

Removing water stains from timber cabinets by Greg VK5LG

Recently I had some luck removing a very ugly water stain from a Columbus timber cabinet, the one Qantas extensively redesigned for me en-route from New Zealand as "fragile" cargo. I can't blame Qantas for the water stain though.



Make a Mixture of 100 grams of Oxalic Acid fully dissolved in 1 litre of water. Oxalic acid is one of the strongest organic acids. It is widely used in wood restorers and deck cleaners to dissolve the top layer of dried wood and expose a clean layer.

NOTE: It is a poisonous substance and its fumes can make you sick. Wear rubber gloves and mix the acid and water outdoors.

Method:

1. Wet timber with cold water.
2. Lightly rub affected area with oxalic acid solution with a bristled nylon brush, but not too vigorously otherwise the timber will lift.
3. Leave 20-30 minutes inspecting progress at 5 minute intervals
4. Wash off with clean water when stain has lightened to desired extent.
5. Repeat if necessary, leaving puddles to soak into the darkest stain.
6. **Important** - when stain has been lightened to desired shade, acid remaining in timber must be neutralised with Bicarb Soda. Apply as a solution until reaction ceases. Wash off with plenty of water.
7. Leave timber to dry in open air.
8. Refinish timber in normal manner.

The trick is to not walk into Bunnings and ask for "Oxalic Acid" they will tell you repeatedly that they do not have such an item. Ask for "Diggers Rust and Stain cleaner"

Below is a picture of the finished result, pleasing isn't it.

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