

# CARE OF TEAK FURNITURE

**TEAK** is a wood indigenous to Burma, Thailand, and Indonesia. It has also been introduced to other tropical countries. It has a narrow grain with a pale to dark golden brown color. Teak feels oily to the touch, due to its natural, preservative oils. For this reason, it is an excellent wood for outdoor furniture, since it will age gracefully, turning silver gray, if left unoiled outdoors. Its natural preservative will keep it from deteriorating for many years, much like redwood. It is a medium density wood, comparable to oak in density. All teak sold by elements, comes from managed, renewing "plantation" forests in S.E. Asia.

## Outdoor Use

The natural oils in Teak do not require any maintenance. However, the natural color of the wood will develop into a grayish finish outdoors, if left untreated. Many people find this beautiful, whereas others wish to keep the original warm teak glow of new wood.

Following a good cleaning with a mild soap and water, using a soft scrub brush, let the wood air dry until it is 100% dry. Do not attempt to oil wet wood! Drying may take a couple of days after a good scrubbing. Do not rush it.

A ready mix Outdoor Furniture Oil, for treating teak, or any outdoor wood furniture, can be purchased from a good paint store, like Hirschfelds, Lathrop, or even Menards and Home Depot.

You can also make your own oil treatment as follows:

3 parts raw linseed oil mixed with 1 part vegetable based turpentine, to thin the linseed oil.

Wipe this on with a soft cloth or soft brush. Let it stand on the wood for 10-15 minutes. Next wipe or buff with another soft, clean cloth. With weathered wood, or even new wood, a second or third coat may be desired to obtain the maximum amount of surface protection. Be certain to buff off the standing oil, or the linseed oil will create a sticky surface that will not be comfortable to use!

Remember, teak does not need oiling. The oiling will prolong its life, but a solid piece of teakwood will take 50-100 years to deteriorate outside naturally. A good cleaning/washing/soft brush scrubbing on an annual basis is recommended, even if you choose to not oil your outdoor teak. Thorough cleaning will remove the soot, grim, oil, and air pollutant buildup that occur on all items outdoors.

Use of a pressure washer for cleaning, is discouraged, since a powerful sprayer can actually remove a significant layer of wood, as well as drive moisture deep into the wood.

## Indoor Use

For teak used indoor, or in an always-covered location, a lighter oil application will provide a smoother, silkier finish than using oil designed for outdoor protection. For this use we recommend Tung oil; again, available from a good paint store. Do not use Tung oil for outdoor use. If you do, you will regret it!

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