



Furniture Care Instructions

Climate Control

Did you know that freshly sawn wood contains more than 50 percent water? To prepare the wood for crafting into furniture, we carefully dry the wood to reduce the moisture content to a level which allows it to acclimate to the average relative humidity in most homes.

The wood in furniture continues to exchange moisture with the air as it responds to climatic changes in your home. Like your skin, wood is porous. It responds to extremely dry air by losing moisture and shrinking a bit. This will correct itself as the relative humidity rises and the wood absorbs enough moisture to expand slightly. These natural changes, however, do not affect the furniture's quality or sturdiness.

The Ideal Environment

Wood furniture is best maintained at a temperature of between 65 and 75 degrees, with a relative humidity between 35 and 40 percent.

Avoid placing fine wood furniture near heat or air-conditioning outlets. Exposure to extreme temperature variations can damage any fine wood pieces, including variations caused by humidifiers, fireplaces or space heaters.

Sticking Drawers

During humid weather, wood drawer fronts may swell and become difficult to open and close. Although we engineer the tolerances to allow for normal expansion, extreme conditions may cause drawers to stick. An easy remedy is to rub candle wax or paraffin on the drawer sides and bottom runners. However, if the humidity remains high over a long period, consider using a dehumidifier. When the air becomes drier, drawers will naturally stop sticking.

Storage

Do not store furniture in damp basements or hot attics. Allow for plenty of air movement around the furniture, and do not stack it.

Direct Sunlight

Do not expose furniture to continuous direct sunlight. With extended exposure, ultraviolet rays can create hairline cracks in the finish or cause fading or darkening. We recommend arranging away from direct sunlight and using window treatments to block the sun's rays. Please note that some wood species darken naturally with age. Such darkening is not considered a quality defect.

Protecting Your Furniture

Our lacquer finishes are designed to enhance the beauty of the wood and offer some protection. However, your furniture is still a natural wood product and, even in the most casual lifestyle, will require certain precautions to prolong its beauty.

Take Simple Precautions

- Don't put anything hot directly on furniture. If your furniture happens to get burnt, seek the help of a furniture repair specialist.
- Use non-synthetic doilies or felt pads under lamps and accessories. Use a protective pad when writing with a ballpoint pen. Use coasters under hot and cold beverages.
- Protect the surface when working with items which could stain or damage the wood, such as crayons, markers and glue. Note that potpourri and scented accessories may contain oils that can, on contact, cause damage to finishes.

- Avoid excessive scratching by lifting objects instead of dragging them across wood surfaces.

Avoid plastics and rubber

Avoid leaving plastic tablecloths and placemats on a wood surface for extended periods of time. Chemical components in the plastic can damage finishes. Affix felt discs on the contact points of computer equipment, alarm clocks, lamps, telephones and other desktop items. The plastic, rubber or nylon feet on these items may contain chemicals that can migrate into the finish, causing indentations, softening and discoloration. Even plastic toys left on shelves for extended periods can cause damage to the finish, if not protected.

If damage occurs, seek the expertise of a furniture repair specialist.

Allow the wood to breathe

The fine lacquer finish on your wood furniture needs to "breathe" to maintain its appearance and durability. It should have exposure to the air, rather than being covered for extended periods of time. Please take the following precautions:

- Periodically move desktop components such as computer equipment, audio/video components, clocks, staplers, etc.
- Rotate accessories or other items placed on the furniture. This includes items placed on desks, sofa tables, nightstands, bookshelves, hutches, and anyplace where items are stationary for extended periods of time. Placing felt discs on the bottom of accessory items can help to prevent indentations as well.
- Felt discs should also be used on the corners at the bottom of an upper unit which will sit on top of a base such as a bookcase, hutch, etc.

Polishing

In addition to regular dusting, wood surfaces also benefit from occasional polishing to remove smudges and particles and enhance the appearance of the piece.

Although it won't hurt the finish to do it more often, we recommend polishing only two or three times a year, depending on use. Over-polishing can detract from the appearance of the finish.

Here is the recommended polishing procedure:

1. Dispense the polish onto a clean, white, lint-free cloth, preferably of natural fiber such as cotton. Use the polish sparingly -- a little goes a long way.
2. Wipe the polish onto the furniture following the direction of the grain. Wipe off excess polish with the other side of the cloth, or a second cloth, if needed.
3. Avoid excessive rubbing. Excessive rubbing can actually be detrimental to matte finishes, as it causes uneven shine.

Avoid furniture polish that contains silicone. Silicone can damage the finish by softening it, and it clogs the wood's pores, making repairs difficult.

Waxing

We do not recommend waxing wood furniture. Today's fine lacquer finishes do not benefit from the waxing, and wax buildup can grey the wood finish.

Minor Touch Up and Repair

Minor damage to wood furniture can be repaired with the right materials and some careful attention to detail.

Scratches and Nicks

Furniture Touch-Up Pencils are available in most hardware stores and are designed to blend with each finish.

When a minor scratch occurs exposing the natural wood underneath, you can use the Touch-Up Pencil to color in the scratch so that it is less noticeable.

1. Stroke the felt tip gently over the scratch in the direction of the grain.
2. Immediately rub off excess colorant with a soft cloth.

If the scratch or dent penetrates deep into the surface, seek the expertise of a furniture repair specialist.

Water Marks

Often, water marks will dissipate over time. If after a month the mark is still there, apply a small amount of salad oil or mayonnaise to a clean, white cloth and rub on the mark, rubbing with the grain. Wipe dry and polish if needed.

Heat Marks

Rub very gently along the grain, using a dry, extra-fine (0000) steel wool pad * or coat the area with salad oil or mayonnaise, and wipe clean with a soft, clean cloth. Follow with polish.

Sticking Paper

Dampen the paper thoroughly with salad oil, wait a few minutes and rub gently along the grain with extra-fine (0000) steel wool *. Wipe dry and polish.

*Extra-fine steel wool (0000) is available at hardware stores. Do not use steel wool pads designed for scrubbing pots and pans.

Note: These are suggested methods. Individual results may vary. Always test your remedy on an inconspicuous area to make sure it does not damage the finish.

Spills and Stains

As careful as you may be, accidents do happen. Some spills may blot up quickly and easily, others may penetrate the wood in seconds. For most spills, quick action can reduce the possibility of damage. Here is a guide to immediate care of spills and stains:

Food Stains: Butter, mayonnaise, ketchup and a variety of juices can leave a slight penetrating stain. Wipe up the spill immediately and polish with a soft, clean cloth.

Candle Wax or Gum: Harden fresh candle drippings with an ice cube wrapped in plastic; then gently pop up the wax with a non-stick spatula or credit card. Remove any residue with furniture cleaner, allow the surface to dry and then follow up with polish.

Alcohol: Many liquids containing alcohol -- cocktails, colognes, medicine and other household fluids -- will dissolve the finish on contact. Let all such spills air dry. If damage results, seek the expertise of a furniture repair specialist.

Paint: Water-based paints should be wiped up immediately with a damp, clean cloth. Oil-based paint should be allowed to dry and then pushed away gently with a non-stick spatula or credit card.

Nail Polish and Polish Remover: These are dangerous solvents. If a spill occurs, do not rub or wipe it, but blot immediately and let the surface dry. If damage has occurred, seek the expertise of a furniture repair specialist.

Aligning your Wood Furniture

Our furniture is constructed to sit in a level position -- all doors and drawers are evenly aligned when the furniture leaves the factory. However, most homes have variations in floor level caused by age, type of construction, carpeting, etc., which may result in misalignment of your furniture.

Over time, you may find it necessary to adjust the levelers again if doors or drawers become uneven. This happens as your furniture settles into the carpeting, or when you place heavy objects, such as televisions or computer equipment, in or on your furniture. Moving your furniture will often require leveling adjustments.

Moving Furniture

Whether it's across the country or only across the room, special care must be taken when moving fine furniture. Here are the procedures we recommend:

1. Remove all knobs and casters. Tape them inside a drawer or within an envelope so they'll be close at hand when unpacking.
2. Remove any adjustable wood shelves and wrap them separately.
3. Close and secure all drawers and doors by covering with a mover's pad or blanket and tying loosely.
4. Protect corners, projecting details and handles with padding or foam.
5. Screw levelers all the way in before moving.
6. Lift all furniture -- sliding and dragging can bend or break legs.
7. Prior to relocating, disassemble larger cabinets, such as armoires and home entertainment centers.
8. Be aware that moving to a different climate can have an effect on the furniture. See the Climate Control section above.