

Congratulations on your purchase of “ready to finish” furniture. We want to offer you some guidance that will enable you to achieve pleasing results in your finishing project. Your furniture is part of nature’s handiwork. Every item has its own unique grain pattern and color. Dark grains and knots are a part of the character of wood and were put there years ago by the tree branches and the twisting of the wind, which causes trees to bend, affecting the outcome of every tree. Each piece of solid wood furniture is an original. Light and dark areas all blend during the finishing process. There are numerous products available for you to finish your furniture with, so be sure to ask your local sales representative to help you in product selection based on your particular needs.

Our desire is to assist you in achieving a beautifully finished piece of furniture. The following tips are to help you accomplish this goal.

First and foremost, **read and follow the directions of your finishing material**. Finish manufacturers really do know their own product; read finishing directions **completely**. Take your time during the finishing process and remember don’t rush! It may take a little longer but you’ll be proud of the results.

### **Surface preparation**

Although all pieces are sanded, **they will need additional “finish” sanding**. Check all surfaces for minor splits, chips or dents and sand or fill them with wood filler. Make sure the residue from the filler is sanded smooth. Start sanding your piece with medium sand paper (#120) and then finish with fine (#220) sandpaper. Check all surfaces. If an item has any frizz or roughness, it will show when staining and you may not be satisfied with the end result. **Never skip the initial sanding of all parts**. Wipe the furniture using a **tack cloth** (available at paint & hardware stores) to remove all of the dust created by sanding.

### **Staining**

Be sure the stain is stirred thoroughly. Some stains have a heavy pigment on the bottom of the can. It is not uncommon to take up to five minutes to make sure the “mud” is dissolved. This keeps the stain color consistent from the top of the can to the bottom. We recommend testing an area on the piece first in an inconspicuous location (under a seat or table top). This will allow you to check stain color before proceeding. When you have completed your first coat of stain and have allowed it to dry, wipe a coat of clear finish on your test location. If you like the finished test location and feel the color is fine then one coat is adequate. If the stain is too light

or uneven, a second coat of stain may be needed and a second test spot using 2 stain coats is recommended.

### **Application**

You can almost use any type of rag, though cotton works best, approximately 10" square for application (larger rags may get in the way sometimes). Stain one surface at a time and do the harder to reach areas first. There is no particular motion to use when applying the stain. We do recommend doing cross grain first and then with the grain. As you stain each area, wipe excess stain off with the grain, then move to another area. As you finish, go back over the entire piece with a clean rag to wipe up all of the excess stain.

### **Topcoat**

The clear topcoat may be wiped or brushed on. Wiping does seem to prevent running. Again, do small areas at a time. We recommend applying topcoat with the grain. You may find it necessary in some areas to apply cross grain, but make sure the final wipe is with the grain. Allow the topcoat to dry completely as the surface will appear gummy if not dry. Drying time will vary depending on weather conditions. Sand with very fine (#220) or #600 wet/dry sandpaper. This will remove the fuzz. Wipe with a tack cloth after sanding to remove debris and then feel the entire piece with your hands. You're looking for a consistent sheen. If it still feels fuzzy, smooth out before applying additional coats. The fuzz will not go away on its own and will remain until it is removed. If after two coats you are happy with the appearance, then you are done. If you have an uneven sheen, apply additional coats, always sanding lightly between coats. If water resistance is a goal, we recommend four layers of top coats.

Apply at least one coat of stain or clear finishes to all surfaces of solid wood even if it is not seen. This prevents cracking as the piece continues to dry out over a period of years.

Remember to read finishing product instructions completely and take your time.