

About Teak

Teak is a dense, coarse, close-grained hardwood native to southeast Asia. No wood on earth compares to teak in durability, elegance, stability and low maintenance, which make it the top choice for shipbuilders and outdoor furniture makers alike. Teak wood contains high levels of resinous oils that make it naturally resistant to moisture, repellent to insects, and impervious to the drying effects of extreme weather including hot sun, rain, frost and snow. Teak also contains silica, which creates a density in the wood that make it extremely resistant to water, rotting, warping, shrinking, swelling, mold and fungal decay, as well as many harsh chemicals. Teak will not cause metals it comes in contact with to rust or corrode.

Teak will easily last a good 100 years virtually unaffected if left unprotected outdoors. Teak beams in good condition are commonly seen in buildings many centuries old, and have lasted in palaces and temples over 1,000 years. In fact, teak structures have been uncovered intact in the jungles of southeast Asia dating back 1,000 years. Teak is the only wood that can make these claims.

Caring for Teak

One of the greatest features of quality teak wood is that it requires very little maintenance and ages gracefully. Over time, the surface of teak gradually changes color from its golden honey color to the silver-grey patina that distinguishes finely aged, outdoor teak. After a while this silver-grey progresses to a darker greenish-grey if left untreated. If you appreciate the natural color of aged teak, then all you really have to do is clean it regularly. A good rinse with a garden hose and wipe down with a towel is plenty in most cases. If you prefer the golden color of new teak, more regular cleanings will maintain much of the original tone. You can also treat teak wood with a teak protector or sealer. This does not extend the life of the wood, but will preserve the golden tone that many people love. Oiling teak will temporarily preserve teak's golden color, but starts a maintenance regimen that involves frequent cleaning and re-oiling. Another option is to lightly sand the very outer surface of the wood. This will expose new wood in the original golden tone. Regular cleanings are important to keep contaminants from accumulating on your cabinets which can create an environment for mold or fungus to grow on the surface of the wood. If you notice spots on the wood's surface, clean them as soon as possible. In harsher environments, or when cleaning has been neglected, a light scrub with a teak cleaner or mild dish soap and clean water with a towel or soft, nylon bristle brush is all it takes. We do not recommend pressure washing our teak cabinetry, but it can be done as long as you do so very carefully and are aware that too much pressure can damage the surface of the wood. Use only low pressure with a wide spray nozzle, and keep the tip at least 12" away.

A Note About Color Staining:

Custom staining teak can produce beautiful results and provide protection for your outdoor teak, but remember that stain is intended to be permanent. Once you stain teak, you can't un-stain it. In other words, you cannot return to the natural golden brown or silver-grey color without numerous sandings. If you choose to stain teak after it has turned silver-grey, you should first sand it before applying stain.

A Note About Oiling:

The natural oils that protect teak wood from weather, pests and rot is always inside the wood. Additional coats of oil added to the exterior don't penetrate deep into the wood to protect it. While oils are essential for some outdoor woods, they only affect the surface of teak to enhance the color and grain. In fact, some commercial "teak oil" includes solvents which can break down and deplete the natural oils in teak. If you decide you want to oil your teak, 100% tung oil or linseed oil is a better choice. If you've applied oil to your teak and want to remove it, a good cleaning or two should do it or just allow it to deplete naturally.

