

# **A BUYERS GUIDE**

## **CARE OF YOUR FURNITURE**

**SIMPLE TIPS FOR LOOKING AFTER  
WAXED OAK, POLISHED OAK, ACACIA,  
PINE, PAINTED, AND SPECIALIST FINISHES.**

# Your new furniture: some tips and advice.

Congratulations on becoming the owner of some fine furniture. Your purchase is a product made from a mixture of solid wood, wood board, and carefully selected veneers, all from sustainable resources. Understanding the right way to care for your furniture from delivery onward is important, so that you get the best use from it, and enhance its beauty. Please find following some handy tips on how to care for your purchase, and importantly, information on the appearance and nature of the furniture.

## APPEARANCE:

Even when cut from the same tree, all wood planks will have differences in colour, grain, and texture, and it is this characteristic which makes every piece of wood furniture unique. Sometimes even adjoining panels will show quite marked differences, and this should be regarded as part of the charm: only man made products won't have these differences. And because natural materials have been used to make your furniture no two pieces will ever be the same.



Different cuts of wood may be different shades.

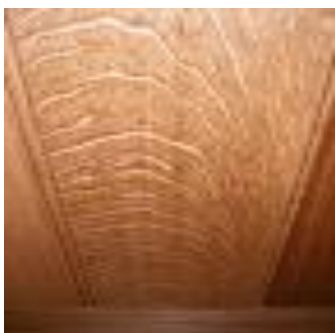


Timber will darken (mellow) with exposure to light.

Hardwood and softwood will gain colour with exposure to light, especially direct sunlight, a process known as mellowing. Different panels on the same piece may colour up at different rates. As well as being unavoidable this is a perfectly natural process, think of it like getting a sun tan. So if in the future you buy another piece for your collection, it will be lighter to start with, but will gradually blend in over time. Always be careful to move lamps, ornaments etc around regularly to avoid leaving shade marks on any surface. Remember that leaves on extending tables also need to "see the light" otherwise a colour discrepancy will arise.

Being a natural material, wood has a life of its own even in the processed state. In high temperatures and low humidity it will shrink slightly, (always across the grain). In cool and humid conditions it will tend to swell slightly. Sometimes this might cause joints to have a slightly raised profile, this is quite normal and if observed over a period of time you will notice this to a greater or lesser extent depending on the local conditions. Furniture placed close to a radiator or other heat source, or in direct sunlight, will be subject to more movement of the timbers, so avoid such a placement if possible. Small cracks, knots, and grain variations should be expected and accepted as part of the overall charm of the product.

**Oak contains what are known as Medullary Rays, some images are shown here:**



This is a naturally occurring feature of oak, also referred to as pith rays or wood rays, a characteristic found in most woods but most striking in hard woods such as oak. So when you see some silvery flecks, or strange silver "tiger stripes" running through the grain, there is nothing wrong, in fact quite the reverse. Medullary Rays, like scars in fine leather, are sign that what you have bought is real wood that will last you for many years. Some customers have been known to think the rays are lacquer runs or faults: definitely not! Because of the random nature of this feature some parts of your furniture will show rays, others won't. Like knots in pine, it is down to Mother Nature what you get and where!

### WAX FINISH FURNITURE:

The appearance of waxed finish furniture by nature can have lots of variances, and this is entirely intentional. The wax has been applied over a sealant coat by hand, and the very essence of the appeal is the rustic look this gives. Small defects, inconsistencies, and cracks are deliberately left in the timber before finishing and these are picked out by the wax, and certainly shouldn't be regarded as faults. There will be a natural build up of wax in corners and sharp angles: this is all part of the intended charm and again this shouldn't be regarded as a fault or defect (see the paragraph below). Always remember waxed furniture is meant to look "comfortable" and "lived in", not pristine and artificial. Expect to see more knots and heavier grains than in plain polished pieces. The big advantage of such a finish is that minor marks picked up in use are less likely to be noticed, and if necessary can easily be waxed over or polished out by yourself at home.

**FOR ADDED PROTECTION DURING TRANSIT AND STORAGE, YOUR FURNITURE HAS BEEN GIVEN AN *EXTRA* COATING OF WAX. PLEASE ENSURE THAT THIS IS REMOVED ONCE YOUR FURNITURE IS IN PLACE. TO REMOVE THE EXCESS WAX GENTLY WIPE THE SURFACE OF YOUR FURNITURE WITH A DRY, LINT FREE CLOTH. THIS WILL AVOID ANY WAX TRANSFER TO CLOTHING/BEDDING.**

### LACQUERED AND PAINTED FURNITURE, OTHER TIMBERS:

The *oak* for lacquered and painted finish furniture has been selected differently to the rustic ranges to give a cleaner more contemporary look. You will still see some knots and Medullary Rays of course, but overall the character is very different. On painted furniture you must expect to see small cracks in the paint where there are joints: this is caused when the unit flexes and the timbers "breathe" and is quite normal. *Acacia* and *Poplar* wood have natural "shakes", small splits along the grain which are completely normal, as are cracks in knots. Most buyers will know that *pine* has numerous knots and a wide variety of different grains depending on the cut of the timber used. Expect pine to darken quite dramatically with exposure to light. Being a relatively soft timber it is more prone to being scratched and dented than hard woods.

### GENERAL CARE:

- **Never** use chemical or abrasive cleaners on your furniture, this can damage the factory applied finish irreparably. A damp (*but not wet*) cloth will remove most marks; use a **very** mild soap solution if necessary.
- **Never** place hot objects directly on your furniture, **always** use coasters or mats. As a general rule, if something is completely comfortable to hold in your hands it should be fine, otherwise use a barrier.
- Some ceramic items (mugs, bowls, plates etc) can have rough bases, so check before placing them directly on the surface that they won't cause scratching if slid around.
- Lots of food products contain dyes and acids. To be safe **always** clean spillages off right away, but be especially careful with red wine, spirits, and colourful food spillages as these can damage the top surface of the finish quite quickly. Use a blotting action rather than a wipe.
- **Always** apply polish or wax along the grain, and use sparingly. Excess application can result in shiny and/or sticky patches which will spoil the overall look and feel of your furniture.
- **Never** drag or push beds or tables to move them about. Doing this will inevitably strain and weaken the leg fittings. Tighten all leg fixing bolts periodically, and on beds check that the central slat support legs are upright at all times.
- Wardrobes, beds, and tables should **always** be dismantled if being moved from room to room (or further) to avoid straining and damaging fixings. For your own safety and to preserve the integrity of the furniture it is **always** advisable to empty cupboards and drawers before any major moves.
- If you have furniture with **concrete** tops they have already been pre-sealed in manufacture, but it's important to reseal them periodically. It is recommended that you seal your tops once or twice a year, depending on how often you use them. When uncertain about the use of a certain product, test it on the corner of the top before applying it on visible areas. Clean your tops regularly by wiping them after each use. Doing so eliminates any leftover particles that can scratch or stain the concrete. The best home cleaner that you can use is a simple mixture of soap and water, but it is wise to invest in a special cleaning solution designed for marble (you can find this at good hardware stores) and follow the manufacturer's instructions. It is critical to **never** use detergents, abrasive products, acidic chemicals, or generic household cleaners to clean your tops because they can cause unexpected heavy damages.
- Sometimes timber movement can cause drawers to feel tight. This can almost always be cured by using a silicone spray on (the outside of) the drawer box and the runners.

## PACKAGING AND PROTECTION:

Your furniture will often be delivered to you in a ready to use state. However if it is still in the manufacturers original packaging be sure to open the box carefully (avoid using sharp blades) and check for loose hardware before disposing of the boxes. Hardware is often attached to the box (or product) with a length of cord or twine, but in practice it can easily be overlooked and so discarded accidentally. Your supplier will have checked for the “tell tale” leader taped to the outside of the box before delivering to you to ensure the fittings are there. Some protective packaging is attached directly to the furniture with pins, staples, or screws, so ensure to remove these fully with a screwdriver or pliers. Pads are often found on the bottom of cabinets and chairs, and these should **always** be removed and special attention paid to removing the fixing pins. This will avoid damage to your floor from anything left protruding. The cardboard used to package the furniture is recycled. Please care for the environment and be sure to dispose of this and all other packaging responsibly.



Carefully remove leg protectors and be sure to remove all pins and screws remaining.



Hardware is attached to the “tell tale” leader.



The hardware is attached to the leader inside along with assembly instructions.



Drawer handles are often reversed in the drawer box.

Assembly instructions are found with the hardware pack for any items not already fully assembled on delivery. Please read these and identify all the required fittings before attempting assembly.

## SAFETY:

It is essential that your furniture is used in a safe and sensible way. Not every home is blessed with absolutely flat floors, and tall items can be unstable if not completely upright. Most tall items are supplied with fixing kits to secure them to the wall and these should **always** be used. Dressers and wardrobes consist of a base and top, again, **always** use the fixing plates supplied to join them together. Contact your retailer immediately if these fixings are not in the boxes.



Always use the safety fixings.



Always fix dresser and wardrobe tops to their bases.