

WINTER CARE INSTRUCTIONS

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

Solid wood furniture has numerous aesthetic and performance related benefits, and these qualities need to be nourished by the proper care of the furniture. Beware that the cold, dry conditions of the winter months, combined with the heating in your home can create a very dry environment that may be detrimental both to you and to your furniture. This document addresses the best practice for handling your furniture at time of delivery, day to day, and what to do if issues arise.

TIME OF DELIVERY OR INHABITATION

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

When the product is moved from the warehouse and into your home or place of business, the change in temperature between the warehouse (even if climate-controlled), the delivery vehicle, and the delivery address can cause 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.

PREVENTING THERMAL SHOCK

During the first two weeks of the environment change, it is crucial to take preventative measures to protect your solid wood furniture. We recommend following one or more of the four procedures below, listed in order of preference.

1) GRADUALLY INTRODUCE TO NEW ENVIRONMENT

We recommend that the relevant room in your home or place of business is kept fairly cool for the first 2 weeks after delivery, keeping radiators and underfloor heating low and consistent. Over the two week period, you may gradually increase the temperature. This will allow the furniture to adjust to its new environment.

2) USE A HUMIDIFER

Keep a humidifer next to the piece of furniture for the first two weeks, to increase the moisture in its direct environment.

3) WIPE WITH A WET CLOTH TWICE DAILY

Wipe all exposed areas of the timber with a wet cloth twice daily for the first two weeks to slow the moisture loss. 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. This procedure will affect the surface finish, so at the end of the two weeks, we recommend

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that you apply Wax Refresher (available through De La Espada) to restore the beauty of the finish.

4) APPLY WAX REFRESHER

Apply a coat of wax refresher to further seal the timber from the environment. Be careful to apply wax to all sides of the product, including the top, underside and edges. Allow to dry for 24 hours. After 24 hours, apply a second coat of wax refresher to the edges (end grain) for a stronger seal. Always wait 24 hours after applying wax refresher before using your solid wood product. Do not place any heavy objects on the newly waxed surface for 48-72 hours.

DAY TO DAY - LIVING WITH SOLID WOOD FURNITURE

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.

MEASURING 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. The ideal conditions for your furniture are 50% relative humidity at normal interior temperature (20°C/68°F).

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.

REAPPLYING WAX

If your furniture has an oil finish, keep plenty of Wax Refresher on hand for reapplications (additional Wax Refresher can be purchased through De La Espada). The frequent application of wax (every 3-6 months) 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.

PROTECTING 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

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or cold such as radiators or air conditioning ducts. Avoid direct sunlight as this can dry out the timber and alter the colour. Close blinds and curtains when the table/room is not in use to limit sun exposure.

WIPE WITH A WET CLOTH

A simple way to prevent the cracking associated with dried out timber, is to regularly wipe your timber with a wet cloth to introduce humidity. We recommend you use this method once or twice a week during the winter months. Follow the 'wet cloth' instructions on page 1.

SPILLAGES

Any spillages should be wiped clean immediately. Once the immediate spillage is cleared, ensure that the whole surface is wiped clean.

Do NOT use any corrosive products such as bleach anywhere near the timber.

PROBLEM SOLVING

FILL CRACKS WITH SOFT WAX

If cracks do occur in your timber, 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.

RESTORE MOISTURE WITH A WET CLOTH

To restore moisture to dried out timber, use a wet cloth, following the instructions on page 1.

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