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Notes on Care

“Furniture should be lived with and not considered something overly precious. There is nothing quite so uninteresting as a shining unmarred surface that looks as if it were never used” ---- George Nakashima

A good oil finish is one that is built up over the years. Initially, there is a “breaking in” period of 45 days that is required to allow an oil finish to fully cure. As spotting may occur during this period, we recommend that you take extra good care of your new piece by cleaning it after each use with a lightly dampened cloth. The light water spots can be removed by rubbing with 4/0 steel wool in the same direction as the grain and blending off the edges before applying a coat of mineral oil. Small dents and scratches, if objectionable, can be removed by soaking with water a piece of paper towel and leaving on the damaged area until the fibers swell to more or less the original state. The spot remaining can be treated as above.

For ordinary care of your new Nakashima piece, we recommend using mineral oil at least once a year. Put a small amount of mineral oil on a cotton cloth and wipe the piece down, leaving a light film of oil. Allow the mineral oil to remain on the surface for several hours and then wipe it off with a clean cotton cloth. Please note that mineral oil is not a finish, but is only used to keep your oil finish looking clean and shiny.

If your piece is looking dry and worn after several years of heavy use, it may be time to renew your oil finish. If you wish to try this yourself, we recommend using Sutherland Welles Tung Oil Wiping Varnish / High Luster, making sure it is applied in a well-ventilated location. To prepare the surface, fully buff with 4/0 steel wool, apply a coat of the Sutherland Welles Wiping Varnish and allow it to remain on the surface for about 3-5 minutes. It should then be wiped off with a clean cotton cloth so that no film remains and allowed to dry at least 24 hours. As spontaneous combustion may occur, please dispose of oily rags per the oil’s safety instructions!

For our bread-boards, we recommend buffing with 4/0 steel wool and then wiping lightly with mineral oil. The mineral oil should sit for a couple of hours and then be wiped dry with a clean cotton cloth. After a few years of use, if the bread-board has scratches and looks dry, it can be sanded in the direction of the grain with #220 sand-paper. Once sanded, we recommend two applications of H. Behlen Salad Bowl Finish Clear B6030015 varnish, a non-toxic, food-friendly finish. Wipe the finish on with a clean cotton cloth, allow the first coat to dry for 24 hours and buff with #0000 steel wool. For the second coat of oil, repeat the application, wipe dry with a clean cotton cloth and allow to dry 72 hours prior to use.

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