

How To Clean Teak Furniture

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Teak is a tropical hardwood species of tree, popular for outdoor furniture use due to its durability and natural resistance to rot and decay. Teak timber has always been valued as a high quality material and for its water resistance. It is used in boat decks, exterior construction, veneer, outdoor furniture, and turnings.

Teak has a rich, golden honey color when new, and requires little maintenance or care. Teak is often left natural, which over time, attains a handsome silvery-gray patina as it weathers or it can be treated with teak oil. If left untreated, teak will weather to a silver-gray tone which is preferable to many people. When treated, and cared for, it will maintain its original golden honey tone.

As teak ages and is exposed to the elements, the natural, beautiful color changes to a silvery gray patina. Teak naturally resists moisture and part of the reason it is so durable is that it is high in resinous oils and does not dry out very quickly. This also prevents it from absorbing too much moisture, making it less likely to rot.



When left outdoors without a periodic protective oil or teak oil, your teak furniture will turn silvery-gray. This process takes several months and depends on the exposure to certain elements such as rain and sun. If this is the look you want then all you need to do to care needed for your teak furniture is a seasonal cleaning.

Left unprotected teak can sometimes develop black mildew spots from moisture and lack of maintenance.

Regular cleaning of your teak will help prevent mildew build-up and potential discoloration. When cleaning your teak, always start with least aggressive cleaning solution first. If that doesn't work, try something more concentrated.

Sometimes a quick wash with mild soap and water and a mixture of bleach or vinegar is all that is needed.

Other times a deeper more aggressive cleaning is needed, in which case you should use a store-bought teak cleaner or oxygen bleach.



2 DIY Cleaning Solutions



1. Mix 1 cup each of chlorine bleach and laundry detergent with 1 gallon of warm water.

2. Mix 1 cup of vinegar with 1 gallon of warm water.

Wear rubber gloves and safety glasses.



Note – If the teak is badly stained with mildew and mold or other material, add about 2 teaspoons of trisodium phosphate [TSP] to the mixture.

DIY Solution Application

Use a spray bottle or garden sprayer to ensure precise application of your DIY solution. Garden sprayers include a reservoir tank, hose, valve, wand, pump, and spray nozzle and require less effort to use than a hand help hand-pump sprayer.

Apply the cleaning solution, in a well-ventilated area, onto the teak and use a soft plastic bristle brush to scrub the solution into the teak. Wait 15 minutes and then rinse with water.



For teak that has seen a long time exposure to the weather you may need a more aggressive store bought cleaning solution.

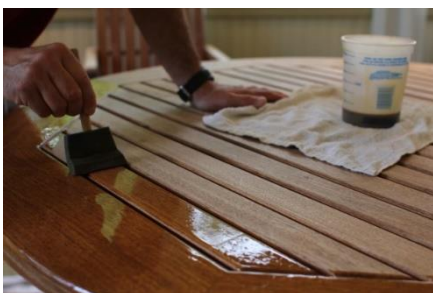
Procedure For Cleaning Teak Furniture



1. Try to work in the shade
2. Apply your cleaning solution to the teak with a garden sprayer
3. Spray the entire table, including the underside, and keep it wet with the solution for at least 15 minutes
4. Using a nylon bristle brush, scrub the mixture into the wood and across the grain. If you scrub with the grain, it can tear the wood fibers, leaving the

surface rough and vulnerable to the elements.

5. A green scrubbing pad works well in nook and crannies where the brush cannot reach.
6. Work in sections small enough that the solution will not dry. Leave the mixture on the wood for 15 minutes, and scrub on more solution to areas that begin drying during this time.
7. Rinse the teak with clean water. Use a soft-bristled brush as you rinse to remove any residual stubborn dirt.



8. Allow the teak to dry for about 24 hours. If it is still dark or stained, mix 1/2 cup of oxalic acid into a gallon of hot water and apply to the wood with a nylon scrubber.
9. Let the mixture sit for about 10 to 20 minutes and then rinse and repeat if staining is still present.
10. Let the wood dry 24 to 36 hours before applying teak oil.
11. Apply a second coat of teak oil after the initial coat has completely dried.