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About Hardwoods

Mature hardwoods supply the nation, and much of the world, with timber used for everything from railroad ties to quality furnishings. U.S. hardwoods are coveted the world over for their warmth and lasting beauty in furniture, cabinetry, millwork and flooring. In finished products, hardwoods are the purest expression of nature. They are not synthetic nor are they engineered. Their beauty is not skin deep. And, thanks to responsible stewardship of America's hardwood forestlands, their supply is abundant and perpetually renewing.

Hardwoods are such broad-leaved trees as oak and walnut, cherry and maple, hickory and poplar, and dozens of other species. Each autumn their green leaves burst into brilliant symphonies of amber, orange, magenta, and thousands of hues in between.

Hardwoods grow prolifically, reaching maturity at about 80 years. When harvested, they often begin a second life as home furnishings that we can cherish for generations.

Just as each tree is different from the next, so, too are hardwood products individually unique. Hardwoods are characterized by an infinite variety of grains and distinctive textures. Trees grow limbs that fall off as the tree matures. What remains is a knot on the hardwood surface. These natural markings add character to the woods appearance and have absolutely no effect on the wood's durability and stability.

Care & Cleaning Tips

With proper care your solid hardwood furniture can give you a lifetime of service and beauty. Here are some tips that will enhance your solid hardwood investment:

- Keep out of direct continued sunlight and away from heat sources such as heating ducts, fireplaces and radiators.
- Maintain a humidity-controlled environment of 40-45% humidity. In winter, use a humidifier; in summer use a dehumidifier or air conditioner.
- Use coasters with non-scratching bottoms and padding under all sharp, hot, or cold objects.
- Store table leaves in or close to the table to maintain consistent environmental conditions.
- Avoid the use of nail polish remover, alcohol or other solvents near furniture.
- Dust often and carefully with a soft cloth following the grain pattern to remove abrasive dust particles.
- Periodically clean with a mild, non-alkaline soap and water. Use the suds in a damp sponge or cloth, but be sure to pre-test the solution on an out-of-sight section to make sure it doesn't harm the finish. Dry immediately with soft cloth and buff lightly, following the grain.
- Avoid wax and polishes that contain any silicones! Catalyzed heat and moisture resistant finishes don't need additional polish, but if you want to use a polish we recommend Guardsman furniture polish.

Furniture First Aid

Here are some common problems and remedies. Always test these remedies in a small, out of sight area first to assure the remedy doesn't harm the finish.

- Water Marks: Rings are often in the wax, not in the finish. Cover the ring with a clean thick blotter and press down with a warm iron. Repeat as needed. Or rub with salad oil, mayonnaise or white toothpaste, wipe dry.
- White Marks: Rub with cloth dipped in a mixture of cigarette ashes and lemon juice or salad oil. Or rub with a cloth dipped in lighter fluid, followed by a mixture of rottenstone and salad oil. Wipe dry.
- Milk or Alcohol: Rub in a paste of boiled linseed oil and rottenstone with the grain, substituting pumice for dull finishes.
- Cigarette Burns: Minor burns can be fixed by rubbing with a paste of linseed oil and rottenstone, working with the grain until the burn disappears.
- Heat Marks: Rub along the grain with a dry steel wool soap pad, extra fine (0000) steel wool or cloth dampened with camphorated oil or mineral spirits.
- Nail Polish: Blot out the spill immediately. Then rub with fine steel wool (0) dipped in Guardsman Furniture Polish. Wipe dry.
- Paint: If fresh, remove latex pain with water and oil based mineral spirits. If dry, soak spot in boiled linseed oil, wait until soft and carefully remove with putty knife or cloth dampened with boiled linseed oil. Remove residue by rubbing along the grain with a paste of linseed oil and rottenstone. Wipe dry.
- Sticking Paper: Dampen the paper thoroughly with salad oil, wait five minutes and rub along the grain with extra fine (0000) steel wool dipped in mineral spirits. Wipe dry.
- Wax or Gum: Harden the substance by holding an ice cube wrapped in a cloth against it. Pry off with fingernail. Rub the area with extra fine (0000) steel wool dipped in mineral spirits. Wipe dry.