

Teak Wood Outdoor Furniture

Buying teak outdoor furniture should be a long term investment with the need for little or no maintenance. Only Grade A teak from sustainable sources should be used because of its high durability and good looks.

What is Teak?

Teak is a tropical hardwood tree native to Southeast Asia and India. Growing vertically and straight, it can reach heights of up to 130 feet. Teak wood is known for having a high oil content, which protects the wood from both water damage and insects. Due to the density and protective oils of teak wood, this furniture can last for a lifetime if the right grade is used.



There are 3 grades of teak wood: A, B, and C. They represent mature heartwood, immature heartwood, and sapwood. Mature heartwood is of course the highest quality wood, while sapwood is the lowest quality. Let's now look at each grade in detail

Grade A Teak

Grade A teak refers to the mature heartwood of a teak tree. In order to harvest mature heartwood, a teak tree needs to be about 20 years old or more. This is the timber that comes from the very centre of the trunk of the tree. Grade A teak is rich with natural oil and should feel slightly oily to the touch. It should have a warm golden colour when new, similar to that of honey. The wood grains will be very close together as this is the densest part of the tree.

For production of furniture it is important that the moisture content of the wood is between 12% and 18% and so it has to be dried, sometimes in kilns. Grade A teak is the best wood for your furniture to be made from.



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Extremely strong, durable and most importantly of all, it is naturally resistant to outdoor elements including rain, UV light, rapid temperature changes and wood eating insects. Even if it is left outdoors all year round without any protection whatsoever, teak garden furniture remains unaffected when it comes to both beauty and durability.

Real Grade A teak furniture will last a lifetime without needing any special treatments but should still be cleaned yearly. With time the colour will change to a silvery grey. If you want to keep the colour fresher, then go ahead and apply a sealer or protector after cleaning.

When a teak tree is harvested, less than a quarter of the available wood will be Grade A, so this makes it relatively expensive. When buying teak furniture, you are paying for quality. If some supposedly "Grade A" teak furniture seems priced ridiculously cheaply, there is a possibility that you are being misled.



Grade B Teak

Grade B teak refers to the immature heartwood, which is found in between the mature heartwood and the outer sapwood. The grain of Grade B teak will not be as uniform or as dense as that of Grade A teak and will also not contain as much oil. Consequently it will appear duller than that of the glossier Grade A wood. Furniture made from Grade B teak will not be as strong or resilient as that made from grade A and will have a much shorter life

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span. It will require regular maintenance. Furniture made from Grade B teak should be noticeably cheaper than items made from Grade A.

Grade C Teak

Grade C teak is an inferior quality teak wood. It refers to timber from the outer sections of a mature log (sapwood) and logs of immature trees. Grade C teak contains virtually no teak natural protective oils, has a very uneven colour and is easily damaged because it is very soft. Furniture that is made from grade C teak is even considered unsuitable for indoor use due to its softness that makes it highly susceptible to damage. Although it is taken from the very same tree species, grade C teak has no similarity to the highest quality teak neither in regard to outdoor performance, beauty or durability. This furniture is relatively inexpensive but it has a very short lifespan even if it is treated with protective coating or periodically oiled. It is not good for making furniture, because it is almost guaranteed to form splits and become warped in a relatively short amount of time. It is inexpensive and so some unscrupulous sellers may try to pass off Grade C teak as Grade A teak, so please don't be fooled!



Beware of cheap imitations!

Please note that grade B and C teak garden furniture is sometimes chemically treated to make it look as if it would be made from the highest quality timber. It can be recognised by a darker colour but most people can't really see the difference between the two, unless seen next to each other.

Grade C Teak before chemical/colour treatment

