



DECKING CARE GUIDE



CARE GUIDE

for Accoya decking

Decks are exposed to changing weather conditions all year round that cause the decking to degrade by a series of chemical, biological and physical processes.

The surface of any wood will be altered by a combination of UV, moulds, algae, mildew, yeasts, and pollution - Accoya is no exception. Therefore regular care is recommended.



Especially exterior horizontal surfaces will form a biofilm that will hold water and reduce the speed of drying of the board, and a large build-up of such a layer should be prevented. In addition to design detail that enhances performance, regular cleaning must be considered to help control the build-up of such a biofilm.



Greying

Accoya decks can be installed uncoated and don't require any surface treatment for high durability.

Uncoated Accoya decks are very popular, especially if you want to comply with the Cradle-to-Cradle® standard. Uncoated Accoya decks will weather naturally and change to a silver-grey colour.

The rate of weathering will vary according to the amount of UV, elevation on a building, the surroundings and the surface structure. Depending on such influences, Accoya will grey out at a similar rate as most other wood species. Partial shading of a surface will lead to uneven greying.

However, before turning grey, uncoated Accoya will go through a phase of bleaching where it turns a lighter shade of its normal colour. Surface growths are particularly apparent in this intervening period and can vary in level from board to board. This will become less distinguishable after full (even) greying, but in this transition period the surface of Accoya may look blotchy.

Preventive measures

If left uncoated, surface mould development can be reduced or delayed by decreasing the level of moisture the wood is subject to.

Decking should be designed in such a way that (rain) water is easily drained off and optimal ventilation around the Accoya boards is ensured. Further, permanently dark and shaded areas should be avoided, and no objects should be placed stationary on the deck for long stretches of time. Flower pots and plant troughs should always be raised from the deck so that back ventilation is possible, e.g. using strips, spacers, or coasters.

Additionally, surface mould development can be reduced by applying a solution that has effective levels of performance protection, helping prevent biofilm and mould development. Please contact your dealer for more information.



Natural greying of Accoya decking over time



Surface fibres

Uncoated Accoya may show some surface fibres after being exposed for some time.

The main reason for the occurrence of surface fibres has been the misuse of pressure washers. Using such cleaning devices with too high a pressure will lead to the damage to the uppermost surface layer of wood.

In addition to that, as explained previously, UV light (which is a part of sunlight) is responsible for partly degrading the lignin in wood surfaces. As this lignin holds the wood cells together, this degradation will lead to a rougher and more open surface. This may be perceived as fine fibres on the surface, which will eventually erode.

The higher the amount or intensity of UV and general weathering the surface is subject to, the faster this process will develop. It should be noted that these fibres are formed on all exposed wood species, including Accoya, particularly on flat surfaces like decking. A ribbed deck profile will tend to cause an accumulation of these fibres, making it all the more noticeable.

In rare cases, certain harsh climatic conditions may lead to a special form of surface fibres unrelated to UV-degradation. Typically, this involves an apparently extreme amount of surface fibres in spring, usually after a prolonged snow cover. A prolonged moisture load combined with a repeated freeze-thaw cycle during winter may lead to a mechanical disintegration of the (uppermost) wood surface.

The Austrian Forest Products Research Society has indicated that Robinia and thermally modified woods are particularly affected, but also Larch, Teak and Sapeli are prone to such behaviour.

In all of these cases the durability of the Accoya wood is not compromised in any way. However, it is recommendable to periodically wash any loose fibres off, as they may flock together and become a spot for organisms to settle, which may lead to disfigurements.



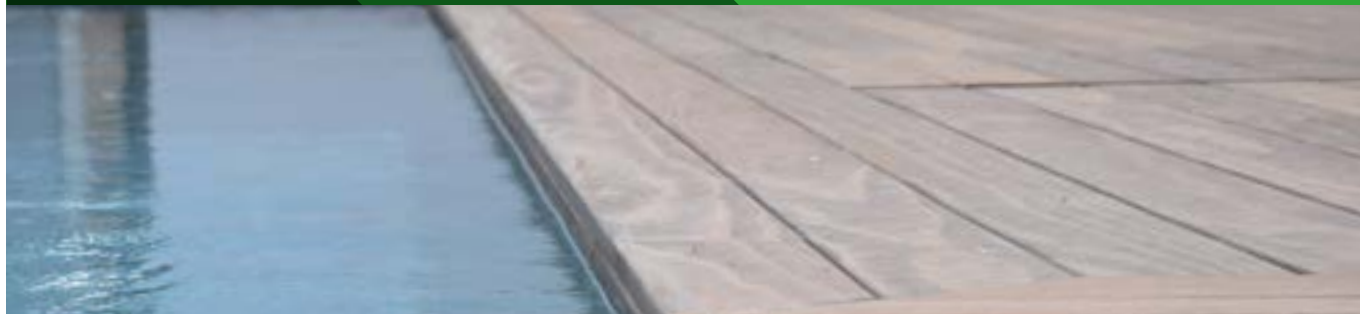
Other staining

In rare cases, intensive hail can mark wooden decking. On weathered decks, lighter areas can appear at the points of impact. Thorough cleaning will remove these disfigurements. A decking cleaning device can help with particularly strong marks.

Fine cracks can appear on Accoya decking after installation and when it starts to weather. Cracks are a natural phenomenon on wood and have no effect on its durability.

On all natural wood, including Accoya, feeding marks caused by wasps, etc. can occasionally appear. These marks have no effect on performance or durability, and after weathering, care, maintenance and cleaning will fade or be removed.

Furniture can lead to scratches on the surface. However, scratches only have an optical effect and have no influence on the deck's service life, function, or warranty. Accoya wood is acetylated from the surface to the core and will retain its properties, no matter how often it is split or processed.



Coated Accoya decking

A coloured surface treatment, for example with a wood oil, is often desired for a special visual appearance.

Accoya is ideal for coatings. Many coating suppliers have developed and tested their coating system for use on Accoya. For specific coating products enquiries, it's always best to consult the experts at your coating supplier. Please follow the coating supplier instruction to achieve a quality finish.

Oil-based stains and hydrophobic agents have water repellent properties, but often cannot prevent water uptake on horizontal parts. Please note that oils can be a food source to fungi and thus oils containing a mouldicide are recommended if appearance is an important consideration. It's not recommended to use a clear semi film or film forming coating as mould and mildew can often develop beneath them.

Coatings and colour treatments need to be renewed regularly to maintain the original effect and colour. Whilst a specific life expectancy of any deck coating system can only be given by the coating manufacturer, generally speaking, a maintenance interval of more than one year will be rare – in line with other typical deck wood species. Typically the darker or more pigmented the coating, the longer the maintenance interval will be. A seasonal maintenance involving a recoat is most common.

The life expectancy of the surface treatment will depend on various circumstances such as the intensity of use, the location of the decking and the level of ventilation.

In places with high humidity, for example due to permanent shade or lack of sufficient ventilation, the surface treatment must be renewed more frequently. Regular cleaning also helps to reduce the risk of mould formation from the coating. However, high-pressure cleaning should be avoided. Please also note that walkways and areas with chairs that are used very intensively need to be maintained for more frequently.

Special environments, such as proximity to swimming pools and chlorine water, contact with household cleaning agents, etc can also have an effect on deck coatings. Please refer to the coating supplier in such circumstances.

Before applying a wood oil, the decking must be cleaned. Before applying the oil, we strongly recommend testing the oil on a separate piece of wood. Accoya can absorb a great deal of oil. If you want to minimize absorption, it is recommended that you let the first coat of oil dry before applying additional coats.



Cleaning Accoya decking

Wood decks are subject to natural weathering and require regular cleaning. Each deck requires an individual maintenance interval, depending on location, use intensity and personal preferences.

Decking will form a biofilm that will hold water and reduce the speed of drying of the board, and a large build-up of such a layer should be prevented. Regular cleaning will be needed to control the build-up of such a biofilm.

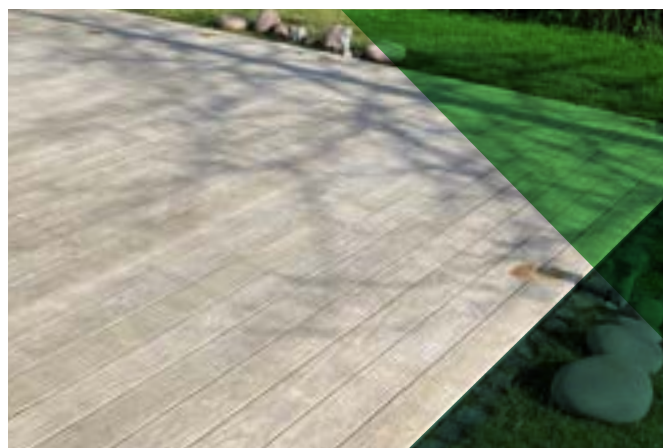
Under normal circumstances, an Accoya deck should be cleaned thoroughly once a year, preferably in spring, with some light cleaning throughout the year. More frequent cleaning may be necessary if the deck is permanently shaded, e.g. on the north side of a house or in the immediate vicinity of bushes, large trees and forests.

Accoya decking can be cleaned with a stiff brush and clear water. The process is improved by wetting it before cleaning, as the soaking softens the biofilm. For more persistent stains, a cleaning agent can be used, we recommend a cleaning agent with a PH value below nine and to rinse the decking thoroughly with clear water.

Planed surfaces are easier to clean than rough sawn surfaces. The use of a high-pressure cleaner is absolutely unsuitable for wooden decking and is expressly NOT recommended.

The high-pressure water jet can damage the wooden boards, regardless of the wood species. Please protect your wood deck with a cover when using a high-pressure cleaner for other materials in the immediate vicinity.

It is possible to use a patio cleaning device for Accoya decks. Please refer to your decking dealer for advice. We recommend using a device with twin brush. When using close to a pool, please ensure the cleaning water is not drained into the pool.



Decking in Germany after 10 years of greying and regular cleaning

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