

Being a natural product, timber exhibits many characteristics that make every piece of furniture as diverse and unique as we are. As two trees are never the same, neither can be any two pieces of furniture produced from natural timber. When purchasing timber furniture it's important to remember this in order to avoid disappointment. Showroom pieces and samples serve only to give a **good indication** as to what your piece will look like as they too will have changed over time and will have been exposed to sunlight or artificial lighting. Staining processes will also differ from one batch to another and being hand finished, will differ with each different human applicator. Mineral streaks, grain variations, knots, pitch pockets, colour variations and other markings will also affect the absorption of the various coats and the look of the finished product.

ENVIRONMENT

Whilst it's impossible to ensure that the environment in your remains exactly the same, it is important that you know that timber will react in response to changes in the relative humidity in the air surrounding the furniture causing it to expand and contract continuously. Maintaining a stable humidity level or reducing the **rate of change** of relative humidity will reduce the amount of movement experienced by your timber furniture. These movements may manifest themselves as small cracks, particularly along the joins and are natural changes which are not considered faults and do not affect the quality and durability of your furniture. It is a good idea to avoid placing furniture on or around heater and air conditioning vents. Tropical climates and areas in proximity to the sea are more likely to affect furniture in this way.

DIRECT SUNLIGHT

Exposure to continuous direct sunlight should be avoided. Extended exposure can create hairline cracks in the finish and can affect the colour by either fading or darkening. Clear coatings often offer limited protection to timber because the coating is transparent to light, which allows it to penetrate through to the wood surface. The degree of colour change will vary with the amount of light the coating and therefore the wood is exposed to. Generally, the surface closest to the light source is effected more rapidly and to a greater extent than the area furthest away. With this in mind, items such as vases and plates placed on top of the furniture should be moved around regularly to avoid spotting. Using window treatments to block out ultra violet rays and arranging furniture away from direct sunlight is recommended. "Mellowing" is a natural changing of colour of timber and is not considered a defect.

CLEANING

Regular dusting helps remove abrasive particles from timber surfaces. When dusting, use a soft moist cloth such as an old T-shirt or baby nappy and always wipe in the direction of the grain, **not in a circular motion**

. Do not use a sponge or a dishcloth and do not allow moisture to remain on the furniture. Pick up and replace accessories gently when dusting, never drag or slide them across the surface.

PRECAUTIONS

- Avoid placing hot or wet items directly on the surface of your furniture as they can leave marks that are difficult to remove.
- Avoid leaving rubber or vinyl mats on the surface as this may cause yellowing.
- Blot spills immediately using a dabbing motion. Do not rub.
- Avoid the use of strong detergents or glass cleaners. Use only products that contain natural ingredients and not silicon-based products. This may make any future repair or re-polishing much more difficult.
- Avoid applying too much polish or too frequently as this will build up and need to be removed with a wood-cleaning product. This may make any future repair or re-polishing much more difficult.
- Never attempt to make major repairs to any finished surface without the assistance or advice of a professional. This may make any future repair or re-polishing much more difficult.

DID YOU KNOW ?

“**SELECT GRADE**” timber means a prime grade that still allows permissible characteristics such as Pin- holes, Knots, Tight Gum Vein, Birdseye, Sapwood, Black Specks, Spots, Flecks and Gum streaks. Natural variation in grain pattern and colour are natural characteristics of timber and are not considered defects.

“**FEATURE GRADE**” timber has become quite popular since Red Gum has been on the market. Due to client demand, Blackwood and Victorian Ash are now available with all the natural defects that timber has to offer such as Gum Veins, Borer Holes, Knots, Splits and Cracks.

“**ROUGH SAWN**” & “**DISTRESSED**” timber furniture has a unique appeal in that the manufacturing processes, although along slightly different paths, deliberately work toward providing a distinctly “rustic” look. In the case of “Rough Sawn”, the saw marks are deliberately maintained and accentuated thus being highlighted during the staining process. The “Distressed” look can be artificially achieved by using clever techniques such as bashing into the furniture, at varying degrees, with such items as metal chains and bars. These deliberate markings again are accentuated during the finishing process where more stain is trapped in these markings and dents to achieve the desired look. If a more extreme look is sought, both techniques are used in unison. When purchasing this type of furniture, it is absolutely

paramount to understand that the hand-finished aspect of these processes on an already variant product such as natural timber renders it impossible to guarantee any degree of consistency!!

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