

Questions and Answers on ModWood - Page 1

What is ModWood?

ModWood is an Australian made and owned composite product made essentially from a mixture of ground sustainable wood waste and plastic (we actually use recycled plastic milk bottles). ModWood products contain no formaldehydes.

Where is ModWood made?

Melbourne, Australia.

Is ModWood moisture resistant?

ModWood has excellent moisture resistance, however it should be noted that ModWood is not designed to "live in moisture" - this will eventually cause swelling and affect physical properties.

Does ModWood need ventilation?

Yes, like timber, it is important to provide adequate ventilation to ensure ModWood is able to dry out after being wet. For this reason it is very important to pay attention to clearance on butt joints (end to end), spacing between boards (side by side), and minimum ground clearances. Lack of ventilation will cause the product to swell and fail over time. Check product fixing instructions for information on ventilation requirements. Boxing in the deck will reduce cross flow ventilation and therefore must be avoided.

Can ModWood be used for cladding?

No it cannot; ModWood requires spacing between and behind the boards to ensure adequate ventilation so that the wood fibres have the ability to dry out. Therefore, this limits ModWood being able to be used in installations to provide primary weatherproofing element. Refer to fixing instructions on website.

Will it warp?

ModWood decking will not warp provided it is used and fixed in accordance with fixing instructions. ModWood mini board can in some circumstances, show some deflection between uprights.

Does it splinter?

The composition of ModWood products means that they will not splinter. This makes them ideal for small children.

How do I fix ModWood?

Whilst ModWood has many fixing similarities to natural timber, there are a few subtle differences that must be observed. Please check Fixing and Installation on our website prior to installation. If unsure, please contact ModWood.

Does ModWood Natural Grain Collection fade?

Yes, ModWood Natural Grain Collection undergoes some colour change when exposed to the elements. This will primarily happen during the first couple of months. When deciding which surface to face upwards, please refer to the section "Brushed or Smooth" below. Check our web site for indicative colour differences under "Care & Maintenance". Note the brushed surface shows minimal fade, and must be used in sheltered or under roofline installations. Note, ModWood Xtreme Guard warrants fade resistance in colour from light and weathering exposure, as measured by a colour change of no more than 5 Delta E (CIE) units. Please visit our Terms & Conditions page on the website for details.

Is it UV Protected?

Yes, ModWood products are highly protected against UV radiation. The following point is relevant for Natural Grain Collection. Please note however UV stabilisation is of the plastic component of the product only and does not have a great effect on the fading characteristics. For information on fading see above.

How does ModWood compare with timber in terms of surface temperature?

Tests have shown ModWood Natural Grain Collection has a similar surface temperature to timber of similar colours and finishes. Please note because Black Bean and Jarrah are darker colours, they can get quite hot underfoot, especially when new (similar to a dark painted timber decking board). Refer to Technical on our website for more details.

Chalk lines

It is best to avoid coloured chalks that are used in construction as most coloured chalks are permanent! Best alternatives are white chalk (Irwin Strait-Line Dust Off) or baby powder. Test on a small off cut if unsure and confirm that you can clean off successfully. Contact the manufacturer of the specific brand and colour of chalk for a cleaning solution that may prove effective prior to use.

Can ModWood be used for joists?

No, ModWood has been designed for use as decking and screening products only and cannot be classed as a "load bearing" product.

Is joist size important?

Yes, when butt joining top fix boards it is recommended to use a 45 mm joist to enable the fasteners to be located a minimum 15mm from the board end.

Natural Grain Collection Brushed or Smooth – which surface to face upwards?

Below are the pros and cons of using the different faces:-

BRUSHED (lighter coloured face up)

Pros

- Must be used for decks under roof/cover
- A more "timber-like" surface feel
- Better non-slip feel in wet areas (e.g. around pools)
- Does not show scratches as easily
- Heavy scratches may be sanded or wire-brushed out
- Less colour shift/fade over time - apart from embossing lines fading
- A more durable finish
- Surface temperature of brushed feels cooler than smooth
- Can more easily take water based clear sealed or coloured
- Can be sealed as soon as the decking is installed, especially under an alfresco roof line.

Cons

- Susceptible to "fatty" stains due to the exposed wood fibre.
- Will pick up dirt/stains/mould more easily due to wood fibres exposed (these can usually be cleaned)

SMOOTH (darker coloured face up)

Pros

- More "plastic" at the surface gives better resistance to dirt and grime (stays cleaner)
- A more solid colour

Cons

- Will show a higher degree of fade over the first few months
- Smoother surface may feel a bit more plastic.
- Surface temperature will get hotter - especially when new
- Smoother surface not quite as good for grip
- Cannot simply give a wire-brushing "touch-up" for scratches
- Needs to be well weathered before paint or stain will adhere properly

Is it scratch resistant?

No – ModWood Natural Grain Collection can show scuffs and scratches, especially when new, and especially on the "smooth surface". By rubbing on a clear/natural decking oil with a clean rag the marks will be less noticeable. Exposure to the weather will see the board fade to its natural colour, thus hiding scuff and scratch marks. It is strongly recommended that all furniture on a ModWood deck has protective feet e.g. rubber stoppers applied to the legs to help prevent scuffing or scratching of the deck surface. **Please note, ModWood is a finished product-take care!** See our web site under the section called Care & Maintenance for further details. Important - the brushed surface on the Natural Grain Collection does not easily show scuffs and scratches. This face is to be installed up when the product is intended for use under shade/cover. The brushed surface can be wire brushed. The area you brush will quickly fade out and hide your repair.

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Can ModWood be used in bushfire prone areas?

Yes, Flame Shield® only, can be used as decking only in bushfire prone areas that have a bushfire attack level (BAL) up to and including BAL-40 (AS3959-2018). Flame Shield®, is certified to AS1530.8.1-2007 with a BAL-40 rating. Flame Shield® can be used in BAL-12.5, 19, 29, and BAL-40 rated areas. Note, our non-flame retardant decking boards and mini boards must not be used in BAL rated zones.

Is it termite resistant?

Termite resistance of ModWood has been tested by the CSIRO against two of the most common species in Australia. ModWood has been found to give superior termite resistance - enough to be classed as a "termite control" product.

Is ModWood slippery?

ModWood Natural Grain Collection decking has very similar non-slip ratings to painted or coated timber decking products. Note, our 137mm profiles are manufactured to a higher anti slip rating of R11. For commercial areas which require a P4 or P5 rating (AS/NZS 4586-2013), Aqualis Traction can be applied to Natural Grain Collection only. This can be applied as a clear or colour sealer using a roller. Note Xtreme Guard has the highest anti-slip rating P5. Refer to Technical on our website for more details.

Is ModWood suitable for use around swimming pools?

Yes - ModWood Xtreme Guard is an ideal decking to be used in a pool and spa environment. Also, as there is no likelihood of splinters occurring, it protects your feet. Refer to fixing instructions with regards to ventilation requirements.

Can ModWood be used by the sea?

ModWood is ideal in a marine environment, being unaffected by the salt air.

How can I clean and maintain ModWood?

ModWood is relatively maintenance free, however, regular cleaning is important in keeping the deck to look great. **Do not use high pressure cleaners on ModWood.** Sweeping and cleaning with normal household cleaners are usually adequate to keep your deck looking great. Aqualis Composite Bright or "Sugar soap", mixed with water, works particularly well when used with a yard broom - take care not to scratch the board surface. Stubborn (usually oil-based) stains on Natural Grain Collection can be difficult to remove - we find that water-diluted Aqualis Composite Bright or So Safe deck cleaning products very effective. The use of Kenco degreaser works well for heavy spot stains - scrub in and wash off after a few minutes. Periodic cleaning of expansion joints is also recommended. Aqualis Sealer can be applied to Natural Grain Collection only for those areas subject to high oil and fats staining to any area under a roof line that does not get full UV exposure. Refer to "Care & Maintenance" on our web site for more detail. Tests have shown that it is possible to remove graffiti paint by using Aqualis Strip-Ease.

Can I paint, oil or stain my ModWood Natural Grain Collection?

You can stain ModWood Natural Grain Collection by using Aqualis Composite Sealer Clear or with pigment added (contact Aqualis Coatings directly for advice) to rejuvenate board colour. Due to its high wood-fibre base, ModWood Natural Grain Collection when fully weathered, will accept some decking oils. Must be oil based and not water based decking oil! Sceneys Timber and Decking Oil and Feast Watson Traditional Timber Oil are suitable. Please note Feast Watson decking oil has a yellow tinge and is not suitable on our grey coloured boards. The plastic component of ModWood (especially the brushed and embossed finishes) can make good adherence of most coatings difficult, until it is fully weathered. Before painting ModWood Natural Grain Collection, it should be given a coating of Taubmans Prep Right oil based wood primer. Do not use the Prep Right if applying the Aqualis Composite Sealer. We strongly recommend a small trial is done first with any of the above suggestions. Choose a small in conspicuous area to satisfy yourself that the result is desirable in terms of appearance and adhesion prior to applying to the total area.

Can water stain marks appear on ModWood?

Yes, water stain marks can show on ModWood boards. There are two types of water stains; both of which will generally disappear with exposure to a reasonable soaking of rain and general weathering. Both can be cleaned fairly quickly with an application of diluted Aqualis Composite Bright.

a) **Water stains from wood tannins** will occur in the early life of your deck as the natural tannins come out of the wood fibres at the surface of the ModWood Natural Grain Collection. This will happen in the early weeks of your deck, and will depend on how exposed to the elements your deck is before the weathering process is complete.

b) **Water stains from water pooling or dripping** can happen with ModWood just like it can with many other materials/surfaces such as timber flooring, glass, laminated tables etc. The visibility of the stain will be governed by factors such as how dirty the deck is and how quickly the water dries from the water pooling. Where decks are only partially exposed to the elements, water stain marks are more prone in this situation. This is due to the inability of the boards to be exposed to the weather to receive a reasonable soaking of rain and general weathering. Clean as mentioned above. It is possible to apply Aqualis Composite Sealer to Natural Grain Collection in these areas which should minimise water stain marks.

Is ModWood mould resistant?

As ModWood has a wood-fibre base, mould and mildew can grow on the deck in some circumstances and environments, or if it "sweats" under the plastic cover (especially in rain) before installation. Failure to keep packs dry in storage can lead to the growth of mould spores on boards. Clean as per directions under "Care & Maintenance" on our web site. We have also found a product known as "Wet & Forget" or Aqualis No Fungal Pro in conjunction with Aqualis Composite Bright to work very well.

What joist span do I use?

Some ModWood products have different joist spans to similar timber products. Please check Installation section for instructions for relevant products on our website.

Why does ModWood specify a bigger side by side gap than timber?

Timber boards will often shrink slightly in width once laid, however ModWood wood fibres have extremely low moisture content. After laying, the surface fibres will "normalise" with moisture and the boards will swell slightly. It is critical that the side by side minimum gapping specified (4mm) by ModWood is maintained when laying the deck.

What are the standard colours and sizes?

ModWood comes in a wide range of colours and sizes for residential and commercial applications. Check our web site for more details. *Please note colours may vary from batch to batch, however different batches of the same colour will weather to within a commercially acceptable tolerance.*

Can audible tones occur between ModWood decking boards?

Yes, it is possible for harmonic's to occur. This is a site specific condition that can occur with the loudness level more pronounced in elevated decks, exposed to high velocity winds from a particular direction. Contact ModWood who will assist with suggestions that may help to minimise the noise level.

Can I use ModWood for screening?

ModWood has a specific product (68 x 17mm) for use as screening. Other ModWood boards may also be used for screening. Check fixing instructions for details.

Are there special tools required for working with ModWood?

With ModWood you can use standard power saws and drills. As with using any power tools, adequate personal protective equipment should be used when cutting or drilling ModWood. The ModWood "sawdust", is coarse, heavy sawdust that doesn't tend to "float" in the air. This makes it safer for handling.

How should ModWood be stored and handled?

Whether at the timber merchant premises or at your own house awaiting installation, ModWood must be stored on edge in a dry, flat area under roof and off the ground. Failure to keep packs dry in storage can lead to the growth of mould spores on boards. When moving product around, ModWood must be carried on its edge.

ModWood is a finished product-take care!

Is ModWood guaranteed?

ModWood Technologies P/L offers a limited twenty five-year Residential and ten-year Commercial warranty for Xtreme Guard. ModWood Technologies P/L offers a limited ten-year Residential and seven-year Commercial warranty for Natural Grain Collection.

Please visit our Terms & Conditions page on the website.

All product performance claims are based on ModWood products being used as recommended and installed in accordance with ModWood's minimum fixing specifications.