

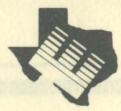
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THE CARE AND CLEANING OF FURNITURE AND FURNISHINGS



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CAUTIONS

Use rubber gloves — Buy *boiled* linseed oil — Destroy oily rags and oily steel wool after use — Keep dustless dust cloth in *tightly*-covered jar — Work with caution when heating flammable mixtures. Heat oily substances by floating on hot water or, *if directed*, by heating in a *double boiler*. Do not heat oil of any kind or wax of any kind directly on a heating unit or surface.

THE CARE AND CLEANING OF FURNITURE AND FURNISHINGS

Wait! I'll take that rusty old kettle if you are throwing it out! Stop! If you don't want it, give me that old green bottle that is all clouded on the inside. Many of us part with seeming castoffs only to see them transformed into useable and delightful furniture and accessories in another home. Magic? Not at all. It is a matter of knowing how to clean and care for wood, cast iron, marble, pewter, glass and the many materials used in furniture and furnishings now and in the past. Unless the material has rotted or rusted through, the surface texture and color is often only hidden under rust, grease, stain or some other build-up.

Cleaning and care are amazingly simple. The purpose is to preserve and enrich the finish. The choice of chemicals and ways to use them depend on the nature of the original material and the finish, and the nature of the dirt or corrosion. In neglected furnishings the condition is exaggerated, but the care required is the same for the surface of materials, whether old or new.

Our push button, spray on, no rub age is a wonderful one to save time, energy and effort but it is bad for THINKING.

In furniture cleaning and care, competent consumers must know more than how to read the name of the product and where to locate the push button for spraying.

A competent consumer should know the nature of the material to be cleaned and cared for and the nature of the materials used for cleaning and care.

Here is the basis of cleaning hard surfaces of furnishings.

Chemicals, either alone or in combination, are used to dissolve or break down the unwanted dirt, rust, grease, etc., without damaging the surface itself. These include bleaches, acids and solvents, the most widely used solvent being water!

Absorbent substances take up grease, moisture and liquids. Some of them are french chalk, talcum powder, fullers earth, soft

cloths, blotters, and facial tissues.

Abrasives are used to rub off or wear away the offending build-up. You move the abrasive on the surface by rubbing, shaking, etc. Abrasives include whiting, pumice, rottenstone, cigar ash, and for some needs, small pebbles or gunshot.

Many times combinations of cleaning materials and ways of cleaning are needed. This is because soil, grease and corrosion are combinations of many reactions and substances.

Only the laboratory chemist should experiment with chemical reactions. The rest of us should understand that we are working with chemicals; that some of them can be dangerous; that we should follow directions as given.

The basis of care of a hard surface in furnishings is preserving the finish by protecting it, removal of surface dust, and, when needed, feeding and conditioning the material from which it is made. Care supplies and methods vary from dusting with a dry, soft, lintless cloth to the use of a cloth that is treated to pick up and hold dust, to washing with clear water, to feeding wood by rubbing with suitable oil. Care supplies are based on their compatibility with the material of the furnishing. Wood, marble, leather, brass and other metals — each requires its own care plan. Follow the advice given.

Commercially-made cleaners and polishes are on the market. You may prefer to purchase them instead of making your own. However, you will be a better consumer by knowing the types of ingredients that should be used for cleaning and polishing.

Unless you can ask a furniture store dealer, hardware or paint store dealer or a manufacturer an informed question, he cannot give you an informed answer. When the dealer or manufacturer understands what you want to know and why, almost always you will get accurate information as requested.

ALUMINUM

Some parts of contemporary furniture are made of aluminum. One reason for using it is ease of upkeep. Properly cared for aluminum should require only dusting and occasional wiping with a soft, damp cloth.

When necessary, wash with hot soapy (mild soap) water, rinse and dry with soft cloth. Do not use abrasives, cleansing powders, etc. Do not use strong soaps or detergents because they contain alkali and can cause pitting of aluminum. If any materials have hardened on aluminum, a soft damp cloth dipped in fine whiting can be used to gently rub away the dirt. Then wash, rinse, and dry.

BRASS

Brass decorative furnishings are often lacquered to protect the surface from corrosion and tarnish. As with any lacquered metal surface, they should not be polished, nor soaked in water, nor washed in hot water. Such treatment can crack the protective lacquer coating. To care for lacquered brass, wash in lukewarm soapy water, rinse with lukewarm water, dry thoroughly. The warm air of a hairdryer can aid in drying hard to reach areas.

Lacquer that is damaged can be removed. To remove lacquer, use one of these methods. One method is to soak the accessory (if it is possible) in hot, soapy water for about fifteen minutes. Rinse with hot water and rub with a soft cloth until lacquer peels. Another way to remove lacquer is to rub with a soft cloth moistened with denatured alcohol. Unlacquered brass will tarnish and requires polishing. Commercial metal polishes are available.

When cleaning and polishing antique brass, test cleaning materials on the surface of the accessory or fixture to be sure of obtaining the desired effect. Some methods indeed clean tarnish

and corrosion of the years, but in addition, remove the mellow-ness of age that is desirable on old drawer pulls, oil lamps, candle-holders and other furnishings accessories. These cleaners and polishes for brass are listed from the mildest polish to the more powerful chemical reactions for removing corrosion and tarnish.

Polish

Antique Brass

How to make:
Boiled linseed oil

Soft cloths

How to store:
Store ingredient in covered jar.

Polish for Soft Finish

Method 1.

How to make:
Make a paste of one of these combinations:
Fine whiting and boiled linseed oil.

or

Rottenstone and boiled linseed oil.
Soft cloths.

How to store:
Store ingredients separately.
Make only enough for immediate use.

How to use:

Wash accessories in hot, soapy water, rinse and dry. This removes surface grime, wax, etc.

Moisten soft cloth with boiled linseed oil and rub on brass surface.

When dirt and grease are removed, polish with soft cloth.

How to use:

Wash accessory in hot, soapy water to remove surface grime, wax, etc.

Wipe on paste with soft cloth.
Rub to remove light tarnish.
Polish with a soft, dry cloth.

Method 2. (This polish dries to a white film and must be thoroughly washed from any lines, crevices and other decorations)

How to make:

Make a paste of: Fine whiting and denatured alcohol.

How to store:

Store ingredients separately. Make only enough for immediate use.

How to use:

Wash accessory in hot, soapy water to remove surface grime, wax, etc. Wipe paste on with soft cloth and allow to dry on surface. Polish off dry white film. Wash in hot, soapy water. Rinse with hot water and dry thoroughly.

Cleaner for Heavy Tarnish and Corrosion

(use only on solid or pressed brass)

How to make:

Household ammonia (clear)
Soft cloths
Glass bowl large enough to hold small accessory.

How to store:

Store ingredient.

How to use:

Method 1. (For accessories too large to be cleaned by Method 2).

Moisten cloth with ammonia and rub on brass. Turn cloth as it becomes soiled.

Method 2.

Pour ammonia in glass bowl and soak brass accessory or fixture for a few minutes.

After corrosion and stains have disappeared (through either method), wash brass in hot, soapy water, rinse and dry. Then polish to a soft finish using a paste of fine whiting and boiled linseed oil.

(See instructions for copper)

Cleaner for Difficult Stains, Corrosion

(use only on solid or pressed brass)

Method 1.

How to make:

Table salt
Hot vinegar

How to store:

Store ingredients separately.

How to use:

Wash accessory in hot, soapy water to remove surface grime, wax, etc. Sprinkle salt on surface. Pour hot vinegar over salt. Rub with soft cloth. More than one application may be needed. When accessory is clean, wash in hot soapy water rinse in hot water and dry thoroughly.

Method 2.

How to make:

Slice of fresh lemon.
Table salt.
Soft cloths.

How to store:

Store ingredients separately.

How to use:

Wash accessory in hot soapy water to remove surface grime, wax, etc. Dip slice of lemon into table salt and rub over corroded areas. Repeat until clean. Wash accessory in hot soapy water rinse with hot water and dry thoroughly.

CHROMIUM

Chromium is used as a plating for metal furniture. It needs only to be wiped with a soft, damp cloth and polished with a soft, dry cloth. Abrasives should not be used as the plating can be worn off as a result.

If the chrome has been badly neglected and dirt has hardened on the surface, dip a soft, dampened cloth into fine whiting and rub carefully. Then wipe with damp cloth and dry.

COPPER-BRONZE

Decorative ornaments and fixtures of copper are often lacquered to prevent corrosion and tarnish. These lacquered decorative accessories should not be polished, not soaked in water nor washed in hot water because such treatment can crack the lacquer covering the surface. To care for lacquered metal, wash, when necessary, in lukewarm soapy water and rinse with lukewarm water; dry thoroughly.

Damaged lacquer can be removed. One method for removing lacquer is to soak the accessory (if possible) in hot, soapy water for about fifteen minutes. Rinse with hot water and rub with a soft cloth until the lacquer peels off. Another way of removing lacquer is to rub with a soft cloth moistened with denatured alcohol. Once lacquer is removed, the unprotected metal will tarnish and require polishing. Commercial metal polishes are available. Home-made polishes can produce either a bright or soft finish.

Cleaner [and polish] for a Bright Finish

Method 1.

How to make:

Table salt
Vinegar
Soft cloths

How to store:

Store ingredients separately.

How to use:

Wash accessory in hot soapy water to remove surface grime, wax, etc.

Sprinkle salt on surface.

Pour vinegar over salt and rub with soft cloth. More than one application may be necessary.

If corrosion is present, use *hot* vinegar.

When accessory is clean, wash in hot soapy water, rinse with hot water; dry.

Method 2.

How to make:

Mix equal parts of:
Table salt

How to use:

Wash accessory in hot, soapy water to remove surface grime,

Vinegar
Flour
Soft cloths

How to store:

Store ingredients separately.
Mix only enough for immediate use.

Polish for a Soft Finish

Method 1.

How to make:

Make a paste of one of these combinations:
Fine whiting and boiled linseed oil

or

Rottenstone and boiled linseed oil.

Soft cloths.

How to store:

Store ingredients separately.
Make only enough for immediate use.

Method 2. (Polish for soft finish — this polish dries with a white film and must be thoroughly washed from any decorative lines, crevices and indentations.)

How to make:

Make a paste of:
Fine whiting and denatured alcohol solvent.
Soft cloths

How to store:

Store ingredients separately.
Make only enough for immediate use.

wax, etc.

Mix ingredients to a paste.*
Rub on surface until copper is clean.

Wash in hot soapy water.

Rinse with hot water; dry.

*(NOTE: The advantage of the paste is that it is easier to apply on rounded surfaces.)

How to use:

Wash accessory in hot, soapy water to remove surface grime, wax, etc.

Wipe on paste with soft cloth.

Rub to remove light tarnish and polish with a soft dry cloth.

How to use:

Wipe paste on with a soft cloth and allow to dry on surface.

Polish off dry white film.

Wash in hot water, rinse with hot water and dry thoroughly.

GESSO

Gesso is a hard plaster-like material that is molded to resemble intricately carved wood. Picture frames, particularly during the Victorian era, were gesso on wood molding finished in gold leaf or gilding. These gesso frames, of both simple designs and ornate ones, are extremely popular today for mirrors, modern museum prints, amateur painter's works, even their original occupants — one's ancestors!

Because the frames have been stored for decades in attics and sheds, the gold leaf and gilding are often flyspecked, dirty and greasy. The frame should first be vacuumed to remove surface dust. In order to avoid the removal of any of the gold, these very gentle cleaning methods are recommended.

Cleaner

Method 1.

How to make:

A fresh lemon.
A solution of 1 tablespoon baking soda in 1 pint water.
Soft cloths
Soft toothbrush
Orange sticks or cotton-tipped swabs.

How to store:

Store ingredients separately.
Discard unused materials.

How to use:

Work on a *small section* (1 or 2 inches square) of the frame. Clean it completely. Then go to another *small section*. Cut slice of lemon. Rub a small section of frame with cut edge. Work into crevices. Sponge the section immediately* with solution of soda and water. Dry thoroughly with soft cloths. Dry crevices by absorbing moisture with orange stick wrapped with cotton or by a cotton-tipped swab. Repeat process if necessary.
*Always neutralize lemon with soda solution or there is danger of dissolving gold.

Method 2. (The limitation of this method is that a film of white sometimes develops in deep crevices and must be gently brushed out.)

How to make:

Mixture of: 1 egg white and 1 tablespoon baking soda.
Soft cloths
Soft toothbrush
Orange sticks or cotton-tipped swabs.

How to store:

Store ingredients. Discard unused mixture.

How to use:

Work on a small section (1 or 2 inches square) of frame. When clean, go on to next section. Moisten a soft cloth with the egg white and soda mixture. Rub on small section of frame and work into crevices with soft brush or orange stick wrapped with cloth or a cotton-tipped swab. Before mixture dries, remove all of it with dry cloths. Remove from crevices with orange stick wrapped with cloth or a cotton-tipped swab. Repeat process if necessary.

Last Resort Method

If neither Method 1 nor Method 2 clean the frame, you can experiment with the cleanser-conditioner used for cleaning wood (See Wood). In dire cases of solid flyspecks, some persons have resorted to using gum turpentine alone, then using the wood cleanser-conditioner. However, this is not the recommended cleaner for gesso. Methods 1 and 2 are usually successful if you have time and patience.

GLASS

Old bottle collecting has recently become one of the country's leading hobbies. Many old glass bottles, cruets and decanters have a deposit on the inside glass surface that detracts from their decorative charm. Sometimes the deposit can be removed by washing in hot, soapy water. A small amount of vinegar or baking soda may help to loosen the deposit. Rinse in hot water and dry. Dry outside of the bottle with towel. Dry inside of bottle by turning upside down with space so that air can get inside.

Cleaner to Remove Deposit from Bottles

How to make:

Water
Vinegar or baking soda
Gun shot or small, smooth, rounded pebbles.

How to store:

Store ingredients.

How to use:

Pour water to which baking soda or vinegar has been added into glass container. Add several pebbles or shot. Agitate the pebbles or shot so that they come in contact with the sides of the bottle. (Do not be so vigorous as to break the bottle!) You may want to change the water occasionally. When all the deposit is gone, wash bottle in hot, soapy water, rinse and dry as directed above.

IRON

Cast Iron and Wrought Iron

This method of restoring the finish on old furnishings of cast iron is also an excellent one for wrought iron. Use it to restore rusted and pitted cast iron that appears beyond saving. Give iron accessories a treatment every year or two.

Cleaner and Restorer

(not suitable for utensils used for cooking or serving food)

How to make:

(If you take a quart jar to your hardware store and give the recipe, the store will often prepare the mixture and you won't need to buy Japan dryer for which you will have little use.)

Combine equal parts of boiled linseed oil and gum turpentine to each quart of mixture add 2 tablespoons Japan dryer.* Soft cloths without lint.

*Japan dryer is necessary so that the mixture dries but does not become gummy and sticky (See Caution).

How to store:

Store in jar with tightly fitting screw top. LABEL.

How to use:

Brush off loose dirt from iron accessory. Saturate a soft, lintless cloth with cleaner* and wipe on the surface. Let it absorb and stand. For badly-aged iron, use more than one coat. Rust and pitting seem to disappear.

Wipe away excess cleaner and polish with soft, dry cloth.

***Caution:** Protect work surface with several layers of newspapers. If the cleaner is allowed to remain on any surface (even a sink), it dries to a varnish-like consistency and is annoying to remove. This is due to the drying action of the Japan dryer.

IVORY

Piano keys and some decorative accessories are made of ivory. Ivory yellows naturally with age and more quickly when away from light. Therefore, the keyboard of a piano or organ should be left open, and decorative pieces exhibited, not packed away.

Clean ivory accessories by dusting and, when necessary, washing with mild soapy water, rinsing and drying thoroughly. Wipe the keys of a piano with a clean, damp cloth, the long way of the key, and dry at once. When necessary, dampen cloth with soapy water (mild soap) then wipe with another cloth dampened with only water; dry at once. Clean key by key.

LAMINATED PLASTIC

Laminated plastic is sometimes used for tops of dining tables, coffee tables, end tables and other surface areas. Wood grain effects are achieved to blend with the rest of the wood of the particular piece of furniture. High style furniture often uses plain white surfaces.

Clean laminated plastic by wiping with a damp cloth or warm water and soap. Rinse and dry. Polish with dry cloth. Do not use cleansing powders. Baking soda rubbed on surface with soft damp cloth, removes most dark stains, ink marks and black lines from white laminated plastic surfaces. Rinse and dry.

Spray wax can be used if desired. Waxes, polishes and creams containing silicone will have no harmful effect. Periodic stripping of wax applications will prevent yellowing build-up.

LEATHER

Leather has been used since ancient times for seating and other furnishings surfaces. Up to a generation ago, leather was frequently used in furnishings, and much of this furniture is still used. Today, owing to the cost of hides and tanning and production, leather is a luxury material used in expensive furniture.

Never use furniture polishes, oil cleaners or varnishes on leather. Any solvents in them will make leather sticky.

If you buy leather furniture today, follow the manufacturer's instructions for care. Some manufacturers warn not to use oils of any kind, even those customarily used on leather. This is because during the tanning process sufficient oils are incorporated into the leather to last indefinitely. In addition, some manufacturers use a finish that can be damaged by anything except wiping with a damp cloth and, if a spill occurs, wiping with gentle castile soap.

Cleaning Soiled Leather

Old or New

How to make:

Bar of castile soap
Soft cloths

How to store:

Store ingredient.

How to use:

Wring out soft cloth from luke-warm water. Rub damp cloth over bar of castile soap. Rub leather briskly.
Rub leather with another damp cloth. Rub dry with dry soft cloths. This restores the gloss.

Leather Dressing to Renew Old Leather that has Dried Out

How to make:

3 parts neat's-foot oil
2 parts anhydrous lanolin
Place container holding lanolin in hot water until melted. Slowly add neat's-foot oil, stirring until blended.

How to store:

Store dressing indefinitely in jar with screw top. LABEL.

How to use:

Apply a small amount of dressing to dried leather with fingertips. Rub dressing into leather until it is completely absorbed.

MARBLE

Old or new marble has a natural beauty in furnishings. To preserve the brightness and luster of old or new marble in good condition, wash with clean cloths and fresh lukewarm water. Twice a year wash with a mild detergent to remove any residue. Waxing is not necessary for marble and is not recommended for white marble, as a yellowish tone develops in time. Marble companies make special protective sealers for those consumers wishing them.

Stains are drawn out of marble by means of poulticing. The principle of poulticing is to keep the necessary bleach or solvent moist for a long period while the stain is drawn from the marble to the poultice that absorbs it. Whiting can be mixed with the suitable cleaning agents and spread on the stain to serve as a poultice, or an absorbent white paper (blotter, paper napkins, or cleansing tissue) can be soaked in the required solution and placed on the stain. In either case, keep the poultice moist while the stain is being drawn out of the marble. This is easily done by covering it with a piece of plastic wrap material. The process may take from one to forty-eight hours, depending on the type and age of stain.

Special products have been developed for use in cleaning marble and can be purchased at special supply houses.

Poultice for Organic Stains (tea, coffee, tobacco, soft drinks, etc.)

Method 1. Whiting Poultice

How to make:

Hydrogen peroxide (hair bleach strength)
Household ammonia (clear)
Whiting
Plastic wrap material

How to store:

Do not save poultice. Mix only enough for immediate use.

How to use:

Make poultice by making a paste of hydrogen peroxide and whiting. Add few drops of ammonia. Spread paste on stains.
Cover with plastic and allow to stand several hours.
More than one application may be necessary. Rinse and dry thoroughly.

Method 2. Poultice without Whiting

How to make:

Hydrogen peroxide (hair bleach strength)
Household ammonia (clear)
Absorbent paper (blotter, paper napkin, cleansing tissue)

How to store:

Do not save poultice. Mix only enough for immediate use.

How to use:

Add a few drops of ammonia to a small amount of hydrogen peroxide. Saturate absorbent paper with mixture and place over stains.
Cover with plastic wrap sheet to keep moist. Allow to stand several hours.
More than one application may be necessary. Rinse and dry thoroughly.

Poultice for Oil Stains (butter, salad oils, etc.)

Method 1. Whiting Poultice

How to make:

Make poultice solution of equal parts of:
Amyl acetate and acetone
Household ammonia (clear)
Whiting

How to store:

Store ingredients separately. Do not save poultice. Mix only enough for immediate use.

How to use:

Wipe surface of marble with a cloth dampened with ammonia. Make paste of poultice solution and whiting. Spread paste over stain.
Cover with plastic wrap material to keep moist.
Allow to stand several hours.
More than one application may be needed.
Rinse and dry thoroughly.
If some color remains, use poultice recommended for organic stains.

Method 2. Poultice without Whiting

How to make:

Make poultice solution of equal parts of:
Amyl acetate and acetone
Household ammonia (clear)
Absorbent paper (blotter, paper napkin or cleansing tissue)

How to store:

Store ingredients separately. Do not save poultice. Mix only enough for immediate use.

How to use:

Wipe surface of marble first with a cloth dampened with ammonia. Saturate absorbent paper with poultice solution and place over stain.
Cover with plastic wrap material to keep moist.
Allow to stand several hours.
More than one application may be needed. Rinse and dry thoroughly.
If some color remains, use poultice recommended for organic stains.

Removing Rust Stains

Rust stains require a manufactured rust remover that can be purchased at special supply houses.

PEWTER

Present-Day Pewter

Contemporary pewter made today is lead free and so does not darken as antique pewter does. (Both kinds are made today.) Care and polishing of contemporary pewter is simple. Wash accessory in hot, soapy water; rinse and dry. Polish by rubbing in one direction. As with all metal accessories, store so that the sides of vase or bowl are not rubbing against another hard surface. Otherwise, scratches may show on the surface.

Antique Pewter

Antique pewter contains lead and this is what darkens and adds to its charm. However, some tarnish should be removed. If you use a commercial cleaner, use silver polish or a specially made polish for pewter. After cleaning, wash in hot, soapy water; rinse with hot water and dry by rubbing in one direction.

Cleaner for Heavily Tarnished Pewter

How to make:

Boiled linseed oil
Fine whiting
0000 steel wool

How to store:

Store ingredients separately.
Make only enough for immediate use.

How to use:

Make a paste of whiting and boiled linseed oil. Dip small piece 0000 steel wool into paste and rub pewter in one direction.
When as much tarnish as can be is removed, polish.

Polish for Dull Finish

How to make:

Rottenstone
Boiled linseed oil
Soft cloths

How to store:

Store ingredients separately.
Make only enough for immediate use.

How to use:

Make a paste of rottenstone and boiled linseed oil. Dip soft cloth into paste and rub over pewter. Rub in one direction.
When clean, wash in hot, soapy water; rinse, dry and polish.

Polish for Bright Finish

How to make:

Fine whiting
Denatured alcohol solvent
Soft cloths

How to store:

Store ingredients separately.
Make only enough for immediate use.

How to use:

Make a paste of whiting and denatured alcohol solvent. Dip soft cloth into paste and rub on pewter. Rub in one direction.
When clean, wash in hot, soapy water; rinse with hot water, dry and polish.

REED, CANE & WICKER

These are natural materials and can be cleaned with the vacuum brush attachment. If badly soiled, wash with mild soap and lukewarm water; rinse with clear water. Dry by absorbing excess moisture with dry cloths. Do not wet wooden parts of furniture.

Outdoor wicker furniture can be washed with mild soap and warm water, rinsed by using watering hose and dried on a dry, windy day.

SILVER

Plated or Sterling

Commercially-prepared polishes in liquid, powder or paste form are readily available. Through recent research, a tarnish preventative silver polish has been developed. Many silversmith companies recommend and some produce such products. Follow instructions given for using tarnish preventative polishes.

There is a method of silver cleaning known as electrolytic cleaning or electrolysis. However, most silversmiths do not recommend it, nor does the author. While the method removes tarnish, it also kills the depth of pattern and luster of silver. The method is omitted from this booklet.

Cleaner for Sterling or Plated Silver

How to make:

3 parts fine whiting
1 part either household ammonia (clear) or denatured alcohol solvent.
Soft cloths — flannel or chamois.

How to store:

Store dry whiting in labeled, covered jar. Make only enough paste for use at one time.

How to use:

Wash silver in hot soap suds.
Make a paste of whiting and either ammonia or alcohol.
Dampen a cloth and dip into paste.
Rub the polish on silver with straight, even strokes (not cross-wise or in circular motion).
Rub with another soft cloth until silver is clean and bright.
Wash silver in hot suds to remove all cleaning materials.
Rinse and dry.

SLATE

Slate is occasionally used, particularly in contemporary designs, as an insert in a coffee table, tray or other furnishing. In addition to its decorative purposes, slate is often used for a built-in trivet or hot pad. Wash and dry slate when it becomes soiled or spotted. Do not wax slate if used for hot dish server.

To Polish Slate

How to make:

Boiled linseed oil
Soft, lintless cloth

How to store:

Store ingredient

How to use:

Rub a small amount of boiled linseed oil over the clean slate.
Rub briskly with fingers or soft cloth.
Wipe off excess boiled linseed oil with soft cloth.
Polish with soft cloth.

STAINLESS STEEL

Some parts of contemporary furniture have stainless steel finish. One reason for using it is ease of upkeep. Stainless steel, properly cared for, requires only dusting and occasionally wiping with a soft, damp cloth. When necessary, wash with hot soapy (mild soap or detergent) water, rinse and dry with soft cloth. Do not use abrasives. If the stainless steel has been badly neglected and dirt has hardened on the surface, dip a soft dampened cloth into fine whiting and rub dirt away carefully. Then wash, rinse and dry.

TIN

Tin is a thin coating over iron or steel. Decorative tinware is imported today and many of the old utensils such as candle molds that are today used as decorative pieces were made of tin. Old tin may be worn or corroded, but it can be cleaned and waxed for decorative purposes. Use a hard wax (See page 14). Wash tin in hot soapy water, rinse well and dry thoroughly to prevent rust.

Remover for Rust

How to make:

Raw potato
Whiting

How to store:

Store ingredients in labeled covered jar.

How to use:

Cut raw potato, dip in whiting and rub over rusted spots.
When rust is removed, wash in hot, soapy water, rinse well and dry thoroughly.

WOOD

Care for wood according to its finish. Don't wax an oiled finish nor use furniture polish on a waxed finish. Plastic finishes need neither oil nor wax. Quality wood furniture that you buy will include a care tag. Save it and follow instructions as given by the manufacturer. Here are some major kinds of wood finishes of old and new furniture:

Varnish, shellac and lacquer finishes. These surface finishes protect and enrich. Colored, they mask the grain of the wood; clear, they expose it. Clean with cleanser-conditioner taking recommended precaution for shellac.

Care possibilities: Polish, using furniture polish as directed.

or

Wax, using paste wax as directed.

Dust using dustless dust cloth or soft lintless cloth.

Penetrating wood sealer with oil base. (This is a finish you will have if you have learned to refinish furniture through Cooperative Extension classes.) Furniture can be cleaned with cleanser-conditioner when necessary. No polish or wax is needed. Dust using dustless dust cloth or soft lintless cloth.

Oil finish. Much old furniture and much of the better contemporary styled furniture pieces imported and American-produced have already been given an oil finish. These furnishings can be cleaned with the cleaner-conditioner when necessary, Use *boiled* linseed oil or the especially refined linseed oil provided by some of the Scandinavian furniture manufacturers. Oil as instructed by the manufacturer, or follow recommendations given here. *Do not* use wax or furniture polish. Dust using dustless cloth or soft lintless cloth.

Plastic finishes are not wood, but are actually thin plastic sheets laminated to the tops of tables and chests. For explanation of care, see Laminated Plastic.

Silicone-type furniture polishes and waxes have been on the market for many years, and today at least eighty percent of the liquid and pressure-packaged wax and polish contains silicones.

You will seldom find silicone listed on the label. Silicones give a high gloss, aid in easy spreading and repel water to protect the finish. The problem they can cause is that if silicone-type polishes penetrate the wood through cracks and scratches in the finish, difficulty can be encountered should the furniture need to be refinished, because silicones are relatively inert and are unaffected by ordinary solvents. To determine whether silicone is present, discuss the product with a reputable dealer or write the manufacturer. There are several commercial polishes that do not contain silicone.

Cleaning Wood

Cleanser-Conditioner

How to make:

Combine:

1 part gum turpentine

3 parts boiled linseed oil

How to store:

Store in covered jar. Label

Will keep indefinitely

How to use:

Heat water and pour into small container.

Shake cleanser-conditioner and pour enough to cover surface of water. **DO NOT STIR.**

With clean, dry cloth, skim along warmed oily layer floating on surface of hot water.

Do not dip into water.

Rub small area of wood.*

For greasy build-up use 0000 steel wool as you did cloth.

Wipe clean surface with damp cloth.

Discard mixture in cup when cold. **DO NOT REHEAT.** It is flammable and will become gummy.

*Shellac finish is easily damaged, so use cleanser-conditioner sparingly on shellac. To find out if finish is shellac, sponge a spot on the underside of furniture with denatured alcohol solvent. Finish will soften and come off if it is shellac.

Care of Wood

Furniture Polish

How to make:

Mix equal parts of:

Lemon juice, freshly squeezed and strained
Olive oil
Denatured alcohol solvent
Gum turpentine

How to store:

Store in tightly-covered container. Label. Will keep indefinitely.

How to use:

(Before polishing furniture, first dust with dustless cloth.)
Shake mixture in container.
Pour small amount on soft cloth. Rub on surface.
Polish with dry cloth. Wool makes a good polishing cloth.

Dustless Dust Cloth for Oil Finishes

How to make:

Place:

1 teaspoon boiled linseed oil
2 tablespoons gum turpentine
2 tablespoons warm water

In:

Screw top glass jar with cover (Pint sized).

Add:

Soft lintless cloths (3 or 4 18-inch square) such as cheese-cloth. Pack loosely into jar. Cover tightly, turn upside down and leave overnight.

How to store:

Store in the glass jar with screw top lightly on. Cloth can be used for several months. Label.

How to use:

Remove dustless dust cloth from jar and wipe lightly over furniture. Treated cloth attracts and holds dust somewhat like a magnet.*
Replace in jar when finished.

* If cloth seems dry, add a few drops of warm water before storing.

Upkeep of Oiled Finish

Method 1. (Use yearly or more often if necessary.)

How to make:

Mix 2/3 boiled linseed oil and 1/3 gum turpentine.
Soft lintless cloth

How to store:

Store mixture in screw top jar with tight cover. Label. Destroy oily rags immediately. Do not leave in the house or any building.

How to use:

Apply mixture with soft cloth rather generously.
Rub into wood with another soft dry cloth. Rub hard.
Wipe surface absolutely dry using several soft dry cloths. Surface oil left on the wood becomes sticky and attracts dusts, and gums the surface.

Method 2. (Use yearly or more often if necessary.)

How to make:

Boiled linseed oil
Soft lintless cloths (several needed)

How to store:

Destroy oily rags immediately.

How to use:

Same as for Method 1, except that harder rubbing is required when boiled linseed oil is used alone.
This method is included because some furniture manufacturers recommend it for their oil finish furniture.

Waxed Surfaces

Wax forms a protective coating for furniture finishes of varnish, lacquer, shellac and several layers are often built up on table tops and other furniture tops that may have heavy use. Wax gives protection, also, to painted furniture. If you have refinished furniture with a penetrating sealer, wax is not necessary. If the furniture has an oiled finish, wax should not be used.

Paste wax is recommended by wax manufacturers for antique furniture, and can be obtained in light or dark shades suitable for light and dark tone woods. Carnauba wax is a harder wax than beeswax. Check label on the jar. Some companies list carnauba as the wax ingredient. Follow manufacturer's directions for applying and buffing paste wax.

To help you be a competent consumer who knows the basic ingredients, here is a recipe for homemade furniture wax.

Paste Wax for Wood Furniture

How to make:

½ pound pure beeswax (For thinner wax use ¼ pound.)
1 pint gum turpentine
Boiled linseed oil
Color in oil (either burnt umber or ivory black)
Melt beeswax in double boiler. When slightly cool, add gum turpentine. Stir mixture until it is a thick batter. Add a small amount of boiled linseed oil to make the wax waterproof. Work in a small amount of burnt umber color in oil for brown tone furniture. Work in a small amount of ivory black color in oil for darker woods.

How to store:

Store in jar with tight-fitting screw top.

How to use:

Remove any old wax and dirt by washing the furniture with a cloth dampened with gum turpentine. Allow surface to dry overnight.
Work in a warm room. Place a small amount of wax between several layers of cheesecloth. Apply using circular motion to spread wax. Polish before wax has hardened so that the surface will have an even polish and not be streaked. Polish with the grain of the wood, using a wool cloth. Use a brisk motion in polishing. Several thin layers of wax give protection.
Dust furniture before applying other coats of wax.

Dustless Dust Cloth for Waxed Furniture

How to make:

1 tablespoon boiled linseed oil and 1 quart warm water
Three or four 18-inch square soft lintless cloths such as cheesecloth
1 pint jar with screw top. Dip dampened lintless cloths into mixture of boiled linseed oil and warm water. Wring out dry. Hang up and dry thoroughly.

How to store:

Store dry in tightly-covered jar or can. Label.

How to use:

Dust furniture with dry dustless dust cloth *made for waxed surfaces*.
The dry treated cloth serves as a magnet to hold dust.
When cloths become soiled, wash and repeat.

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