

Caring for Wood Furniture

Caring for furniture is easy. Follow a few simple guidelines will help extend the life of your furniture.

- Always dust with a polish moistened cloth. Polish cushions the cloth, eliminating the scratching that occurs with dry dusting. Dust will scratch the furniture surface if not removed properly.
- Use a soft, clean cloth that won't scratch the surface. Avoid coarse or scratchy materials or fabrics.
- Never use soap and water on furniture. Water can penetrate the finish and raise the grain on wood, causing damage.

The Enemies of Furniture

Many common problems in furniture care are caused by the elements. If you are aware of these troublemakers, the resulting damage can easily be avoided.

- Sunlight's ultraviolet rays can damage wood finishes. Arrange furniture out of direct sunlight; use sun screening drapes during intense sunlight hours; rotate furniture in place and in room arrangements.
- Liquid spills will damage furniture if not removed promptly. Use coasters under beverage glasses and saucers under cups and flower pots. If a spill occurs, immediately blot it gently without rubbing the surface.
- Heat creates a chemical change in the furniture finish which can result in a white spot. Use protective pads under hot dishes, utensils or cooking appliances.
- High humidity causes wood to swell. Low humidity causes wood to lose moisture and shrink. Extreme changes cause warping, splitting and cracking.
- Try to keep humidity as constant as possible.

Choosing the Right Products

A quality polish enhances the natural beauty of wood by complementing the luster and enriching the grain. It protects the finish because it serves as a temporary barrier to spilled liquids. The cleaning ingredients in polish effectively remove smudges, dust and soil when properly applied. Tips for Better Dusting:

- Be sure to use the same type of polish consistently. Your furniture will appear cloudy or streaky if oil-based and wax-based polishes are interchanged.
- Always use a fine furniture polish when dusting. Never dry dust, as it could cause microscopic scratches on your furniture surface. Remember to change dusting cloths frequently since a dirty cloth may scratch your furniture's surface.
- Spray your furniture surface evenly, but not too generously. Wipe in a circular motion with a soft, clean cloth to clean and loosen the old polish.
- Then, buff until completely dry for a beautiful shine and a smudge-resistant finish. For wood trim, spray polish on the cloth first, then dust.