

# SOLID WOOD WORKTOPS

## CUSTOMER CARE RECOMMENDATIONS - IMPORTANT- PLEASE PASS THIS SHEET TO CUSTOMER.

Wood is a natural product and each specie will have very different qualities. Wood can be affected by heat, humidity and water.

### Oiling.

Worktops should be oiled every three months, except beech that requires oiling monthly. Apply a generous coat of oil with a clean, lint free cloth and pay particular attention to exposed end grain and areas near your sink, cooker and hob. A worktop needs re-oiling when water smudges rather than forming well defined droplets.

### Rough Areas

It is normal for wooden worktops to feel rough in the first few weeks after installation. The cause of any rough areas is the grain lifting; the fine fibres of the wood swelling from the application of oil and then setting. If this occurs the tops require light sanding with fine sandpaper until a very smooth finish is achieved and then a light coat of oil. The sanding should only be required for the first week and may only be required on patches of the surface.

### Timber Movement

Being a living, natural product wooden worktops will react to the ambient climate conditions throughout the year. During the cooler and wetter months timber will pick up some of the atmospheric moisture and slightly swell. This is completely normal and as the product grows with age will reduce as long as they are regularly maintained. In the summer and hotter months the timber will dry slightly and could shrink slightly. As your kitchen fitter will have fitted the worktops to allow for this movement no real problems should occur.

### Colour Changes

Solid wood worktops will change in colour, some species reacting to the change much more quickly than others. This oxidisation process happens to all timbers and is natural. The first couple of sealing coats of oil will start the darkening process but the timber will still be much paler than when they start to 'mature' in colour after a year or so. The oiling process and exposure to natural light causes a reaction within the timber and the natural colour genes start to mature bringing, after some months, a more natural looking product. This process cannot be hastened in any way, although worktops in a south facing kitchen will react to the sunlight more than worktops in a north facing room or one with little light.

## Heat

Wood is a very resilient surface but it is sensible to take precautions against possible problems. Pots and pans taken from a hot oven or from the hob should always be placed on a trivet and NEVER directly onto the worktop! It is also a good idea to use a trivet for the kettle allowing air to circulate underneath an area that will be hot, damp and humid.

## Wet Areas

Water causes wood to swell! All timber worktops are suitable for use in sink areas although their performance is strongly related to correct installation and subsequent aftercare. Carry out the oiling procedure as recommended above and remember, Beech worktops must be oiled monthly, especially in wet areas. Do not leave standing water on the worktop for long periods of time but wipe the surface dry as soon as possible and pay particular attention in areas of the sink and kettle.

Remember, by the time the worktop is installed in your kitchen the timber can be up to 100 years old. We have become a 'throw away' society mainly because a lot of the things we buy cannot survive due to built in obsolescence. With ever increasing environmental pressures, timber allows us to move in the right direction of longer lived products. Correctly looked after your worktop will give many years of reliable service as well as being a warm, natural and attractive enhancement to your kitchen.