



## Carving Care

Thank you for giving one of our carvings a good home. As the proud owner of a piece of chainsaw art, there are a few things you can do to keep it looking good for years to come.

### Cracking.

Chainsaw carvings are, for the most part, carved from whole diameter green logs. After the wood is carved it is sealed right away with an exterior sealer that is meant to slow the escape of moisture without locking it in. The slower the moisture escapes, the less cracking that will appear, however this does not eliminate cracking, it's the nature of a log to check or crack as it dries, and all carvings will crack within the first year. The checks and cracks that occur make each carving an individual, adds character to the carving, and distinguishes a real wood carving from one made of plastic.

\*\*\*When small cracks do develop, the light color of the wood under the finish will catch your eye and make it look worse than it may be. In the case of a bear carving, use some ebony color stain and a small brush to dab the stain into the crack, try not to get too much outside of the crack since it may make a darker area. For any other color carving, use a stain close to the color that matches. Indoor stains from Minwax are perfectly fine to use, they will hold their color until you are ready to do the usual maintenance re-finishing.

### Displaying your carving.

Your carving is wood. Wood can split, crack, rot, fade, burn and/or be attacked by insects. Putting a little thought into where and how it's displayed can help your carving to last years longer.

Do not set your carving directly onto soil or grass. A pad of concrete, gravel or paving stones is better and will help protect the base from water and insect damage. It's also best to leave at least a 1/2in gap between the ground and the base of the carving to allow for air flow.

Direct sun is not good for a carving. If possible, keep it under some source of shade.

Rain is not much of a problem for a properly sealed carving. Frequent drenching with water however [irrigation, etc] increases the likelihood of water damage so try to display your carving beyond the reach of your lawn sprinklers. Keeping it properly sealed [described below] is very important for any location, but more so if not in an ideal one

If you're going to keep your carving indoors, household heat will dry the wood quickly which causes additional cracking. Keep the carving as far from direct heat such as baseboard heaters, fireplace/wood stove, and heat vents as possible. Avoid these when possible or be prepared to renew the finish more frequently.

### Maintaining the finish.

Your carving is finished with **"TWP 1500 (Natural 1530)"** an oil based, semi transparent outdoor sealer and stain. It is available online at The Stain Depot, Amazon, etc. Some local paint stores may also stock it.

It is not a clear shell coating like a spar urethane but an oil that allows the wood to breathe and stabilize. If the wood inside the carving does get soaked, the oil finish allows the moisture to

evaporate out. TWP1500 Clear can be used as well, but any unpainted surfaces may gray over time, however if your carving is mostly painted, this is a good option to prevent any discoloration that could be caused by the tint of the "Natural" color. A spar urethane finish is like a solid shell, and is perfectly fine to use once the carving has dried out (about 3-6 months) if you prefer. That said, if your carving is in a very sunny spot or indoors, Spar Urethane is recommended since it will slow down the drying process more than an oil finish will, and cause less cracking over time. It can be applied over the existing finish without issue, and it should be coated within a few weeks of placing your carving in one of these locations.

I recommend that any carving displayed outdoors be re-sealed with whichever finish you decide to go with 4-8 weeks after your purchase, then once a year afterwards. Keep an eye on the finish, sometimes they will need to be coated more (or less) often, depending on its location.

You can use TWP 1500 in the color highlighted above as I do, or you can use Spar Urethane if you prefer. Spring and Fall are the best times of year to reapply the finish since the humidity is usually lower at these times of year. Be sure to follow the directions on the can.

### Bugs and Mold/Mildew

Before the finish was applied, the carving was treated with a Borate solution to prevent mold, mildew, and wood eating bugs from destroying it. Like any pest control, it is not a cure all and does not stop bugs that do not eat the wood such as carpenter bees, and the effects of the Borate will wear out over time depending on how well the finish is maintained. The best way to control these pests is to keep the carving from becoming water logged (damp locations, being kept directly on dirt, and not leaving space between the base and ground to allow air flow), if the wood is not moist, most pest can not survive and will not be a problem. If you do develop a problem, or carpenter bees have started making holes, spot treatments for the specific pest will usually work just fine. If it becomes an ongoing problem though, there are many different sprays and treatments that can be applied to the whole carving to stop the problem, just search the internet for log home care supply websites, and they will almost always have what you are looking for.

If you have any questions about your carving, want it re-sealed, or if it develops a crack that it is really bothersome, or is in a critical spot, feel free to contact me. Follow WJH Chainsaw Carving on Facebook or Instagram for maintenance reminders.

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## **Quick Tips**

**Keep your carving off the ground. Leave a small gap between the base and the ground using small sticks or flat rocks to allow air flow**

**Carvings rot from the bottom up, protecting the base is very important to its longevity**

**Refinish every year with the appropriate finish....don't forget to coat the bottom as well**

**Do not place your carving in a damp location and where a lawn sprinkler will be spraying it often**

**Avoid putting your carving where it will get all day sun...some shade is good.**

**Spring and Fall is the best time to refinish if needed, and to check to make sure the base is still above the ground, clear away any debris around it, and to check for any bugs or mold.**

**And the most important thing....put it where you will see it and can enjoy it.**