

Care guide

Installing, finishing and looking after a solid wood top · Edition October 2026

Your top is 1-1/2" of solid wood all the way through. Treated right, it can be sanded back and refinished for decades. Two things actually ruin a wood top: **standing water**, and **heat straight off the stove**.

1. Before you install

- 1 **Let it acclimate.** Leave the top flat in the room for 48 to 72 hours before you cut anything. Wood moves to match the humidity of the room it will live in; let it finish moving before you size it.
- 2 **Measure in three places.** Measure wall to wall at the front, the middle and the back: walls are rarely parallel. Take the smallest figure and subtract 1/4", so there is a 1/8" expansion gap at each end.
- 3 **Cut good face up.** Use a circular saw with a fine-tooth blade against a clamped straight edge. Support both sides of the cut so the offcut cannot drop and tear the last inch out.
- 4 **Round every internal corner.** Give the corners of a sink or cooktop opening a 1/4" radius. A square internal corner concentrates stress at a single point, and that is where a crack starts.
- 5 **Fix it so it can still move.** Fasten from underneath with elongated screw holes or Z-clips. Never glue a solid top to the cabinets: it must be free to expand and contract across its width.

2. Seal all six faces

Seal the top, the underside, both ends and every cut edge, including the inside of a sink opening. Do it before you install, while you can still reach every face. A top sealed on one face only takes up moisture unevenly, and that is the most common reason a top cups.

Unfinished tops

- **What to use:** food-safe mineral oil is the simple, forgiving choice: inexpensive, easy to repair, and suitable for a surface you prepare food on. A hardwax oil gives a harder, more water-resistant surface but is less forgiving to patch; follow its maker's instructions instead of the schedule below.
- **Three coats, 6 to 8 hours apart.** Flood the surface, leave it 6 to 8 hours, wipe off the excess and repeat. Oil left standing stays tacky instead of curing, so the wipe matters as much as the coat.
- **Keep it up.** Re-oil every 4 to 6 weeks in the first year, then twice a year, and more often around a sink.

Factory-finished tops

- **Golden Teak and Mocha (acacia, factory oil finish):** seal any edge you cut before installing, and refresh the surface with food-safe mineral oil whenever the water test below says so.
- **Natural UV, UV Light Brown and UV Walnut (hevea, UV-cured factory finish):** seal any edge you cut, and the underside if it is bare, before installing. For everyday care, clean the surface as described below. If the finish is worn or damaged, contact us before you sand or apply a product, so we can tell you what is compatible.

3. Everyday care

Every day

- Wipe up spills promptly. Wine, citrus and cooking oil stain fastest.
- Never leave standing water, especially at the sink edge and around faucet openings.
- Use a cutting board, and trivets for hot pans. Heat marks can be avoided; they cannot be repaired without sanding.
- Clean with mild soap and a damp cloth: damp, not soaking.

The water test

Flick a few drops of water on the top and wait a minute.

- **It beads:** the finish is intact. Nothing to do.
- **It soaks in and darkens the wood:** the oil is spent. Give that area a fresh coat.

No schedule needed: the top tells you when it wants oil.

4. Fixing a mark

On an oiled or unfinished top, sand out a scratch, scorch or stain with 180-grit paper, feather the edges so there is no step, and re-oil that patch. It blends in within a coat or two. Because the top is solid wood all the way through, you can do this again and again without reaching a different material.

5. What not to use

No bleach, no ammonia, no abrasive cleaners, and no dishwasher detergents. They strip the oil and raise the grain.

Questions

Email support@gridwoodsupply.com or call +1 302-342-8305, Monday to Friday, 8:00 to 17:00 ET.