Coated Timber Site Care & Storage

TIMBER COATERS LTD | OFFLOADING • HANDLING • STORAGE • INSTALLATION | VERSION 10/2026

IMPORTANT: Share this guidance with the delivery team, site manager and installers before goods arrive. Product-specific treatment, coating and installation instructions take precedence.

1. Protecting the factory finish

Factory-applied coatings improve appearance and weather resistance, but coated timber is not waterproof or immune to site damage. Timber absorbs and releases moisture; excessive changes can cause swelling, shrinkage, splitting, staining, distortion and coating deterioration.

Initial curing: Coatings normally leave the factory sufficiently dry for careful handling, but some develop final hardness over approximately 14 days or longer. During this period avoid abrasion, pressure, heat build-up and face-to-face contact. Follow separate conditioning instructions, especially for fire-retardant products.

2. Delivery inspection and safe offloading

- Before unloading, provide a clean, firm, level area, suitable lifting equipment and competent operators.
- Inspect wrapping, strapping, pallets and packs for impact, water ingress, condensation or displaced boards. Photograph concerns before opening; record damage on delivery paperwork and report promptly.
- Use appropriately rated equipment with sufficient fork length and correctly positioned lifting points. Fully support longer packs; protect coated faces from forks, chains and slings.
- Never drag, drop, tip or push packs across surfaces; never lift by retaining straps unless certified for lifting.

3. Storage location and support

- Preferred: clean, dry, well-ventilated covered storage. If outside, provide effective rain protection and open airflow.
- Store packs horizontally on clean, level bearers of equal thickness, preferably at least 100 mm above ground; increase clearance if splashback or pooling is possible.
- Set bearers approximately 500–600 mm apart (closer for thin/flexible boards). Align supports vertically through stacked layers.
- Keep clear of wet soil or concrete, puddles, direct sunlight, extreme heat, scaffolding drips and building contamination. Avoid sealed containers and trailers where condensation and heat can accumulate.

4. Wrapping, covers and ventilation

- Transport wrapping is not intended for prolonged sealed storage. Inspect for trapped moisture, and open or adapt airtight wrapping as needed for ventilation.
- Retain clean, non-marking protective foam or interleaving between coated surfaces.
- Use a raised or supported weather-resistant cover that sheds rain while leaving the sides and ends ventilated. Never tightly wrap in polythene or allow water to pool on covers.
- Check coverings regularly and after heavy rain, strong wind or temperature changes.

5. Opening, moving and rebuilding packs

1. Prepare a clean, level location with bearers approximately 500–600 mm apart.
2. Open outer wrapping carefully: keep knives and cutters away from finished faces.
3. Stabilise the pack before removing straps; beware of tensioned strapping.
4. Retain protective foam or other suitable non-marking interleaving.
5. Lift and support boards; never slide one coated board over another.
6. Restack evenly on supports, separating coated faces and preventing local pressure.
7. Secure using suitable straps and edge protection, without overtightening.
8. Re-cover against rain, retaining ventilation, and check pack stability.

6. Handling during installation

- Lift rather than drag boards. Keep unused timber protected, interleaved and secure; never lay finished faces on damp, dirty or abrasive surfaces.
- Avoid marks from tools, ladders, mortar, render, paints and adhesives. Use clean, non-marking cutting supports.
- Treat exposed end grain, site cuts, drilled holes and damaged surfaces using the approved coating/repair system. For fire-retardant products, confirm any cutting, sanding or recoating is permitted by the classified specification.

7. Wet trades and contamination

Concreting, plastering, rendering and screeding increase humidity. Avoid storage or installation in excessively humid conditions; allow drying and ventilation, with controlled gentle heating or dehumidification where appropriate. Remove contamination promptly using a coating-compatible method; avoid solvents, abrasive cleaners or aggressive scrubbing unless explicitly authorised.

8. Inspection and prompt installation

Arrange delivery close to installation. Inspect packs regularly and after severe weather for moisture, condensation, staining, distortion, coating marks, boards sticking together or displaced covers. If timber becomes wet, protect it and allow gradual ventilated drying; do not use direct heat. Seek advice before installing visibly affected boards.

9. Site responsibility and reporting

The receiving party should ensure appropriate offloading, handling, storage and installation. Site damage may cause scratching, pressure marks, moisture staining, timber movement or coating deterioration. Timber Coaters Ltd cannot accept responsibility for damage shown to have arisen from inappropriate site handling, storage or installation after the goods have passed into the receiving party’s care, subject to contract terms and applicable law. This does not exclude responsibility for pre-existing defects or defective workmanship.

SITE CHECKLIST: Inspect and photograph on arrival • Lift and support safely • Store flat and off the ground • Keep dry and ventilated • Retain foam between faces • Never drag boards • Re-cover opened packs • Protect site cuts • Install promptly • Report concerns.

Reference guidance: TDCA; Timber Development UK; Teknos; British Woodworking Federation; HSE. Always follow the current technical instructions for the particular coating and timber product.