

Management & Maintenance

Introduction

The document is intended for anyone responsible (either directly or indirectly) for purchasing, setting out, using and maintaining outdoor equipment. PlayEquip Ltd are specialist manufacturers and distributors whose prime objective is to offer the public and private sector a range of safe, quality and durable products. This guide provides general safety and maintenance recommendations as well as specific advice on assembly and use of outdoor equipment.

Purchasing of Equipment

PlayEquip offer a complete range of equipment, all designed for use in gardens, schools, colleges, universities, sports clubs and outdoor facilities. Equipment meets the relevant British and European Standards and members are committed to the concept of European Standards (EN 1167) for all equipment. These standards, together with PlayEquip's knowledge, ensure safety and quality in all their products. PlayEquip are committed to the following objectives:

- To raise the standards of equipment available in the UK and Europe for the benefit of customers
- To operate and police a Code of Practice ensuring customers have peace of mind in all purchases

Before Assembly/Use

Note: Operators have a responsibility to staff under the Health & Safety at Work Act to ensure that staff are properly trained to carry out the tasks they are asked to do. Employers should also be aware of COSHH regulations regarding the licensed use of chemicals. If staff were not competent, the body issuing the task could be liable in case of accidents.

- Before assembling equipment, check that it is not damaged and that it is fit for use.
- Inspect the equipment to ensure that it conforms to the relevant specifications and recommendations of European Safety Standards EN 1176, including required free space and surfacing

Assembly

The equipment must be used for the purpose it was intended. Check this before assembly.

Note: Construction, Design and Management regulations (CDM regulations) affect this area of work and may apply to your facility. Organisations should check whether any specific requirements apply to them. Equipment must be safely secured at all stages of use. When erecting equipment, always use these instructions and recommendations.

- Personal protective equipment (PPE) must be worn at all times.
- When tall and/or heavy equipment is being erected, it is recommended that scaffolding and/or heavy lifting equipment is used and that the correct tools for the job are used at all times.
- Assembly must be carried out by a sufficient number of competent persons. Never try to assemble large or heavy products with only one person. A second person is required, sometimes a third or fourth, to support the parts while fixings are being secured.

- All equipment should meet the requirements of British and European Standards and should be assembled to meet the requirements of the same
- If necessary, protect children and the general public from your work.

Moving

- It may not be appropriate to move equipment in an assembled state.
- If a product is moved or edged into position when it is still assembled, great care must be taken.
- If a piece of equipment must be moved and no transportation wheels are provided, the equipment must be lifted by a sufficient number of competent persons to prevent injury or to prevent damage to the product.

During Use

- The product must be used for the purpose for which it has been designed and no other purpose.
- The product must be secured according to the manufacturer's instructions and recommendations.

General Maintenance Recommendations

- The operator of the equipment has a legal responsibility to maintain the equipment and this requires positive action to do so.
- Allocate one person within your department or organisation the responsibility for visually checking over equipment once a week to ensure it is still fit for use and safe. Written records are recommended.
- Have in place a reporting procedure if equipment is deemed to be faulty or unsafe. Ensure report is given to a manager/leader with authority to remedy any problems prior to equipment being used again.
- Any splinters in the timber must be treated or sanded to prevent injury.
- The life expectancy of steel can be enhanced by the application of a polymerbased wax to the product prior to use and annually thereafter.
- Critical points such as fixing points where sleeve nuts enter timbers, which are prone to rust and should be examined by a responsible person and a record kept of such inspections in a log
- An independent annual inspection of all equipment is recommended.

General Safety Recommendations

- Ensure that all equipment is purchased from a reputable supplier.
- Regular maintenance of equipment is essential to ensure that it is fit for its purpose.
- A risk assessment of the use of equipment and a review of this assessment should be carried out on a regular basis. Annual inspections to be done by play safety experts.
- Ensure that person(s) responsible for the assembly and use are suitably trained to carry out these tasks.
- Children must be supervised by an adult when they are near all equipment.
- Good signage in and around the facility is recommended to ensure that users understand that all equipment should be properly used before use commences.
- Do not use damaged equipment that will be a safety hazard. If it is not possible to repair, replace with new equipment

Timber Elements

As wood's natural habitat is the great outdoors, it is naturally weather resistant. Left untreated the oak and robinia will weather to a silver colour in around a year. If required, a lighter colour can be retained if the wood is treated or sealed before it is exposed to the elements. Remember though, that if you do this, you are signing up to a lifetime of repeat coats as the weather erodes the treatment off. We also recommend that you check the colour on an off-cut of the same timber if you do intend to treat it so you can get exactly what you want.

Areas of water forming on the surface of the beams during construction are often unavoidable when installing outside and will affect the colour and leave watermarks. If staining occurs, it can be cleaned with oxalic acid after the structure is weather tight and the staining removed.

Due to its high tannin content and because it is a breathable material, which allows moisture and humidity to pass freely through it, oak and robinia are also highly resistant to insect and fungal attack.

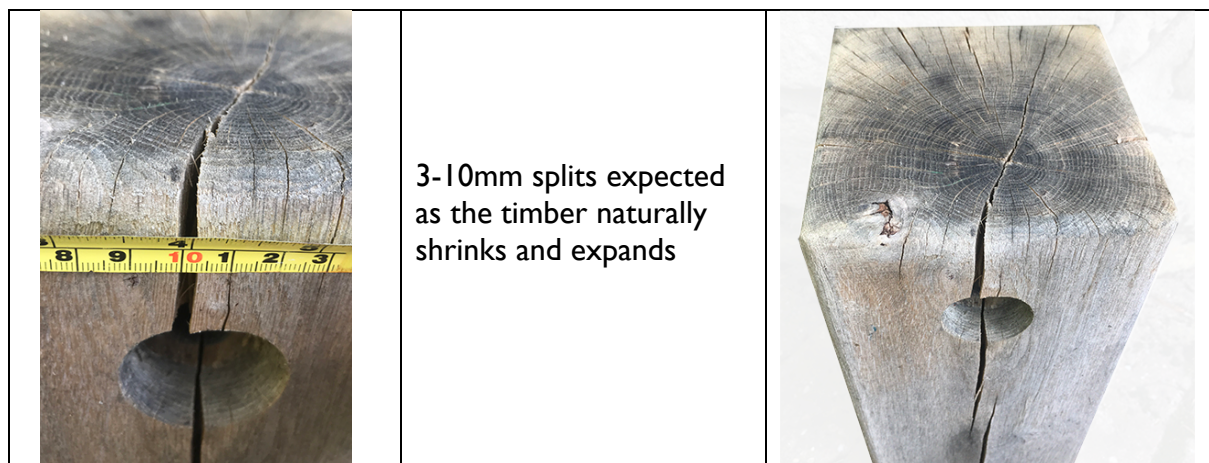
Splits, Cracks and Splintering

Splits and cracks are always to be expected in oak and robinia components (see examples below). Timber dries out, it shrinks across the grain, which is caused by the the fibres in the cellular structure thinning and pulling closer together. Some of them stick on one side and pull away from another causing shakes (splits) along the grain, which is completely natural and does not effect the frame strength in most situations. The shrinkage has a strengthening effect on the frame with and can also tighten joints between components. These splits should not exceed 10mm in diameter and create potential finger traps.

If cracks and splits exceed 8mm in diameter it is recommended that these gaps are filled with an exterior grade flexible filler. Contact PlayEquip Sales Department for further instruction if required.

Special care should be take in monitoring timber components for splintering. Sand splinters smooth

Inspection of rot and insect infestations



Stainless Steel Tubes and Fixings

Mortar and cement spatter: If mortar or cement comes into contact with stainless steel, remove immediately. Use E-NOX CLEAN or another Phosphoric Acid based stainless steel cleaner. Spread cleaner evenly over the surface, wait 30-60 minutes, then neutralize the acid with an alkaline cleaner like UNO S F. Thoroughly rinse away all residue with clean water.

Graffiti removal: Graffiti can be removed from stainless steel with a biodegradable graffiti-cleaning spray or wipe. Avoid using knives or hard scraping tools to remove graffiti, as these may damage stainless steel surfaces.

Oil and grease marks: Remove oil or grease from stainless steel with hydrocarbon solvents such as methylated spirit (Bartoline is a common brand), isopropyl alcohol (i.e. rubbing alcohol) or acetone. Apply solvent several times with a clean, non-scratching cloth until all oil or grease is removed.

Heavily neglected or tarnished surfaces: Use domestic metal polish to improve the appearance of tarnished stainless steel. Chrome polishes for automotive parts are suitable for stainless steel and are widely available. Treat entire stainless steel surface to avoid discolored patches.

Heavily damaged products: To avoid progression of damage, identify and address problems as early as possible. Heavy damage includes structural compromises such as visible dents, cracks, breaks and rust that can undermine the integrity of a product. Heavily damaged products should be removed from service until a repair or replacement can be made. To prevent worsening of damage, any significant rust should be removed as soon as possible. If any parts are broken or missing, contact PlayEquip's Sales Department to determine the availability of replacements.

Recommended Checks

We recommend the following checks take place:

Weekly	Check for splinters (treat with sandpaper as necessary) Check for fraying of ropes on nets and vandalism. Check items for stability. Tighten bolt fixings. Get in touch with PlayEquip if excessive movement is reported. Check for rotating steel bars. These may become loose if sleeve nuts are not kept tight
<u>Monthly</u>	<u>Check for exposed screw heads</u> <u>Check Safety surface to prevent trip hazards etc.</u> <u>Check rope fixings and all moving parts for excessive wear (grease if necessary)</u>
Six Monthly	Check all nuts for tightness Check all safety surfacing is in good order.
Yearly	Check timbers for signs of rot particularly at the base of all timber post. If timbers are installed directly into ground, excavate down 150mm below the surface and check for rot.

A written record of the recommended checks must be maintained to validate warranties and guarantees