

# FURNITURE CARE & MAINTENANCE

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**ANDY THORNTON**

— SINCE 1975 —

Andy Thornton supplies contract quality furniture suitable for the hospitality, leisure and workplace markets, which, with care and regular maintenance, will give years of superior performance. We are happy to provide guidance on the suitability of any of our products, by the type of venue and internal or external environment.

We use only the best materials and the most robust finishes to ensure all our furniture is fit for purpose. However, even these materials can be damaged by misuse or lack of suitable maintenance. So, to ensure our products give you many years of great service, please refer to this care and maintenance guide.

We offer a 12-month guarantee across our entire product range, to provide cover against faulty materials, or mistakes in the manufacturing and finishing processes. Please note our guarantee is not binding, when damage to products has been caused by the care and maintenance advice not being followed.

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## GENERAL MAINTENANCE TIPS

We appreciate that furniture used in contract environments is likely to be used more frequently than domestic furniture and potentially exposed to more rigorous use. It is likely to be moved frequently for different applications during the day or week and for regular cleaning etc.

To stand up to this pressure our chairs are made using thicker legs than domestic chairs and assembled with additional fixings, such as screws, bolts and brackets, at joints and other weak points, to supplement the glue. Tables have thicker legs, tops and leg braces, to counter the impact of regular movement.

However, there are a number of practical maintenance hints that will dramatically prolong the life of your furniture and minimize potential problems on site:

- Avoid using aggressive sanitizer sprays or abrasive cleaning products on wooden table tops.
- Regularly check all fixing screws and bolts on chair joints, table frames and table top to base fixings, are tightened (one cause of wobbly tops).
- Where possible we fit floor protectors to tables and plastic or felt glides to chairs. These have a limited shelf-life so must be checked on a regular basis. We are happy to supply replacements on request, free of charge.
- Avoid dragging tables and chairs across floor surfaces. As well as helping to protect floors, this also prolongs the life of floor protectors and glides.
- Avoid regular exposure to direct sunlight, big fluctuations in temperature and excessive levels of humidity, to minimize bleaching, warping and splitting of furniture.
- Don't lift tables by their tops, especially if they are on heavy bases and avoid putting chairs on tables during cleaning.
- Clean up spills immediately, blotting rather than wiping.
- Always use the appropriate cleaning technique and most suitable products for your furniture.



## WOODEN CHAIRS & TABLES

Clean by wiping with a damp cloth using a mild cleaning liquid if required (always blot spills immediately), then buff with a dry duster. **We strongly recommend you not use sanitizer spray on tops**, as it will damage polished surfaces and they become sticky. Lacquered or polished surfaces can be cleaned with *Relay* spray.

Avoid using bleach, chlorine or silicon-based products. Proprietary spray polishes should be used sparingly, otherwise a build-up can develop, especially on arms and backs (a proprietary cleaner can be used to remove residue).

Avoid prolonged exposure to direct sunlight, excessive humidity and significant changes in temperature. These can affect the stability of the furniture and cause bleaching or discolouration to the wood.

### FLOOR PROTECTORS

Most chairs and some tables are fitted with floor glides to protect the different floor surfaces. For solid timber, engineered and laminate flooring, plastic or felt glides can be used (some plastic glides can leave a slight mark). For natural stone and synthetic stone floors, both plastic and felt glides can be used, though felt will not have a long shelf life. For carpets use plastic glides, whilst felt glides are ideal for vinyl, linoleum and soft synthetic floors.



## METAL TABLES & CHAIRS

Metal surfaces should be cleaned regularly to avoid permanent discolouration. Wipe with a slightly damp cloth and mild detergent and dry with a lint-free cloth. For stubborn stains use a non-abrasive cleaner such as baking soda, ensuring the cleaning product is rinsed off and the surface dried thoroughly.

Chrome finishes should be polished using a standard liquid chrome cleaner, or white vinegar with baking soda. Stainless and brushed steel can be cleaned like other metal, then polished with a stainless-steel polish or baby/olive oil.

### STAINLESS STEEL FURNITURE

All grades of stainless steel will stain or discolour without proper maintenance and cleaning. Use warm water and detergent with a damp cloth, then buff with a dry cloth. For deep cleaning use a recommended stainless steel cleaner with non-scratching nylon scourer and clean in the direction of the grain. Stainless steel polish is also available, or you could use baby/olive oil. Do not use abrasive cleaners or acid solutions. Chrome finishes should be polished using a standard liquid chrome cleaner, or white vinegar with baking soda.

### CAST IRON FURNITURE

- Clean with warm soapy water and liquid detergent and possibly a soft brush to get into cast detail, then dry immediately to avoid rusting.
- Ensure all assembly fixings, such as nuts, screws and bolts, are checked regularly for tightness, particularly where tops fix to bases.
- Avoid dragging heavy tables and chairs on floors.
- Floor protectors: see across. If tables have floor levellers fitted, make sure they are adjusted to the uneven floors.



## OUTDOOR FURNITURE

- Don't use indoor furniture outdoors.
- Avoid light furniture in areas prone to windy conditions.
- Wash your outdoor furniture regularly, not only to clean it but to remove harmful salts, especially from metal furniture.

## HARDWOOD FURNITURE

To ensure oiled furniture maintains its rich colour it should be washed down and oiled every six months to maintain this finish. Alternatively, the furniture can be left to weather naturally to a silver-grey colour. Wipe up spills immediately to avoid permanent staining.

## STORAGE

Particular care needs to be taken with the storage of solid timber and veneer tops, especially during the winter months. Significant changes in temperature and humidity can cause these tops to warp or split. Tops should be stored at between 10–25 degrees Celsius, with all faces equally exposed to the air.

## CAST IRON AND STEEL OUTDOOR FURNITURE

This is either finished in a robust powder-coat which is baked onto the metal surface or a painted finish. This can be cleaned with warm water and detergent and a soft brush if necessary. Painted metal furniture is prone to rusting and chipping, it needs a rub down with fine sandpaper, treating with metal primer and touching up the affected area with colour-matched paint. Iron furniture can be protected with spray-on wax.

## PLASTIC FURNITURE

Some plastics can bleach in the sun, so if not in use keep the furniture out of direct sunlight. Plastic furniture can be cleaned using warm water and detergent, taking care not to scour the surface. For stubborn marks, use white vinegar with baking powder or a non-abrasive cleaning cream such as *Vim*. To restore the shine, use a material-specific wax.

## SYNTHETIC WOVEN RATTAN PRODUCTS

Simply wash with warm water and mild detergent, using a soft brush to penetrate the cracks and hose down lightly to remove the excess detergent.

Outdoor furniture with water-resistant fabrics should be stored indoors when not in use, to avoid attracting mould.



## TABLE TOPS

### SOLID WOOD AND WOOD VENEER TABLE TOPS

Clean polished or lacquered tops by wiping with a damp cloth using a mild cleaning liquid if required (always blot spills immediately), then buff with a dry duster. Alternatively, we recommend *Relay Spray* restaurant table top cleaner, which has been specially developed to clean and sanitize tops without harming the lacquer.

**Do not use sanitiser sprays** (including without limitation D10 Sanitiser), degreasers or other aggressive cleaners on tops as they will seriously damage the lacquered/polished surface. Their aggressive constituents attack lacquer finishes causing them to deteriorate, which results in table tops showing water marks, heat marks and other signs of wear. Our 12-month product guarantee does not extend to damage caused by the use of such cleaning products.

### OILED TABLE TOPS

This is a very durable finish which, as well as protecting the wood, hides marks and scratches as the oil permeates into the wood. However, it requires regular re-applying to avoid marking and weathering (apply oil on a dry surface and follow product instructions). To clean use a slightly damp, lint-free cloth and wipe dry with a soft dry cloth in the direction of the grain. Never use wax-based products, furniture polishes or abrasive cleaners.

Although wooden tops are relatively heat resistant, avoid putting really hot objects directly onto the surface (use heat resistant mats). Avoid excessive heat from radiators and direct sunlight as this can crack and warp tops (sunlight will also cause fading). Use place mats to avoid ceramic crockery scratching surfaces and lift and place objects rather than dragging them across the surface. Avoid placing plastic or rubber material on lacquered tops as it may damage the finish (use felt pads if possible).

Do not use wax or furniture polish as a build-up can occur and spoil the appearance of the finish.



## LAMINATE TABLE TOPS

For our laminate self-edge, Werzalit laminate and compact laminate tops, simply wipe with a soft cloth soaked in a solution of mild detergent and warm water and rinse and dry with a soft cloth. For stubborn marks a careful application of a non-abrasive cleaning cream can be used, but test a concealed area first. Do not use powdered abrasives or other harsh cleansers like bleach or diluted acids as these may deface the surface and change the finish colour.

## GLASS TABLE TOPS

Clean with hot water and minimal detergent and dry with a soft cloth. For a shiny streak-free surface use a recognised glass cleaner or a mixture of distilled water and distilled white vinegar with a micro-fibre cloth.

## MARBLE & GRANITE TABLE TOPS

Acidic and strongly coloured foods and drinks (wine, citrus juices, coke, vinegar, tea, coffee, curry etc), can etch into and permanently mark the surface. All spillages need to be wiped clean immediately, to prevent marking. Use warm water and detergent or *Relay Spray*. Deep stains, grease and oil marks may be removed with white spirit or a suitable stain remover, but test an area, preferably the underside of the top, first.

Recommended marble sealers do a great job of preventing staining, but are not completely effective, so spills should still be removed immediately. Don't use scouring creams, bleach or acids.

Some ceramic crockery may scratch the surface, so we recommend the use of place mats.

## METAL TABLE TOPS: COPPER, ZINC AND BRASS

These surfaces oxidise in the air to create an attractive patina and tops can be supplied with this finish already in place. The finish can mark easily when exposed to liquids, especially acidic liquids such as wine or vinegar, so the surface can be protected with Beeswax to moderate the oxidation. It is important to reapply this finish regularly, once the tops have been cleaned with soapy water or *Relay spray*.

Tops supplied in a highly polished or slightly patinated finish can be protected with a clear matt lacquer, but please be aware that surfaces can easily be scratched, so we do not normally recommend for contract use.

## UPHOLSTERY

### LEATHER

Leather is a durable, supple and resistant natural material which, when left unfinished, ages over time, acquiring a deep natural patina. This is part of leather's unique appeal, especially for untreated aniline leathers, suede and nubuck. To keep it that way it is important to care for the leather carefully. Occasionally vacuum or dust down lightly before cleaning with a slightly damp cloth and mild detergent to remove grime, then allow to dry naturally.

For spots and spills wipe excess liquid immediately with a clean cloth or sponge and allow to dry. Do not spot clean leather, clean the entire surface. For oil, grease or butter, dab off the excess with a paper towel and let the remainder dissipate into the leather. Do not apply water or try to wash a grease spot.

Leather for the contract market is often finished with a pigment dyed surface and a clear polyurethane coating, which provides significant protection against staining. We recommend cleaning lightly with a damp cloth. Occasionally use saddle soap on a damp cloth, lightly buffing when dry, then applying a coat of leather protector. For stains, use a specialist leather furniture cleaner such as *Furniture Clinic*.

Do not use chemical cleaning solvents, oils, sprays, furniture polish or abrasive cleaners, this will affect the finish and feel of the leather. Any further treatment should only be done with products suitable for leather, or by consultation with a leather restoring specialist.

Over time, leather can dry out so we recommend using a leather restorer or conditioner.

### FAUX LEATHER

Faux leathers are very stain resistant and can be washed with warm water and detergent. Tough stains can be removed with a suitable alcohol-based cleaner but test on a hidden area first.



## FABRICS

Occasionally vacuum fabric lightly (dust removal may be improved by pre-brushing with a soft brush). Cleaning should be done by a reputable cleaning company and to the manufacturer's recommendations. Regularly turn and interchange the positions of reversible cushions. Avoid exposing upholstered furniture to direct sunlight for long periods of time, as this may result in fading or degradation of the fabric.

Clean spills on velvet, polyester and other man-made fabrics immediately using warm water and mild detergent/soap. For stubborn stains such as wine, use water diluted 5:1 with methylated spirits, followed by detergent and warm water.

Wool is a thick material therefore stains can easily penetrate deep into the fabric. Soak up any spillages immediately with paper towels or cloths. For stubborn stains use detergent and warm water sparingly and don't rub too hard or the structure of the wool may be damaged irreparably. For water-resistant stains, lightly dab with a little turps or acetone on a cloth. Vacuum lightly to remove dust.

Cotton fabric is a natural and absorbent material prone to staining, so should be treated before use with a protector such as *Scotchgard Fabric Protector*, to minimise staining. Clean spills immediately with warm water and soap/mild detergent. For stubborn stains try a heavy-duty clothes stain remover and test first on a hidden area.



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