

furniture care project

wipe down...

scrub and scour... spray clean... treat and paint... use the machine...

Give your garden furniture a facelift

If your tables and chairs are looking a bit scruffy, give them a new lease of life with a wash and brush-up, and a coat of paint



A bit of elbow grease brings gleaming results

Sitting out in the garden is one of summer's pleasures, but is your outdoor furniture fit for the job? With a bit of effort, you can rejuvenate dirty or tired-looking wood, metal, canvas and, to some extent, plastic.

We found that renovating hardwood furniture is very effective and rewarding, with impressive results achieved in just an hour.

Restoring metal furniture

is time consuming because the painting is fiddly, but it's very satisfying because the end results look great.

Plastic furniture is more of a challenge. We tried cleaning a white plastic chair with products like sugar soap, T-Cut car polish, multi-surface cleaner and Cillit Bang, which was the most effective. But, the result was not as good as for wood and metal, so let us know what works for you.

3 STEPS TO... restoring metal



1 Brush all the metalwork with a wire brush (available from DIY stores) to remove any flaking paint and smooth out any rust and imperfections.



2 Use a damp cloth to wipe away any rust dust created by the wire brush and to wash off general grime that may have accumulated after a winter spent outside.



3 Paint the furniture. We used Hammerite Metal Paint in Smooth White, which can be applied direct to rust (£5.98 for 250ml, B&Q, 0845 609 6688, www.diy.com).

5 STEPS TO... reviving wooden furniture



1



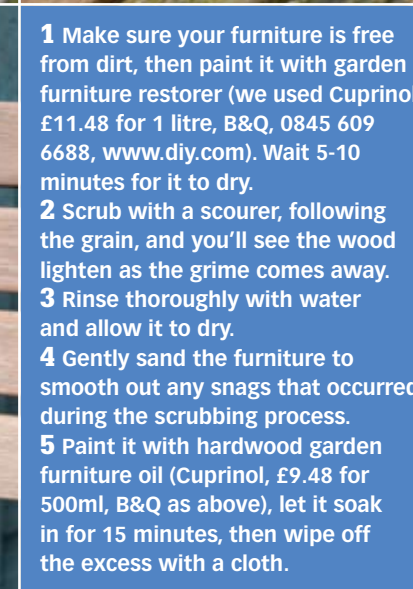
2



3



4



5

1 Make sure your furniture is free from dirt, then paint it with garden furniture restorer (we used Cuprinol, £11.48 for 1 litre, B&Q, 0845 609 6688, www.diy.com). Wait 5-10 minutes for it to dry.

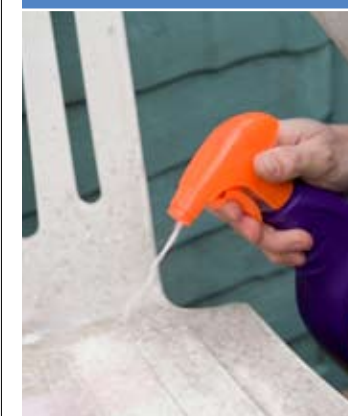
2 Scrub with a scourer, following the grain, and you'll see the wood lighten as the grime comes away.

3 Rinse thoroughly with water and allow it to dry.

4 Gently sand the furniture to smooth out any snags that occurred during the scrubbing process.

5 Paint it with hardwood garden furniture oil (Cuprinol, £9.48 for 500ml, B&Q as above), let it soak in for 15 minutes, then wipe off the excess with a cloth.

2 STEPS TO... bright plastic



1 Spray the furniture with Cillit Bang (around £3 from supermarkets) and leave it for 5-10 minutes to take effect.



2 Give the plastic a good, hard scrub using a scourer. Work on a small area at a time so the cleaner doesn't dry out.

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Start with a clean canvas

Revive the canvas on deck and director's chairs by removing it from the frame and washing in the machine. We found using a stain remover and biological detergent the most effective on material that had been left outside during the winter, although we struggled to get rid of stubborn mildew.

Spray new canvas with a waterproofing product such as Nikwax UV Proof (£6.99 for 500ml, 0800 665 410, www.blacks.co.uk) to keep chairs and parasols left outside all summer in good condition.



Bring canvas back to life with a machine wash

If you are looking for new garden furniture for the summer, turn to p130 for our patio furniture best buys