FURNITURE CARE AND MAINTENANCE

To ensure optimum durability of the furniture, the individual provider's advice on the use, care and maintenance of furniture and various furniture materials must be followed!

GENERALLY ABOUT FURNITURE CARE AND MAINTENANCE

Normal degradation over time - appearance change and decay - especially of fabrics and leathers, as a result of wear and tear, will is expected on all furniture. If a new piece of furniture unexpectedly has a deficiency, you as the buyer should within a reasonable time after you have discovered the defect - or should have discovered it, inform the retailer that you want to complain about the defect.

For the furniture to look good as long as possible, it is important that you take good care of it. Remember that neither furniture leather or upholstery fabrics are self-cleaning and maintenance-free and is affected by the outer skin, hair, acidic sweat and smearing of jeans. In addition, the spilling also makes messes that must be treated immediately.

Sofas and chairs are the furniture that is most used. Therefore it is important to have knowledge about furniture leather and furniture textiles' qualities, in order to know how these will best be maintained and cleaned. However, you must calculate the normal wear/degradation over time.

The maintenance guidance below describes recommendations for dusting, cleaning and stain removal for furniture textile, leather, wood and some other common furniture surfaces. For guidance on care/maintenance of new furniture, contact the store/vendor who sold the furniture or producer.

FURNITURE TEXTILES

GENERALLY ABOUT FURNITURE TEXTILES

Dirt and dust that remains in the fabric helps to break down the fabric fibers and contributes greatly to shorten the life of the fabric. Regular (weekly) vacuuming with a soft brush inhibits degradation and is essential for the textile to achieve longevity. Important maintenance factors are: 1) main cleaning, 2) stain removal, 3) control of color fastness and precautions for upholstery fabrics.

MAINTENANCE FACTORS

1. Main cleaning: Begin to clean the fabric as soon as you see that regular vacuuming and dusting is no longer enough. For the main cleaning foaming cleaner is recommended. Contact the furniture retailer for guidance. How frequently this should be done depends on the furniture usage, but the parts of the furniture that comes in contact with the skin should be cleaned at least once every three months.

2. Stain removal: When an accident happens, it is important to remove the spill/stain as quickly as possible. A new spot can be easier to remove than old. If you get a stain that you are unsure of how to remove, you should contact the furniture retailer. For removal of stains you should avoid common household cleaners because many of them are too harsh for the fabric, and ALL other products containing solvents or oil, as they can damage fabrics.

3. Control of color fastness: By main cleaning and stain removal, you should always check that the fabric dyes can withstand the detergent you use. Test the detergent first on an invisible spot. Leave to dry and check the result.
   - Natural fiber - fabrics made of natural fibers such as cotton, linen, wool or the artificial rayon are very comfortable because they breathe and absorb perspiration. These textiles are hydrophilic - draws and absorbs water and anything that contains water. The fibers are also oleophilic - absorbing oil and grease, e.g. fatty acids from sweat.
   - Synthetic fibers - fabrics made of synthetic fibers such as polyester, polyamide, acrylic, has outstanding mechanical resistance. These fabrics are hydrophobic - repels water and other liquids. Stains from spilled liquids and water-based products are not absorbed by the fibers, and these spots are thus easier to remove. The fibers are however oleophilic - attracts oil and grease.
   - Mixing fibers - fabrics made of mixed fibers - different combinations of natural, artificial and synthetic fibers, are highly resistant to stains and superb comfort.

4. Precautions for upholstery fabrics: The main considerations you should take for your furniture: Cleaning, lightfastness, avoid injuries, furniture fabric's lifetime and pets.
   - Lightfastness - A lot of furniture is destroyed unnecessarily by the interaction of sunlight. Remember that all exposure to light will weaken both the fibers and dyes in textiles. Although the furniture textiles are tested and approved for lightfastness, is should be located so that direct sunlight and sharp reflexes are avoided. Shades or blinds are recommended, but be also aware that not all fabrics in blinds or curtains stop harmful UV rays. It is important to remember that the sun shines into the room even when we are not present! Especially the "low" sun at our latitude goes far into the room - all day. If you are going away for a longer while, the furniture should be covered specifically. Ask your furniture retailer how to best protect your furniture so they do not degrade unnecessarily by sunlight.
   - How to avoid damage to furniture fabrics - Clothing with extremely rough seams or sharp details like rivets, or belts with metal fittings, increases wear and can pull out threads. Denim - particularly new, and clothing with excess dye, can cause discoloration. Objects or tools in pockets can damage the upholstery fabric.
   - Fabric lifetime - Lack of care and maintenance reduces fabric life. If the furniture is used extremely much every day, it is recommended with covers and protective sleeves (this can be ordered for most furniture).
   - Pets - Pets and upholstered furniture do not mix. Hair, nails and scraping tugs hard on the fabric. Four-legged family members should be in their basket, not in the furniture.

FURNITURE LEATHER

GENERALLY ABOUT FURNITURE LEATHER

Contractor’s advice on the use, care and maintenance of leather furniture should always be followed, because it is the individual dealer, furniture manufacturer and supplier of the skin that can vouch for what each product can withstand and requires.

LEATHER - A NATURAL PRODUCT

Furniture leather is made from the hides of cattle. As is natural, there may be scars, insect bites, color variations, etc. How much of these natural markings that shows on the furniture skin depends on various factors, a.o. what treatment the surface of the skin gets. Furniture leather will often change appearance after prolonged use. This kind of patina the leather furniture buyer should learn to appreciate.

THE DIFFERENT QUALITIES/TYPES OF FURNITURE LEATHER

Leather that is used for furniture today is usually of cattle - cow, bull or buffalo. Most are from cow because access to such skin is relatively stable, and the size and characteristics make cowhide...
suitable. There are many steps in the process from the slaughter of animals until the leather is on the furniture. For tanneries that supply furniture leather, it is important to know what your customers (furniture manufacturer) want of such quality and finish. Prices vary widely, depending on the quality class or sort and wanted features.

- **Aniline leather** - aniline dyed skin gets sorted out early in the process and these leathers have hardly been processed by tanning. Narva is original, and insect bites and marks of wounds will appear on this type of skin. Sometimes aniline leather gets a thin color pigment or finish layer over the basic color. These skins are very soft and comfortable, they have kept breathing ability and is considered to be the "best" quality. Aniline leather is just a small part of the total production in a tannery and the price is very high. Color selection is usually not set by furniture manufacturers, they have to choose from the selection the tannery offers.
- **Semi-aniline leather** is slightly more processed than aniline dyed skin, and is a cross between aniline leather and corrected skin. A bit more color has been used and furniture manufacturers can increasingly determine the colors.
- **Corrected leathers** are the most affordable and most processed. Here, furniture manufacturers order exactly the color tint they want, from completely black to white. Due to the surface treatment, such hides do not have the same breathability as aniline leather.

**PRECAUTIONS FOR FURNITURE LEATHER:**

1. Especially armrests and neck pillows are exposed to grease and sweat resulting in dark spots, and over time break down furniture leather.
2. Chemicals from e.g. hair gel and hand creams can cause similar damage.
3. All dust and dirt from clothing, for example, will damage furniture if not removed.
4. Pets do absolutely not belong in/on the furniture!
5. Sunlight will cause fading and drying out the leather upholstery. Influence from other heat sources will lead to the risk of dehydration and color changes on e.g. light leather (avoid placing a laptop with hot battery directly on furniture leather).
6. The use of covers, blankets and sofa cushions, is a good help to prevent injuries.

**GENERALLY ABOUT MAINTENANCE OF FURNITURE LEATHER**

It is important to follow the vendor’s advice on the use, care and maintenance of leather furniture, and it is important to know the quality of the current furniture skin. Care instructions attached to the furniture should always be followed - most furniture manufacturers submit their own product information with each piece of furniture.

**STAIN REMOVAL AND CLEANSING OF FURNITURE LEATHER:**

1. Water soluble stains should be washed off immediately with a clean, white, soft cloth or sponge wrung out in lukewarm water (boiled water).
2. Regular cleaning and dust removal should be done frequently by vacuuming with a soft brush and dusting with a clean, white, damp cloth.
3. Do not use chemicals on the leather. When in need for stain removal, treatment and more, contact the furniture store that can provide guidance in your situation.
4. Leather furniture thrive best if they are protected from sunlight, drying out and heat.

**WOOD AND SURFACES**

**GENERALLY ABOUT WOOD AND SURFACES**

Wood requires care and maintenance to retain its uniqueness and character. Especially untreated wood is sensitive and should be periodically cleaned and processed. Furniture in solid wood is not recommended in direct sunlight, near heat sources or in rooms where the climate swings. This may result in stresses in the glued connections and in furniture plates which again can result in cracks.

**MAINTENANCE AND CLEANING OF DIFFERENT SURFACES**

- **Untreated wood:**
  - Wash with water and soap. For stains that does not come off with soap water use a scrub/brush. Always scrub in the wood’s longitudinal direction. Rinse off all soap and dry well. Do not hang sheets or put objects on the table until the surface is completely dry.
- **Lacquered and painted wood surfaces:**
  - These have a strong, smooth and usually water repellent finish with normal use and cleaning. Wipe clean with a damp cloth. Solvents should not be used.
- **Waxed wooden surfaces:**
  - Hard wax can almost be compared to coated surfaces, while the soft waxes in quality is comparable with oiled surfaces. The surface is easy to clean but not particularly resistant. Clean carefully with small damp cloth and should be treated according to the descriptions producer and supplier provide guidelines on.
  - **Oiled wooden furniture:**
    - Has a slightly fatter surface that is more susceptible to dirt and liquids than other treated surfaces. So you need to wash and treat these often. Clean with caution and should be treated with furniture oil the manufacturer or furniture shop recommends. Do not hang sheets or put objects on the table until the surface is completely dry.

**POWDER-COATED FINISH (STEEL, MDF,等.)**

The surface can be somewhat different, depending on how the customer wants it. Powder coated surfaces can be categorized as strong against wear. The cleaning is carried out with a damp cloth. Stain removal is done with a common cleaning detergent and in certain cases white spirit.

- **Steel surfaces:**
  - As a general rule, use a soft cloth for daily cleaning. To protect surface and simplify cleaning, apply a thin layer of wax added silicone.
- **Plastic surfaces:**
  - Plastics have different properties depending on which applications they should cover. Cleaning is best done with a cloth soaked in lukewarm water with small amounts of detergent. For stain removal, use a stronger dose of detergent (see also the supplier/manufacturer’s instructions).
- **Furniture with mounting brackets:**
  - Indoor climate varies with the seasons. The driest is in late winter when we heat and the most humid in autumn. Wool is hygroscopic - absorbs and releases moisture depending on the climate, and shrinks and swells in response to changes in climate. This can make the furniture that is assembled with mounting brackets somewhat wobbly in dry periods. Therefore go over the mounting brackets and tighten them if necessary.

**Source:** Mobelfakta.no