discolouration.

Spillages, Stains, Scratches and Minor Damage

Lacquered wood is less affected by liquid and is less likely to allow liquid to soak into the pores. Spillages of any liquid must still be wiped dry immediately in order to avoid permanent staining. In any instance of a stain or scratch we advise using professional service rather than attempting to remove it yourself. Doing so could cause further damage to your product.

Stains which do not extend past the protective layer of lacquer can be removed using a clean white cloth wrung out with clean warm water and a neutral detergent. Before attempting to clean any stain, it is advisable to test the effect of the cleaning method on a small hidden surface of the wood, to ensure it will not damage the finish. After the stain is removed, wipe down the entire surface with a damp cloth. Take extra care when cleaning products that feature other materials such as fabric, leather, metal, paper cord, glass, etc.

Lacquered wood cannot be retreated like oiled wood. Because the surface is sealed, repair involves sanding back the entire finish and re-applying the lacquer to the whole piece. In order to prevent scratches and wearing, we recommend the use of table mats, coasters and trivets. A small pointed brush may be used to apply small amounts of clear furniture lacquer directly to any scratches or dents. Ensure any applied lacquer is completely dry and the surface has been cleaned before using the furniture.

Scratches which do not extend past the protective layer of lacquer may be repaired with light buffing using a clean dry cloth and some clear wax. Please note wax may appear to darken affected areas of wood, especially if the protective layer of the lacquer has been penetrated. Never sand the surface of lacquered furniture, this will cause permanent damage which will require professional repair.

NOTE: Wax and oils will not soak into the wood of a lacquered surface. Make sure to follow the steps above in "Everyday Care and Cleaning" after any repair in order to prevent build-up of foreign substances which can cause a sticky or tacky surface. Heavy wear and severe damage should be carried out by a professional restoration service.

Painted and Stained Solid Wood:



Overview

Stains or paints are used to alter the natural colour and tones of wood while maintaining the surface texture and appearance of the grain. These treatments are not employed as protective surfaces. Either an oil or lacquer will be used over the top of a stain or paint in order to protect the wood. Please consult the relevant section above for more detailed care instructions on your product's top surface finish.

Stained and painted furniture can be much harder to repair. Any damage, including small or large scratches, dents, stains, or discolouration, will require a professional restoration service. This is because any damage to the finish can reveal the natural colour of the underlying wood, requiring the stain or paint to be sanded back and reapplied.

Everyday Care and Cleaning

For everyday cleaning, use a soft, damp cloth to wipe down the wood and then a dry cloth to remove any moisture. Never use any cleaning agents such as bleach, chemicals, or spirits on stained or painted furniture.

Cleaning should not be concentrated on one particular part of the surface as this could cause uneven wear or discolouration. Wipe away any remaining liquid with a clean dry cloth after cleaning, in order to avoid water marks.

Stained or painted wood will not darken with time like natural wood does, however, sunlight and some artificial lights can fade the pigment of a stain or paint. Take care not to leave your furniture in direct light for long periods of time as this can cause uneven discolouration.

Spillages, Stains, Scratches and Minor Damage

Spillages of any liquid must be wiped dry immediately in order to avoid permanent staining. Do not attempt repair stains or scratches in painted or stained furniture. Never sand stained or painted wood. In any instance of a stain or scratch we advise using professional service, never attempt to remove it yourself. Doing so could cause further damage to your product.

Solid Wood Veneer



Overview

Solid wood veneer is a thin piece of solid wood, bonded to a substrate such as plywood. Either an oil or lacquer will be used on a solid wood veneer in order to protect the wood. Please consult the relevant section above for more detailed care instructions on your product's top surface finish.

Solid wood veneer can be just as durable as solid wood if properly cared for and maintained. Solid wood furniture can be vulnerable to warping and splitting from moisture. Veneer is more resistant to these effects, while still maintaining the look and feel of solid wood.

Everyday Care and Cleaning

Our solid wood veneer furniture may be finished with either oil or lacquer. Please consult the relevant section preceding this page for specific cleaning instructions for your veneered furniture. Take care not to leave your veneered furniture in direct light for long periods of time as this can cause uneven discolouration.

Spillages, Stains, Scratches and Minor Damage

Spillages of any liquid must be wiped dry immediately in order to avoid permanent staining. Do not attempt to repair stains or scratches in veneered furniture. Never sand veneered wood. This may wear through the veneer layer completely which is irreparable. In any instance of a stain or scratch we advise using professional service, never attempt to remove it yourself. Doing so could cause further damage to your product.