

Thank you for choosing Acorn Buildings, we do appreciate your business.

If you have any queries now or in the future, please contact us.

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this guide is to help our customers understand how to care for their new/existing timber building. Maintaining your building will ensure continued performance, improved visual appearance and will help to support any manufacturer warranty claim should the need arise.

Being a natural product wood is not perfect. It can be affected by atmospheric changes, expanding and contracting as it repeatedly absorbs then loses moisture. It can lose colour, get dirty, support mould growth and quickly begin to look unsightly. To prolong its life, it will need protecting, so please take care of your investment, we will be happy to answer any queries you may have on 01428 654334.



Timber Building Specialists

Workshop: Bensons Yard, Iron Hill Farm, Hollycombe, Liphook, Hampshire GU30 7LP

T +44 (0) 1428 654 334 **E** richard@acornbuildings.co.uk **W** acornbuildings.co.uk

Registered at 51 Wellhouse Road, Beech Alton, Hampshire GU34 4AQ.
England Reg No. 16868963. VAT No. 509 5704 81. Directors: R Parker & R Gardner

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RECOMMENDED MAINTENANCE PRACTICES FOR YOUR ROOF

Minor upkeep of the roof is important to maintain optimum performance. Minor maintenance involves carrying out regular visual inspections of the roof, usually twice a year in the Spring and the Autumn. However, as a minimum visual inspection should be carried out by suitably experienced persons at least once per year and always after severe storms or extreme weather.

Inspection of the roof should always start from the inside of the building; such checks should be carried out prior to the exterior inspections. Where practicable, roofs from the outside should be inspected from the eaves or gable ends, avoiding the need for traffic on the roof. Binoculars are very handy!

General Rules & Maintenance Check List

- Do not allow leaf debris to build up on the surface of any roof, left unattended the debris will form leaf mould which by holding moisture (particularly in the profiled sheeting bases) will reduce the effective life of the product.
- Remove debris, such as pine needles and broken branches in a non-abrasive manner.
- Tree and shrub branches – check that overhanging branches are not in contact with the surface of the roof, wind generated movement can result in mechanical damage to the surface of some roof coverings.
- Keep gutters clean to promote proper water drainage.
- Look for signs of any cracked or broken sheets/tiles caused by impact or wind damage.
- Look for any interior evidence of roof leaks or dampness.
- Check tiles for cracks caused by roof settlement or shrinkage.

Fibre Cement Sheeting

Fibre cement profiled sheeting is low-maintenance and will not rust or corrode. It is a high strength product with polypropylene reinforcement strips inserted along precisely engineered locations that run along the length of the sheet.

Occasionally damp patches may occur on the underside of new sheets, particularly on low pitch roofs with slow drainage discharge. The damp patches are generally caused by a combination of permeability and condensation, as the material can absorb up to 25% of its dry weight in moisture. The amount of water that the material can absorb diminishes in time as the material continues to cure and any pores within the cement matrix become

filled with crystals, thereby reducing the incidence of damp patches. Damp patches are more like to occur when the building is still drying out and the sheets are new and can be reduced by providing ventilation into the building.

Condensation can occur on the internal surface when the temperature of the material is below the dew point of the air, such as on frosty nights or during a cold rainstorm. Condensation will also occur when relatively warm weather follows a cold spell in winter. Much of the moisture can be absorbed by the fibre cement, although if this already has a high moisture content, the condensation may drip from the underside of the roof.

Do not walk on sheets, always use roofing ladders or crawling boards. Keep the sheet debris and moss free. Sweep off accumulations of debris periodically. Translucent sheets may be more susceptible to cracking so please check regularly.

Onduline® Sheeting

Onduline is an extremely tough, lightweight, corrugated roofing sheet manufactured using a base board produced from recycled cellulose fibres which is saturated with bitumen under intense pressure and heat. Easily maintained follow general rules above, paying particular attention to overhead branches and keeping the base of the profiled sheeting clear. Translucent sheets may be more susceptible to cracking so please check regularly.

Onduvilla Tile Strip

As above.

Cedar Shingle Tile

As with all roof coverings the roof should be kept clear of moss and debris build-up. Sweep off accumulations of debris periodically. The cedar shingle tile will weather beautifully to a silver grey.

Tapco® Artificial Slate

TapcoSlate is RECYCLABLE and made from limestone and virgin resins. It is UV stable and through coloured. It will weather and fade as does any roof covering depending on location and exposure. The product will not curl, lift or delaminate and it is impermeable to water. Follow general rules and maintenance guide. Tapcoslate does not actively promote growth on its surface. However, there are two ways of approaching “roof cleanliness”:

Prevention of Growth:

1. To treat a new roof with fungicide to prevent the growth of mosses, algae and lichens, this will last for 3-4 years.
2. The installation of copper strips (Ascot do not do this)

Removal of Growth:

1. Growth can be removed by simply power washing the area. Please remember that mosses washed down the roof will need to be removed from the guttering.
2. Manual removal of growth using a rubber scraper/bristle brush and a chloride solution, followed by treatment with a good quality fungicide.

Asphalt Shingles

Newly installed shingles carry some extra granules riding on the surface of the shingle, these will leave the roof in a short period of time assisted by rain and wind. After the initial release of these granules, it is part of the normal weathering process for additional granules to be released over the life of the shingles.

Periodic roof cleaning maybe required to keep the roof free of moss and algae, if keeping debris off the roof does not prevent moss and algae growth – try a cleaning solution or concentrate.

Clay & Slate Tiles

They are fragile and should be treated with care, avoid access on to the roof by trades without use of correct equipment and follow general rules above. The tiles are actually fired clay, they may sometime crack or leak, particularly if they are stepped on.

GUTTERING MAINTENANCE

All Acorn Building Rainwater systems have been tested by the British Standards Institute. Leaking and blocked gutters can cause problems with damp, this is easily avoided if they are kept free of debris, and loose joints are fixed as soon as you see them.

UPVC, plastic guttering has one of the highest thermal expansion coefficients of any construction material, this is exacerbated when the material is black in colour as it absorbs the sun's heat more quickly. As the sun warms it

from 10C to 30C, a 10-metre length of black plastic guttering will expand by up to 10mm, and it will shrink back again in the cool of the evening, or even when the sky clouds over. That's why you will hear plastic gutter clicking and creaking. This regular expansion and contraction need to be allowed to happen. Theoretically the lengths of gutter will expand and contract on the rubber gasket and should not force joints apart. However, these expansion gaps can get filled with leaves, silt from the roof or other debris which may restrict this process – this may force the gutter length to bend and pop out of its brackets. Even if joints do not spring apart, leaking can occur if the rubber gasket becomes degraded, gritty silt from concrete tiles (interlocking) and asphalt shingles added to rainwater make an effective grinding paste which will quickly wear these joints. To repair a leak at a gutter joint, it is best to replace the joint than to use a sealant.

A gutter run must slope slightly so that water will run efficiently to the downpipes.

Blocked downpipes often result from a build-up of leaves and debris finding its way into the drainage system, consider fitting leaf guards to prevent this from happening if your outbuilding is situated under dense tree cover. A well-maintained guttering system will increase the efficient flow of water from roof to drain.

Non-PVC Gutter, Aluminium, Galvanised Steel, Zinc & Stainless Steel. Do not use abrasive pads or brushes that could damage top protective coating. Apply warm water with solvent free detergent, rinse with cold water.

Keep drainpipes free of debris with the use of drainage rods.

CARE AND MAINTENANCE OF SOFTWOOD & THERMOWOOD TIMBER WINDOWS AND DOORS

Regular maintenance of any timber product is essential if you are to retain a beautiful finish and prolong their use. If you care for your doors and windows, they will give you good service and good life. We recommend Sadolin products.

The periods you leave between maintenance checks will vary depending on the type of paint or stain you choose as part of your maintenance programme; local environmental conditions will also play a key factor. In areas of severe exposure where it is not possible for porch, hood or canopy, particular caution should be taken.

Softwood Timber Windows Garages, Stables & Outbuildings

The decorative finish applied must be preserved while they are in service to ensure moisture does not penetrate the wood. You can maintain your windows in accordance with the paint or stain manufacturer's guidelines. We recommend making an annual inspection and suggest touching up any areas of wear and tear. Windows should be cleaned inside and out every six months as a minimum using a mild non-abrasive detergent and soft cloth. When cleaning windows, check the drainage holes are clear (factory fitted glazed only).

Thermowood Timber Windows Garages, Stables & Outbuildings

Thermowood though durable product will last longer with a surface coating. The natural effect of weathering and exposure to sunlight will cause loss of colour, increased raised grain, surface cracking and higher risk of surface algae. Pigmented translucent stain can give protection against UV light and consequent bleaching of the wood while retaining the natural appearance. The most used is a stain using a brown pigment close to the original colour. Only vapour permeable, either translucent or opaque 'low build' stain recommended for exterior use should be used.

The environment and climate have a crucial impact on the service of surface coatings. This could mean South facing elevations need more regular maintenance than those facing North. In addition areas exposed to prevailing winds may require more maintenance than those more protected. This is due to the abrasive factor of wind blow moisture. Always refer to specific instructions supplied by coating manufacturer.

Unfinished Thermowood will also benefit from occasional washing with a mild detergent solution to removed surface growth or dirt.

Ironmongery

Hinges, rivets and other moving parts must never be painted and should be kept clean and always lubricated lightly with Vaseline or neutral oil. Clean and lubricate at least once a year – more often in coastal areas and places where pollution is high.

Timber Doors – Garage, Stables & Outbuildings

The decorative finish applied must be preserved while they are in service to ensure moisture does not penetrate the wood. You can maintain your doors in accordance with the paint or stain manufacturer's guidelines. We recommend making an annual inspection and suggest touching up any areas of wear and tear. Timber doors will move and require adjustment, seasonal changes in the humidity will cause timber to shrink in the winter and

expand in the summer. A high-quality finish will slow the rate of moisture exchange, but it will never stop it completely.

Protect the doors from natural thermal distortion, make sure the top and bottom shoot bolts are engaged when the door is shut. This will help to control the movement.

If heavy horse blankets are stored on stable doors when left open this may also cause dropping.

Thermowood Timber - Doors Garages, Stables & Outbuildings

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Ironmongery

- Hinges, rivets and other moving parts must never be painted and should be kept clean and always lubricated lightly with Vaseline or neutral oil.
- Clean and lubricate at least once a year – more often in coastal areas and places where pollution is high.
- Please remember doors are designed to be opened and closed regularly, locks will stick and doors will misbehave if they are not used!

CARE AND MAINTENANCE OF OAK DOORS & WINDOWS

Oak is popular for external joinery application BUT it flexes and moves more than softwood with changes in ambient humidity, putting stress on the joints and causing them to open. It has a tendency to surface check (split) when externally exposed and discolours in sunlight, typically to a dull greyish colour. As a result, oak joinery needs more frequent care and maintenance than most other species, particularly in its early service life to maintain its decorative appearance. Oak also has a natural tannic acid content which causes the timber to turn black when exposed to moisture containing trace amounts of iron.

Oak naturally greys and discolours in sunlight regardless of the coating system applied or how much 'UV protection' the coating may claim to offer. A light tint in the coating will help to disguise this greying and mask the patchy appearance which can be evident in the early stages as the sunlight bleaches the timber surface. The use of clear finishes on oak joinery are not recommended.

Regular washing down with a mild detergent solution, when the windows and doors are cleaned, will help to remove surface contaminants, at the same time check external joints, gaps and end grain for repair. We recommend OSMO UV Protection Oil to help with the aging process and Deks Olje D1.

Ironmongery

Hinges, rivets and other moving parts must never be painted and should be kept clean and lubricated lightly at all times with Vaseline or neutral oil. Clean and lubricate at least once a year – more often in coastal areas and places where pollution is high.

CARE AND MAINTENANCE OF UPVC WINDOWS AND DOORS

Although designed and constructed to require a minimum of maintenance, they will require occasional cleaning – dirt build-up and atmospheric pollutants may cause minor appearance changes that cleaning will remove.

PVC-u and Rubber Components

- PVC-u frames are chemically stabilised to prevent discolouration and should only need an occasional external wash with warm water and detergent. This can be done using a sponge and is purely to remove grime and airborne dirt. Stubborn marks can be removed using a small amount of PVC-u cream cleaner. We recommend frames are cleaned once a year.

- The internal surfaces of the PVC-u can be soiled by cigarette smoke, cooking etc., such stains are easily removed using a PVC-u cream cleaner. After washing and rinsing, the PVC-u frame should be dried with a lint-free cloth and polished to a light sheen using an anti-static spray surface cleaner. To remove paint spots (or similar) only White Spirit may be used.
- Stronger petroleum-based solvents should NOT be used with guidance.
- Never use bleach, scouring powder or any harsh substance on any part of the window
- The drainage channels located in the frame should be always kept clear.

Handles

- Windows and door handles require no maintenance other than occasional cleaning with warm water and detergent.
- Never use bleach, ammonia or other 'aggressive' substances
- After washing, dry and then polish with a surface cleaner or spray polish

Gearing Mechanism

- Any visible gearing components on the opening part of the window (the sash) should be cleaned with lint-free cloth to remove any dirt or grit that may build up – particularly in industrial or heavy traffic area.
- The gearing may be washed with a solution of pure detergent and warm water, dried and then wiped over with a clean, very lightly oiled cloth to provide a lubricated surface - Never clean with a metal or abrasive cleaner as this will damage the protective coating on the gearing and lead to discolouration and corrosion.

Glass

Double glazed units are manufactured using high quality float or safety glass. This glass should be cleaned using a solution of warm water and detergent, rinsed with clear water, dried using a chamois cloth and polished using a glass cleaner and a lint-free cloth. **Never use abrasive cleaners on glass**

Condensation

Modern buildings are designed to eliminate draughts and do not have the natural ventilation that some older buildings have with ill-fitting doors and windows not to mention chimneys! Buildings that have been completely sealed can become moisture traps. In such cases condensation is a ventilation problem, providing the rooms are heated normally the solution will be found by controlled ventilation.

In the case of 'unsealed' buildings the dominant factor is likely to be the indoor temperature. Additional heat or the introduction of localised heat near the windows may help.

Care & Maintenance of Roller Garage Doors

Annual service by the installer is recommended. They will check fixings and safety systems on the door, lubricate the parts and clean the tracks to ensure smooth operations.

EXTERNAL CLADDINGS

Treated Softwood Featheredge Cladding

Acorn's feather edge cladding has been pressure treated and impregnated with wood preservative under controlled conditions in a vacuum pressure timber impregnation plant. It has a built-in brown colour which is more aesthetically pleasing than the traditional green associated with tanalised timber. The featheredge will weather to a warm honey brown and eventually turn grey and bleached if not maintained. Prolonged exposure can lead to surface checking and splitting of the timber and loss of wood fibres from the surface, resulting in a woolly or uneven appearance. For this reason, it is necessary to provide some form of treatment to the timber exposed to the weather. We recommend Sadolin Ultra Highly Translucent Woodstain – range of colours available.

Softwood Shiplap Cladding

Acorn's shiplap cladding has been pressure treated and impregnated with wood preservative under controlled conditions in a vacuum pressure timber impregnation plant. It has a built-in brown colour which is more aesthetically pleasing than the traditional green associated with tanalised timber. The shiplap will weather to a warm honey brown and eventually turn grey and bleached if not maintained. Prolonged exposure can lead to surface checking and splitting of the timber and loss of wood fibres from the surface, resulting in a woolly or uneven appearance. For this reason, it is necessary to provide some form of treatment to the timber exposed to the weather. We recommend Sadolin Ultra Highly Translucent Wood stain – range of colours available.

Please note:

Wood Preservatives are designed to penetrate and be retained in a 'shell' of the outer few millimetres of timber to guard against stain, decay, mould growth and insect attack. Surface treatments such as paints, varnishes and

stains will not alone give this protection but will improve the effectiveness of the preservative by reducing water uptake.

Home Grown Cedar Feather Edge

Home Grown Larch

Cedar Shiplap Cladding

The boards will become silver, grey over time because of the natural UV in daylight. There will be natural variations in colour as the boards age. Whilst the boards can be left to silver to lengthen the service life, we would recommend exposed areas of the building such as rear, sides, gables are protected in 3–5-year intervals. We recommend Sadolin Classic (all-purpose wood stain).

Oak Cladding

Oak is more durable timber than softwood and no further maintenance will usually be required, oak needs to breathe and surface treatments can restrict the release of moisture. The drying and the hardening of the timber protect against rot and pests as well as giving the wood strength and character. Sometimes the cladding may appear patchy, this will even out over time as the grey silvering colour develops. The tannin leaching out of oak is a natural process and will stop as the oak dries out, over time weather will wash away the stains. This may stain bricks/concrete initially.

Cedral® Cladding

The ideal low maintenance, rot free alternative to traditional timber weatherboard. It is a multi-layered fibre structure – simple combination of wood, cellulose, sand, synthetic fibres, water and cement. For minor soiling, washing with a mild household solution detergent or soft soap followed by rinsing with clean water is sufficient to maintain its appearance and colour.

Oak Posts & Beams

Green oak will shrink as it dries out, this process takes many years, it is an entirely natural process during which time it may develop some cracks (shakes), twist and settle. This period of 'movement' is not as severe as the term suggests. All the jointing has been designed to minimise this movement and, in the process become stronger as a result. Posts and beams are supplied from the 'boxed heart' the centre of the tree, this is the most stable to keep its shape. The posts and beams will 'silver down – greying'. Osmo UV Protection oil will help to

delay this process, but repeated applications will need to be made to preserve its effectiveness. For cosmetic purposes only.

Oak Tannins

The tannin leaching out of oak is a natural process and will stop as the oak dries out, over time weather will wash away the stains. This may stain bricks/concrete/stone quoins initially.

External Staircases

It is important that exterior wood which services heavy foot traffic is protected against weather protection as it will quickly wear down. You should be checking the condition of your stairs every year and implement the necessary upkeep. Frequent maintenance will help catch a problem whilst it is still easy to fix. Softwood, hardwood and pressure treated timber will age naturally and eventually the natural oils will disperse and the wood will turn a grey colour over the years. You cannot totally prevent this, but you can slow down the aging process by using a good semi-transparent stain on the wood. Moisture allows fungal activity to increase in the wood and this will eat away at the wood causing it to become brittle. On a staircase this is a highly dangerous hazard.

Ensure the treads are swept regularly starting at the top of the stairs and working the way down. Keep the grooves on each of the treads clean ensuring tree debris, grit, algae mould is quickly removed as not to encourage dampness. Wash with a high-performance fungicidal cleaner to remove moss, mould and algae where present. We would recommend Sadolin Classic to allow the wood grain to show through or Sadolin Beautiflex for a complete colour change.