

Keeping patio furniture clean

From vinyl to wood, keeping your outdoor furniture clean will make it last longer.

For the best results, clean your patio furniture often. Since you are using soaps and detergents, make sure not to do the job on your lawn or around any plants that may catch run-off. The soap can kill the vegetation. It is also a good idea to clean your furniture during the morning and out of the sun since, like with cars and windows, the sun can cause streaks.

■ **Vinyl furniture:** Warm water and dishwasher detergent are the best things to use on white vinyl. Use one gallon of warm water to three teaspoons of detergent. Wash the furniture and let the solution sit for 15 minutes before rinsing. The bleach in the detergent will help to get out spots. Rinse and dry. Do not use dishwasher detergent on coloured furniture. The bleach will make it fade faster. For coloured vinyl, use a mild, all-purpose detergent. Be sure to rinse well.

■ **Outdoor wicker:** Brush with a soft brush and then vacuum to get out any loose dirt or particles. Wash with a mild detergent and water. Use a sponge to wipe off the surface, rinse and let dry.

■ **Aluminum frames:** Wash with a mild detergent and water. Rinse and let dry, then cover the frames with a light coat of car wax to protect them. Don't get any wax on the webbing or cushions, as it will stain. After the wax is dry, buff with a clean cloth. If the frames are pitted, scrub with steel wool and a detergent solution. Wax the frames to prevent further pitting.

■ **Wood:** Teak is a popular wood for outdoor furniture and requires little maintenance. Weathered teak turns a soft silver-grey colour in time. However, regular cleaning with a solution of warm water and a mild soap, not detergent, will help to keep the teak from turning a dark grey. 🌿