

DeepStream Designs

www.DeepStreamDesigns.com

Mariner Planter Care Instructions

Your planters are built with marine-anodized aluminum legs and solid Jatoba, Lyptus, Cumaru, or Ipe wood planks and stainless steel fasteners using dielectric anti-corrosion paste that prevents galvanic action between the stainless steel and the aluminum. HDPE feet isolate the leg from water while the recycled plastic commercial grade liner isolates the wood from water and dirt.

The wood has been finished with Thompson's WaterSeal Waterproofer Plus Clear Wood Protector, which darkens the wood minimally while adding protective oils and UV inhibitors to repel water and slow fading from the sun. Just as with teak, these woods will go "grey" in time if not repeatedly waterproofed, and the planks will take on a more uniform appearance.

We use Thompson's as it has relatively low VOC and can be used indoors at our shop safely. There are many other, longer-lasting oil based waterproofing materials that we cannot use indoors. This link will take you to one internet source that ranks some wood finishes: <http://www.deckstainhelp.com/what-is-the-best-deck-stain/>

To renew the finish, let the wood dry after washing with plain soap and water before reapplying the same Thompson's finish, or another waterproofer of your choice, with a clean rag. After waterproofing the wood, wipe the leg down with alcohol, mineral spirits or MEK to remove excess waterproofing.

The whole process only takes about 10 minutes. **Afterwards, be sure to dispose of used rags per the package instructions to prevent spontaneous combustion.**

NEVER USE VARNISH OR POLYURETHANE to refinish the wood.

See [Wood Finish Options](#) to find out more.

If you wish to renew the natural color of the wood after it has faded and gone grey you will need to remove the outer layer of wood without damaging the aluminum legs. For more information see:

[Refinishing: Pressure Washing](#)

[Refinishing: Sanding](#)

Pressure washing should be done sparingly as it is more destructive than sanding as it removes more than soft wood the hard wood leaving a raised grain to catch more dirt.

To clean the ALUMINUM **do NOT use acids**, including vinegar, **caustic agents** such as ammonia, **or abrasives** such as Soft Scrub or Comet. **Also avoid contact with de-icing chemicals.** Just mild dish soap and water, or products such as Simple Green, Formula 409, etc. will clean the aluminum as well as the wood. If you get sealer, paint, markers, or the like on the legs, MEK on a clean rag is the best solvent for heavy duty clean up. Wear gloves when applying MEK. Mineral spirits are also safe to use. (more >)

NOTE: Water may wash out red color from the wood for the first few weeks, leaving stains on the deck below. Phosphoric acid will remove these stains easily from pavers, cement, and porcelain tile, but will quickly eat into the anodizing on the aluminum legs. We recommend that you move the planters first, if possible, and use care. Use MEK early and often in the initial months to prevent stains on the aluminum.

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Wood Finish Options

Tropical hardwoods are photo-reactive, meaning they change color in the sun, first darkening and then lightening before finishing up a light grey. To keep your planters or bins as close to the color they are when new, you need to apply a waterproofing with a UV sun screen as soon as they start to look lighter or when water stops beading up on the surface.

With decades of yacht operation and wood refinishing in our background, DeepStream has selected THOMPSON'S® WATERSEAL® WATERPROOFER PLUS CLEAR WOOD PROTECTOR as a light oil-based low-VOC finish option with UV filters that is safe for our craftsmen to use in our enclosed shop.

Depending on which variety of wood the project calls for, we dip and dry the planks one to three times before assembly. However, once the planters or bins are out in the sun and rain they will need a fresh coat applied within a month or two. With each successive coat you apply over time, the interval between applications lengthens.

There are many other longer-lasting waterproofing and stain option available that you can apply outdoors on planters and outdoor bins, where the fumes can be dissipated

rapidly. One online source to compare alternatives is: www.deckstainhelp.com/what-is-the-best-deck-stain/



Regardless of the finish you choose, water- or oil-based, it can be easily wiped on as soon as needed in under 10 minutes by unskilled labor. After wiping on a fresh coat, simply wipe excess finish off the legs with paper towels and alcohol, mineral spirits, or MEK, depending on what works best with the finish you have chosen. These solvents will not harm the marine-anodized aluminum legs.

(More >)

Varnish or Polyurethane is not a viable finish option for a number of important reasons, easily seen in this photograph.

Good varnish application requires skill, experience, and time. It is evident that the person who varnished this planter had none, as is can be seen in the splotches of varnish yellowing on the aluminum legs.

Even with experience, the sharp contact lines between the leg and the wood, as well as the Zephyr banding on this model, make it impossible to do an acceptable job unless the planter is disassembled.

Varnish, even blends with UV filters, needs constant maintenance. Used outdoors, it must be sanded and recoated with three coats every 6 to 8 weeks in Southern and Southwestern states after building up an initial coat of six layers.



It is impossible to get an even layer of varnish on the wood near the metal contact lines. These areas will “lift” with water intrusion leading to rapid deterioration.

Even if you start with a factory-applied varnish finish, and could properly varnish without disassembly, the time to tape off the legs for protection, sand, and properly varnish just one coat on a planter would take hours, and it would need to be stripped and completely redone within a couple of years.

Additionally, planters would need to be varnished inside and out, as a barrier coat on just one side makes the planks more prone to warping due to differential wetting and drying.

Eventually, left to nature, all the varnish on this planter will evaporate or peel off, once again leaving the noble look of aged hardwood. At that point, a light power washing at 1800 PSI will provide a fresh and uniform surface for properly recoating with an oil-based waterproofing finish. Alternatively it can be quickly disassembled and the wood sanded.

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Refinishing Wood : Pressure Cleaning



To restore faded wood planks to their original color, it is possible use a low-power pressure washer to quickly remove the faded outer coating. Start on a light pressure with a broad fan spray and carefully increase pressure.

Pressure washing should be done sparingly, as it is more destructive than sanding. It removes more soft wood than hard wood, leaving a raised grain to catch more dirt. See also: [Refinishing: Sanding](#)

Once the renewed wood is dry, you may apply a fresh coat of Thompson's, or another type of water-proofing, to maintain the fresh look. See also: [Wood finish Options](#). One source for alternatives is: www.deckstainhelp.com/what-is-the-best-deck-stain/



Alternatively, you may re-waterproof the planter whenever the wood shows signs of fading, or water stops beading up on the surface, or allow the wood to fade to gray naturally.

PHOTOS:

(Top left) Pressure washing the planks of a 24-month-old Lyptus planter.

Originally finished with Thompson's Water Seal, this planter received no maintenance for over nine months.

(Bottom left) The newly cleaned wood looks like new.

305-857-0466 Fax: 305-854-3218

dsdmiami@gmail.com

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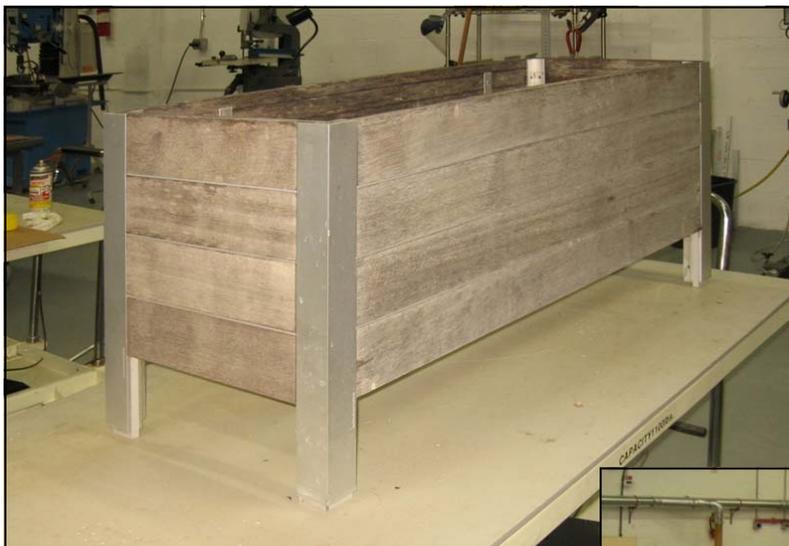
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Refinishing Wood: Sanding

While wood-on-wood planter construction will last 3 to 5 years, DeepStream's Mariner garden planters are engineered to last for decades, giving the lowest cost of ownership over time, and backed by a Lifetime Structural Warrantee.

If you will own or be responsible for the building where planters will be placed for more than 5 years, give serious consideration as to what it will mean in terms of cost and disruption to go back and replace or repair the planters every 3 – 5 years, especially on rooftops and balconies.

The Mariner test planter shown below, built in Jatoba wood with only an initial waterproofing at our workshop, has been exposed to the Miami sun and rain for seven years with no maintenance.



For more information, see:
[Wood Finish Options](#)



The same planter after sanding .014" off the face of the planks, waterproofing, and wiping down the proprietary marine-anodized legs with mineral spirits.

Good as new!

If you are going to disassemble your planter to sand and refinish, contact us for more proprietary dielectric paste for your fasteners before reassembly to ensure you will be able to take it apart again.

Check waterproofing alternatives at:
www.deckstainhelp.com/what-is-the-best-deck-stain/



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dsdmiami@gmail.com

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About Wood and Mariner Planter Care

It is the character of wood - warm and sophisticated, yet rugged - that makes it our favorite material for our planters. Getting to work with it in the shop is a very rewarding and almost spiritual experience. Wood's warmth of color and feel, the figuring of its grain, and its varied organic nature give each piece its own unique identity in an increasingly uniform world.

However, if you seek perfect uniformity over the character of wood then we have a myriad of other options for you.

While all of the characteristics of the woods we use make it beautiful for indoor applications and rugged enough for the outdoors, it is not for everyone or every project. The planks we use are solid $\frac{3}{4}$ " flooring grade tropical hardwoods that are appropriate for ship and deck construction. This planking has more wonderful character than you will find in thin, uniform cabinetry-grade veneers of similar wood. This includes shallow chips, small knots, burrs, interlocking and wooly grain.

We revere wood, the trees and the natural environment that it comes from, and we never waste it. If it is structurally sound and aesthetically pleasing, we use it. Non-structural flaws are part of the natural character of the wood, especially in plantation grown wood, that we cherish in our planters. Because we have sized our planters around standard plank lengths, cut-off pieces are minimal and all trimmings and sawdust are taken to a wood recycler. If you have enough appropriate $\frac{3}{4}$ " unfinished solid wood left over from a flooring project we can probably use it!

While these woods are chosen for their stability in both wet and sunny environments, wood is still a "living" entity that changes on a daily basis. We use tongue and groove construction to minimize warping. Each plank comes from a different part of the tree or from different trees, so each will have its own "life." Ipe, one of the longest lasting woods, is especially hard, fibrous, and difficult to work.

I have engineered our proprietary aluminum legs and specifically to handle the dimensional changes that wood undergoes as it swells in humid environments and shrinks in dry or sunny locations. It is the design of the leg that channels the power wood exerts when it expands absorbing water, which is the same force that causes the rapid deterioration of wood planters that use screwed, bolted, or nailed construction. Stone has been quarried for centuries by wetting wood dowels and using the woods expansive strength cracking off huge blocks. You can also think of buckled wood floor. To fit the leg, the wood has to be machined using high-speed carbide cutters and scoring; however, wood can still chip where it has been machined at 90° angles leaving minor cosmetic chips, especially in Ipe.

Even though we handcraft these planters in humid Miami, you may find that the top plank swells upwards over the top of the leg when exposed to rain. This is normal, but you may modify it easily if you like. We urge you to wait until the wood has seasoned and stabilized over time before doing so, as you may find it shrinks back during the dry season. The easiest way we have found to plane the wood down is to use an inexpensive Microplane® or Sureform® rasp available at any hardware store. Carefully plane the top edge down to almost flush before finishing with 120-grit sandpaper. If you want to make the wood absolutely flush, you must remove the plank from the leg to avoid damaging the leg by simply removing two fasteners, but with every change in the weather it will continue to shrink or grow.

Occasionally a plank may split over time and, while this is not a material defect, nor will it reduce the planter strength, if it diminishes the aesthetic appeal for you, call us with the exact measurement between the legs, accurate to 1/64", and we can supply a replacement plank that can be inserted in our modular design.

Similarly, if a leg should be badly damaged, we can supply a new leg for a reasonable cost provided you return the damaged leg to us for recycling. **It is imperative that neither acid nor abrasives be used to clean the aluminum leg.** Denatured alcohol, mineral spirits or **MEK**, in increasing order of strength are available at any hardware store paint department and are the best cleaner to use for stubborn stains and waterproofing buildup.

We drill and tap standard holes in the leg before anodizing for the greatest corrosion protection. When the leg is anodized, electricity passes through the solution to chemically bond and protect the leg. The legs are hung in the anodizing solution by the screw holes to give an even cosmetic appearance to the outside of the leg that will be visible when the planter is in use. It is not uncommon to see a "halo" effect around the screw hole. This is not considered a defect and it will not be seen in an assembled planter.

Even without any protective finish, tropical hardwoods may last decades. Our planter design eliminates contact between the wood and wet dirt or standing water. These woods are photo-reactive and change color with exposure to the elements.

Even with treated wood, water will wash out red color from wood and leave stains for the first few weeks. Although rain and sun will eliminate these stains Phosphoric acid will remove the stains quickly and easily from pavers, cement, and porcelain tile, but will quickly eat into the anodizing on the aluminum legs. So move the planters first and use care. Use MEK early and often in the initial months to prevent stains on the aluminum.

Just as with teak, other woods will go "grey" in time if not sealed, and the planks will take on a more uniform appearance. Sealer will darken the wood while adding protective oils to minimize water and sun fading. Your planter has been finished with Thompson's Water-Seal Waterproofer Plus Clear Wood Protector.

For refinishing advice and more information on alternative longer lasting waterproofing and UV filters see one of the following articles:

[Mariner Planter Care Instructions](#)

[Wood Finish Options](#)

www.deckstainhelp.com/what-is-the-best-deck-stain/

[Refinishing Wood: Pressure Washing](#)

[Refinishing Wood: Sanding](#)