

Bodhi[®]

Lifestyle

How to Clean and Care
for Reclaimed Wood Furniture





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"Is unfinished reclaimed wood furniture difficult to care for?"
"No, it's not ... if you follow these few simple tips."

Here at d-Bodhi we fashion most of our furniture from recycled wood, mainly teak.

Wood that once supported the sturdy structure of a house or seafaring boat falls into disrepair. We pull out the beauty hidden in the weathered timber and breathe new life into it.

We're known for creating distinctive furniture designs that allow the aged wood to speak. You'll see small nail holes, cracks or old joints. We leave the wood unfinished, which adds to the story behind each piece of furniture.

Unfinished wood has no protective coating or barrier on the surface, giving it a raw, natural look. It's like bringing the forest right into your home. This raw look is exactly what many people love about d-Bodhi.

There is a certain attitude of "letting go" when living with unfinished furniture. Enjoy the changes that touching the wood brings as a rich patina develops over time.

Spills, stains, little nicks and scratches do blend in and add to the overall character of the furniture. This is especially true of dining room or kitchen tables that get heavy use every day.

You won't have to worry about insects either. Teak wood's natural oils and silica in the wood make it extremely durable and resistant to termites, rot or decay, indoors or out.

Here's how to keep your furniture looking great...
year after year



Prevention

1. Give your furniture a drink during winter season.

That's right. If you use home heating, set a cup of water in the room to enhance the humidity. It's not only good for your furniture, but your own health as well.

And try not to place wood furniture near heating vents or a fireplace. It tends to dry the wood too much.

The best care for wood furniture is a stable environment. Abrupt changes in humidity are what cause problems with wood joints, cracking, and splitting.

2. Avoid placing indoor furniture in direct sunlight.

Teak is an exceptionally strong hardwood that can live outside with no problem. However, the sunlight does change the colour of the wood from its original soft, honey brown tone to a silver grey. To prevent that, use curtains to regulate the sunlight falling on your furniture inside.

3. What is too hot?

You can use a trivet or hot pad under hot dishes from the oven or the teakettle if you like, but in fact, the wood is remarkably heat resistant.

4. Prevent water stains.

Immediately sweep the whole surface of the furniture equally (not just the area that's been spilled) with a wet cloth. Finish off with a dry cloth to absorb more of the water.

Use a coaster underneath glasses or coffee cups on tables if you don't want a water ring to form.



Maintenance

Regular dusting with a soft cloth is recommended. An old cotton T-shirt or lint-free dishtowel works well. Wet the cloth lightly, wring out so it's just damp, and wipe down the furniture. Turn the cloth often so you're picking up the dust, not just moving it around on the surface.

Spray "furniture polish" is not recommended. These products often build up a residue and actually attract dust.

Rustic tabletops with several pieces of wood placed side-by-side can gather crumbs into the cracks. Brushing the surface off first with a soft brush will make it easier to clean the overall table with the cloth.



Finishing

Some people do prefer to finish the wood surface to protect from food or liquid spills.

Various clear water-based, non-toxic coatings are available from your local hardware store.

Another Solution: Paste Wax

Taking the time to apply a paste wax to the furniture pays off in the long run. The wax dries to a hard finish and does not attract dust and dirt. It can last 3-5 years depending on how much use the piece of furniture gets and how many coats of wax are applied. Tabletops might need a fresh coat of wax each year. Beeswax based products are recommended.

Stain Repair

Follow these steps for removing various stains from the wood.

1. Grease Stains

If grease or oil spills on the wood, it's best to take care of it right away. Immediately pour salt directly on the oil. Wait until the salt absorbs the oil. Wipe the salt away and repeat if necessary.

Then wet down the whole area with a cloth first so a water ring doesn't form. Finally scrub the remaining oil stain with a mixture of 1 ltr. (1 qt.) warm water and 50 ml (1/4 cup) white distilled vinegar. Wipe again with clear water.

The longer the oil remains on the wood, the deeper it gets soaked into the pores.

If you find the oil remaining, you may need to sand the stain down with fine grain sand paper. Rub in the direction of the wood grain. Rustic finished wood seems to absorb the oil even more than smooth finish.



Cooking Oil Stain on Rustic Wood
(before)



Cooking Oil Stain on Rustic Wood
(after)



Cooking Oil Stain on Smooth Wood
(before)



Cooking Oil Stain on Smooth Wood
(after)

2. Rings and Water Marks

To remove water stains from the wood, rub non-gel toothpaste into the stain with a soft cloth. Wipe it dry. This works surprisingly well on both rustic and smooth finish wood.



Water Stain on Smooth Wood
(before)



Water Stain on Smooth Wood
(after)



Water Stain on Rustic Wood
(before)



Water Stain on Rustic Wood
(after)

3. Red Wine

First of all, make the whole area damp so no water marks form.

Cover the red wine stain with a layer of baking soda. Add a spoonful of white distilled vinegar to the baking soda. It will bubble and foam. Stir it into a thick paste and leave it on the stain for 15 minutes or so.

Take a stiff brush and rub that into the wood in the direction of the grain. Don't be afraid to really scrub the stain. It seems like it's not coming out, but when it's dry the stain should be reduced quite a lot. If not, repeat the process.

This may dull the colour of the wood in the treated area. You might want to wax over the surface of the wood afterwards. Or, just let it blend back into the overall colour as time goes on.

Proper care of your recycled wood furniture, whether unfinished or not, will assure you years and years of enjoyment.



Red Wine Stain on Smooth Wood
(before)



Red Wine Stain on Smooth Wood
(after)



Red Wine Stain on Rustic Wood
(before)



Red Wine Stain on Rustic Wood
(after)

For further information, go to www.d-bodhi.com/signup and receive our free monthly d-Bodhi Lifestyle Newsletter. We give you tips and ideas for home decorating, eco-friendly lifestyles and the latest news of d-Bodhi's forward thinking furniture designs.