

# Wood Care & Maintenance Guide

Must-read  
wood care  
guide



**SILVA**  
TIMBER PRODUCTS



# Getting the best from your exterior wood

Congratulations! By ordering wood care products you've taken an important step in ensuring your wood is protected from the elements.

This guide breaks down the wood protection routine into three stages - Preparation, Application and Maintenance.

## 1 Preparation - Sanding

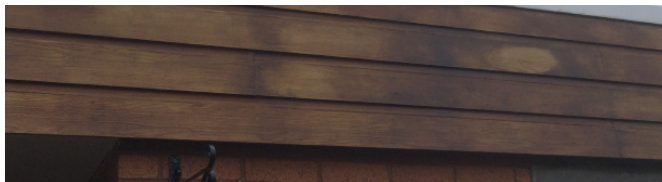
The secret to a perfect finish is to sand the surface prior to coating to open the wood grain. Sanding allows more stain to penetrate into the wood, providing an even, consistent and long-lasting finish. Studies have proven that sanding can extend the life of a coating by up to three times compared to a smooth non-sanded surface.

### Remove mill glaze

Mill glaze occurs when heat from the planing and kiln drying processes causes a glaze-like coating to form. Mill glaze can be removed by sanding to open up the wood surface so the coating will penetrate more readily.

### Create an even surface

Sanding removes any minor differences in level and surface texture that may not be immediately visible. Sanding creates a smooth flat surface that allows the stain to penetrate evenly, prevents dirt and moisture accumulation and allows for even wear.



*Example of a patchy coating where the timber was not sanded prior to coating application.*

## 1 Preparation - Mixing

### 'Agitating' the coating

The organic compounds within the coating may separate if left to rest over a period of time. This can leave active deposits at the base of the tin which need to be thoroughly mixed in to obtain optimal results. Before applying, ensure you agitate the contents at the base of the tin with a drill mixer, or a broad stick of approximately 25-50mm. Mix in a random motion rather than circular to mix in as much of the contents as possible - the longer you spend mixing, the better the end result so it is worth the extra elbow-grease!



Colour of coating before mixing



Settled deposits at bottom of the tin



Coating should be smooth in consistency

### Combine all containers together

Manufacturers recommend blending tins together for multi-tin jobs to ensure colour consistency. Use a larger container and decant unused coating back into tins to store for future maintenance.



### Sanding tips

For the best results it is recommended to use a random orbital sander with 60 grit sandpaper.

## Deeper penetration of coatings

Along with removing mill glaze, excess fibre and uneven surfaces, sanding opens up the pores, allowing coatings to penetrate deeper into the cell structure of the wood.

## 2 Application

### Using the correct brush

Brush size is always down to personal preference but we find a 2 inch (50mm) brush is the most effective for applying to wood as it provides you with more control than a wider brush.

For water based stains always use a quality synthetic brush. This allows for a better uptake of the coating and flow when applying. Oil based stains can be applied using either a synthetic or natural bristled brush.

Always resist the temptation to buy low-cost brushes. It is better to buy one really good brush and look after it than a set of low-quality budget brushes.

### Applying the coating

Generally the application of the coating is the simplest part of the finishing process, and also the most rewarding.

The recommended application can vary depending on your chosen coating. For best results always read and follow the manufacturer's instructions and product data sheets.

Silva Timber hold further technical data information on all our wood care products at [www.silvatimber.co.uk](http://www.silvatimber.co.uk).

### Coating all sides

For new applications it is recommended to coat all sides for maximum protection. Any area which could allow moisture ingress should be coated to form a protective layer.

Exposed end grain or fresh cuts are particularly prone to moisture ingress and should be adequately protected with wood coatings or an end grain wax sealer.

## 3 Maintenance

### Look after your project

Regular brushing and occasional washing away of leaves, soil or debris will keep your wood surface clean and defend against algae growth.

Cleaning also provides a good opportunity to inspect the coating. Any areas which are seen to be discoloured, scratched or failing should be dealt with quickly to avoid any further performance issues.

### How long will it last?

This is a difficult question to answer as there are so many factors to take into consideration. The design and orientation of the building, wood species, preparation taken, exposure to sunlight, exposure, foot traffic, general cleaning and how translucent the finish is, among other variables, will all influence the life of the coating.

Typical Maintenance Cycles:  
Clear finish - 9-18 months  
Semi transparent finish - 3-6 years  
Opaque finish - 10-15 years

Maintenance life cycles are detailed on the product tin and at [www.silvatimber.co.uk](http://www.silvatimber.co.uk) but it is always advisable to regularly inspect your application on a seasonal basis.





The document should be seen as a general guide for best practice. Approaches to application can vary from brand to brand so we always recommend reading the manufacturer's instructions as well.

Our website - [www.silvatimber.co.uk](http://www.silvatimber.co.uk) contains detailed, product specific information on all our wood care range, including:

- Technical Data Sheets
- Material Safety Data Sheets
- Maintenance Advice
- Application Guidelines
- Application Videos

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