



## Exterior Woodwork Care & Maintenance

### **#1 Deep clean twice a year**

To properly care for your exterior wood products, deep clean a couple times a year by spraying a solution of white vinegar and water. The mix should be 50% vinegar and 50% water. Wipe with a soft, dry rag to remove salt, dirt and other airborne contaminants. Work in small sections and do not clean in direct sunlight.

### **#2 Wipe in the direction of the grain**

Use a soft, clean cloth. We do not recommend terry cloth because it can leave strings or lint or actually cause damage to the wood or finish. Soft, plain rags can be found at most paint stores. You may need to repeat the process to remove all contaminants.

### **#3 Polish with lemon or polyurethane oil**

If desired, you may wipe down woodwork with a lemon-oil type furniture polish or polyurethane oil. Do not use a wax type product. Apply the oil polish to a soft rag and wipe the wood, covering the entire surface. Then, re-wipe with a soft, dry rag to remove any excess and let dry.

### **#4 Apply clear coat using circular motions**

Circular motions will push the coating into the wood pores to reseal cracks, dents and fractures in the wood or finish. Let stand for one or two minutes, then wipe excess off in the direction of the grain.

### **#5 Limit contact with moisture**

Keep in mind that consistently watering your external wood products with automatic or handheld sprinklers can cause discoloration and damage to the finish. When watering grass and cleaning walkways, try to avoid spraying woodwork or provide protection for it. If water does reach the woodwork, wipe it off immediately.

### **#6 No wax, abrasive, chemical or ammonia cleaners**

These will all damage the finish on your wood. Wax-type products can turn white with exposure to salt, water or high humidity. Harsh chemicals used to clean metal, stone or glass will deteriorate the finish on your woodwork. When cleaning glass such as windows, wipe the wood clean.



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### **#7 Avoid high heat and direct sunlight**

Exposure to hot pans, plates, light sources, and direct sunlight will alter the appearance of woodwork over time. Paint and stains can and will both fade from their original condition. Never perform maintenance to woodwork during the hottest part of the day.

### **#8 Re-color damaged areas before applying polish**

If damage causes exposure to bare wood, it is best to re-color this area before applying the lemon or polyurethane oil described above. Take a small sample to us or a local paint/stain store to have a match made that you can apply.

### **#9 Fix damage to woodwork**

Apply stain or paint with a rag or small camel hair brush. Number 6 artist brushes work well. Stains may need to be applied twice to match correctly. Major damage may require the use of a soft putty stick you can find in almost all hardware or paint stores.

### **#10 If sanding is necessary, use fine sandpaper**

#320 grit works best. Clean the area first and sand with the grain of the wood, never against. Wipe off any residue after sanding and apply several coats of polyurethane varnish (can be purchased at any paint or hardware store)

### **#11 Call a professional for major work**

When it comes to high traffic areas or wood products in direct view, it may be best to contact a professional to repair the damage. They will use harder and higher quality products that will hold up better over time than doing it yourself.

### **#12 Be consistent and keep records**

Some wood products with severe exposure to weather elements may need extra coats of clear polyurethane coating once or twice a year. Stay on track with maintenance and keep records to ensure timeliness. This will also help guarantee you are not voiding any warranties for your products.