

SAGE. Lifestyle

beautiful design made for life

Outdoor Furniture Materials and Maintenance

Synthetic Weave

Synthetic fibers are used by the leading outdoor furniture brands worldwide for manufacturing quality outdoor furniture. Natural rattan by contrast, although very strong and durable, does not survive well in outdoor settings. Natural rattan is very susceptible to moisture and ultraviolet light. Even with protective finishes it deteriorates quickly in the outdoor elements.

Our manufacturers use Viro® synthetic fibers for our outdoor ranges. Viro® is 100% HDPE (High Density Polyethylene) which means that it is non-toxic and 100% recyclable. Viro® is used by top global designers and furniture makers throughout the world for their outdoor furniture applications and is regarded as one of the top three high end fiber brands. HDPE is a more tightly packed structure than Low Density Polyethylene ("LDPE") and consequently has a higher density and strength as well as excellent chemical resistance properties. Some furniture brands use cheaper fibers that are either PVC based (PVC contains plasticizers that can be toxic) or lower quality LDPE's both of which do not have the enduring characteristics of HDPE.

The key characteristics of the HDPE synthetic weave used are:

- UV Resistant
- Resistant to chlorine, salt, suntan creams and oils
- Colourfast and will not fade.
- Weatherproof, will not stain from water or dirt and is not vulnerable to rot, mold, or mildew.
- Extremely durable, will not warp or crack.
- Ease of maintenance
- 100% recyclable

Synthetic Weave Care

Clean with a soft brush and warm mild soapy water to remove any dust and dirt and then rinse with clean cold water from a bucket or garden hose. Take care not to damage the fiber with sharp objects. Do not use wire or hard bristle brushes.

We recommend you do not use water blasters or other high-pressure washers.

Teak

We use certified Plantation Teak from Indonesia. Teak is the premium natural material for outdoor furniture as it is an extremely durable hardwood. It requires little care to preserve its good looks and integrity over decades of use. It requires no special treatment or coating to extend its long life as the natural oils below the surface are enough to protect it from the elements. However, customer preferences differ in relation to the natural silvering of the wood. In this regard there are some choices for the proper care of its appearance depending on customer preference.

We recommend that all new teak furniture is wiped down with a soft damp cloth after unpacking to remove any dust particles left over from the manufacturing process prior to placing cushions or fabrics directly on it.

Silvering

New teak furniture often has a slight surface sheen from the naturally occurring oil in the wood. This surface oil will wash away once the furniture has been outdoors for a brief period.

Teak will naturally age to a handsome silver grey colour. This silvering process will be evident after a few months and takes between six and twelve months to fully weather depending on the local conditions. Water spots or other discoloration may occur early in the weathering process and some small cracks may also develop in the woods surface. This is all part of the natural weathering process, and such effects will soon blend into the surrounding surface of the wood. The slight separation of the grain occurs naturally and is not a fault. It has no effect on the strength and longevity of the furniture and it will return to its original smooth feel after the initial weathering process. The oils and resins that remain inside the teak give it its lasting durability.

Oils and Cleaners

If you prefer your Teak furniture to retain its original golden honey palette, we recommend that you consider using a quality marine teak sealer as those that are applied in marine environments such as SEMCO. These sealers tend to be solvent based with water-like viscosity. They contain pigments that inhibit mildew, UV, and water damage.

If your furniture has already faded in colour a teak cleaner can be applied prior to sealing to restore it to the original color (other than where it has been stained). Where the furniture has been outdoors for some period and is very faded a light sanding will also aid in reviving the colour prior to sealing. Depending on the conditions and your color preference, the cleaning and sealing process should be applied once or twice a year.

There are many commercial teak oils and stains available, but we advise against using oils as they do not have the longevity of the cleaning and sealing process and need to be consistently applied to achieve the desired result. They may also be damaging to the

natural oils in the teak. Oiled teak may also be more susceptible to mildew, dirt build-up and irregular coloring as it weathers. Paint or varnish or other comparable products should be avoided as they tend to crack and flake from the surface as they are not suited to being applied to teak. You must carefully follow the instructions on any Teak cleaning or sealing product. We do not recommend applying wax to Plantation Teak.

Cleaning

Clean with a soft brush and warm mild soapy water. The cleaning will assist in returning the teak to a smooth finish. Tough stains or any mildew that resist the soapy water can be dealt with by adding a small amount of household bleach to your mild soapy water (be careful with the bleach solution around fabrics). Remember to rinse well with cold water after washing and wipe the surface dry with a soft cloth or towel. DO NOT use water blasters or other pressure washers as they can scour and roughen the surface of the teak. An annual cleaning once weathered should suffice to keep the teak in good order in most environments. As already noted, commercial marine teak cleaners are available if required for teak that has not been cleaned for some period and has become blackened or dark grey.

Stainless Steel

Our manufacturers use stainless steel 304 in their furniture ranges. This is high quality steel that is resistant to corrosion and oxidation with excellent toughness and attractive appearance. If customers require marine grade stainless steel 316 for specific environments (for example where the furniture is positioned where it will continually get sea spray) it may be available as a custom order at additional cost on request (subject to availability).

Stainless steels are not impervious to corrosion. Exposure to salty air can cause minor superficial corrosion called "tea staining." Tea staining is normal and not a fault. It should not affect the strength or integrity of the furniture. Stainless steel requires regular maintenance to keep it clean and shiny.

Care

First remove any surface dirt or dust with a soft brush or cloth. To get the best results, we recommend washing the steel regularly with a soft brush and mild soapy water. Any tarnishing created by salt and sea air and atmospheric rust particles should be removed with an appropriate stainless-steel cleaner. Avoid abrasive cleaning products. Cleaning should be undertaken more regularly in maritime areas and other more highly corrosive environments to remove any tea spotting and surface particles. We suggest cleaning a minimum of once a quarter in such environments and 1-2 times a year in less corrosive environments. Commercial stainless-steel cleaners are available but please read the labels carefully to ensure they are suitable for application to outdoor furniture. After cleaning, rinse well with clean water and dry with a soft cloth or towel.

Do not use steel wool or steel brushes to clean stainless steel as they can leave particles on the stainless steel that can cause rust and surface damage.

Powder Coated Steel

Some of our range also uses galvanized and powder coated steel where there is a requirement for a thinner frame design with added strength. Galvanizing describes a process whereby the steel is coated with a layer of zinc. The zinc layer provides cathodic and barrier protection which prevents the steel from oxidizing resulting in a much longer life span in outdoor environments. Cathodic protection means that even if the coating is scratched or abraded, the exposed steel will still be protected from corrosion by the remaining zinc – an advantage that is not present in paint or enamel coatings.

Powder coating is typically applied electrostatically to the galvanized steel and is then heat cured to bind it to the steel. The powder coating acts as an additional layer of protection to the galvanized layer and results in an attractive finish. Combining galvanizing and powder coating materially extends the life of the steel furniture.

Care

To get the best results from this type of product keep the coated steel clean by washing regularly with a soft brush and mild soapy water. Rinse with clean water and dry with a soft cloth or towel.

Aluminium

Powder coated aluminium is both highly weather resistant and lightweight making it perfect for outdoor use. Aluminium reacts with oxygen in the air to form a layer of oxide which although extremely thin provides excellent corrosion protection. Importantly the oxide layer is self-repairing if damaged.

Our Manufacturers' furniture ranges feature strong 1.8mm Aluminium tube framing that is high-density welded and reinforced providing added strength and longevity. Aluminium has zero toxicity.

Care

Remove any surface dirt and dust with a soft brush or cloth. Use mild soapy water and a soft brush or sponge to keep the Aluminium clean. Avoid using anything that will scratch the surface. Rinse thoroughly with clean water and dry with a soft cloth or towel.

Commercial aluminium cleaners are available but please read the instructions carefully to ensure they are fit for purpose.

Fabric Care

Sunlight in New Zealand is extremely harsh. The sun's UV rays will affect the color of fabrics. Whenever possible, we recommend that you limit the amount of direct sunlight on your fabrics to minimise the amount of fading and that you move and rotate cushions, so they get equal exposure as much as possible.

We recommend Sunbrella fabrics with QuickDryFoam® inserts for seat and back cushions on furniture that will be completely out in the weather. We specify them as standard. QuickDryFoam® is exceptionally porous and permeable allowing maximum drainage of water and circulation of air enabling quick use even after the cushions become saturated with water. QuickDryFoam® uses UREGARD a built-in anti-microbial protection that prohibits the growth of common molds and fungus even when furniture is left outside for prolonged periods of time.

Be wary of cheaper brands of furniture that specific cheaper fabrics & foams with lower levels of performance outdoors. Also be aware of the difference between “outdoor” and “outdoor under cover” specifications.

If cushions have been out in the rain, we recommend angling them against the furniture to aid draining and drying. If the furniture is not going to be used for an extended period in winter, we recommend storing the seat and back cushions under cover.

The following cleaning & care instructions are recommended by Sunbrella (please refer to Sunbrella manufacturers website for care instructions). As a rule, brush off dirt before it becomes embedded in the fabrics. Wipe up spills as soon as they occur and spot clean soon after stains occur.

General or light cleaning

1. Brush off any loose dirt.
2. Prepare a cleaning solution of approximately 1/4 cup mild detergent (or dishwashing liquid) per 4 litres of lukewarm water.
3. Use a sponge or a soft bristle brush to clean.
4. Allow cleaning solution to soak into fabric.
5. Rinse thoroughly with clean water to remove all detergent residues.
6. Allow fabric to air dry.

Spot cleaning

1. Apply a light mist of mild detergent and water using a spray bottle.
2. Work the solution into the stain by lightly scrubbing the area with a sponge or very soft bristle brush.
3. Rinse thoroughly to remove all detergent residues.
4. Blot excess moisture with a clean, soft towel or sponge.
5. Wet-vacuum or blot excess water.
6. Repeat steps 3, 4 and 5 until all detergent residue is removed.

7. Air dry. Do not dry in a Dryer.

For removable covers

Hand washing

1. Soak fabric in a solution of 1/4 cup mild detergent per 4 litres of lukewarm water.
2. Use a sponge or a soft bristle brush, as necessary.
3. Rinse thoroughly to remove all detergent residues.
4. Air dry. Do not dry in a Dryer.

Machine Washing

Machine wash in cold water (after first checking that the fabrics can be machined washed). Depending on wash load size, use normal amounts of mild laundry detergent and add approximately 1 cup of bleach. Allow fabric to air dry.

Heavy cleaning for stubborn stains and mildew

Mildew may grow on dirt and other foreign substances that are not removed from the fabric. To clean mildew, or other stubborn stains:

1. Prepare a solution of 1 cup of bleach and 1/4 cup of mild detergent per gallon of clean water.
2. Spray on entire area and allow to soak into the fabric for up to 15 minutes.
3. Remove stains with a sponge, clean towel, or very soft bristle brush.
4. Rinse thoroughly to remove all detergent residues.
5. Allow fabric to air dry.
6. If stain and/or mildew are severe, bleach quantities may be increased slightly.

Re-treating the fabric for ease of cleaning.

Outdoor fabrics have a special finish that enhances water repellence. The finish is designed to last for several years of normal use, but it may be advisable to refresh this finish after thorough cleaning or extended use. There are many commercial fabric guards available on the market but ensure you always test before use and read the manufacturer's instructions carefully prior to applying.