



## Product Knowledge

Crate Designs is based on a style of furniture developed in the U.S. in the early 1970's. The basic design principles of this style of furniture are:

1. Constructed of hard pine.
2. Straight lines, flush joints.
3. Eased edges and corners.
4. Practical oil finish.

Crate Designs started as Heirloom of Canada, a manufacturer of traditional styled occasional furniture since 1906. The company became involved in crate style furniture in 1990, by importing and distributing an American produced line of Crate furniture. The rapid acceptance of the style and value in this line of furniture led Heirloom to start producing a Canadian version one year later.

By softening the colour to suit Canadian tastes, applying stricter quality control standards, adding smooth running drawer glides and expanding the product offering, the appeal of the furniture was broadened beyond the value driven segment of the market to appeal to a wide spectrum of both value and style conscious consumers.

What was started as import based "Crate in Motion", became Made in Canada, "The Crate Furniture Co," and evolved into today's "Crate Designs".

Crate Designs opened its first retail outlet in Guelph, Ontario in July, 1990. By 2003 the chain had grown to 21 stores.

We start the manufacturing process by sourcing the finest available Southern Yellow & Radiata pine. Yellow pine is North America's fastest growing hard lumber, roughly equivalent to maple in weight and hardness. It is totally unlike any of our native Canadian pines, which have gained a poor reputation as a furniture material in some peoples' view, due to their softness. The fast growth produces striking annual rings and grain patterns, which can be very compatible with oak. Radiata is very similar, but is sourced from Chile.

Worthy of note is the fact that most of the wood we utilize today was planted on tree farms for harvesting. This is not the product of clear cutting or detrimental lumbering practices. Our non-toxic oil finish & no excess packaging also help to reduce the environmental impact of our furniture.

One of the major differences from traditional furniture stems from the use of these hard pines. While it is possible to dry traditional hardwoods (maple, oak, cherry) and softer pines (white, red) to a very stable 6% moisture content, it is not possible to purchase hard pine this dry and still be able to manufacture with it. Therefore, depending on the relative humidity of the environment the furniture is in, some further drying, and therefore, shrinkage and cracking can be expected.

The furniture is designed, manufactured and guaranteed with this in mind. Unlike traditional furniture, crate style furniture is not edge glued. This allows individual pieces of wood to shrink with a minimal amount of cracks or checks developing. To join pieces of wood edge to edge (such as shelves), a mechanical fastener - a "scotch: nail - is used. Gaps or "cracks" are a part of "Crate" right from manufacturing.

Recognizing the drawback to this type of construction in dining tables, where small gaps present a housekeeping problem, or desks, where a smooth writing surface is essential, Crate Designs introduced a laminated insert for larger tops (i.e. occasional & dining tables, desks & dressers). In this construction a veneered panel is sandwiched between and surrounded by a solid wood perimeter, guaranteeing a smooth stable surface, protected from damage on all sides and corners by solid wood. Wood doors also utilize a veneered inner panel to minimize warping.

Face to face joints, though, such as between the outer frame and the recessed pieces on an end panel are all glue joints, held and reinforced by 1 1/4" staples. These staples, relatively inconspicuous in most pieces, invisible in others, are also indicative of the "Crate" style.

Crate Designs uses staples for their unique holding power. As the staple enters the wood the two points diverge and act in a similar fashion to a fish hook. The staple can no longer be withdrawn in a straight line and offers tremendous resistance to separation. In addition, we utilize a glue coating on the staple that melts on penetration and glues itself to the wood.

The third type of fastener used in basic construction is the wood screw, ranging in length from 1 1/4" to 3", depending on the joint. Where screws are used in conspicuous areas they are concealed with a wood "button" or "plug", resembling a peg or dowel. In the interior of Crate Designs furniture, all joints are reinforced with glued corner blocks to ensure lifetime rigidity.

Most backs are recessed, or rabbeted, into place, in order to also serve as long term structural support. Backs that show from the front, (i.e. 8005, 7002) are constructed of the same 3/4" thick pine as is used elsewhere in the furniture. These pieces do not look good from the back. Case pieces (i.e. 3010, 7011) have luan plywood backs. All desks and seating pieces have finished backs, as well as the 7010, 7014, 8042, 8000 & 8001.

Because drawers are the moving part most prone to failure in furniture, Crate Designs has paid particular attention to them. Drawer bottoms are constructed of luan plywood, because of its superior strength characteristics. Although it costs a little more, these bottoms are captured all four sides in a groove in the drawer sides, to ensure that they never sag or fail. Drawer handles can never break, loosen or get in your way with Crate Designs convenient recessed pulls. To top it off, all full sized drawers are mounted on self closing Euro-style steel and nylon drawer runners. Even fully loaded drawers glide easily out to a safety stop and close with a slight push (exceptions are the 4104 & 8003 drawers).

Upholstered pieces in the Crate Designs collection are executed with the same attention to value and style. All of our fabric choices are selected to offer the consumer a good combination of style, comfort and life expectancy.

Keeping your upholstery clean, with frequent vacuuming, is the single most important thing you can do to prolong fabric life. Accumulated dust and soiling is the primary cause of fabric wear. Regular rotation of seat cushions will not only equalize use, but will also help to keep the covers aligned, which reduces the chances of premature foam failure. The softer back pillows of the pub back style should also be "patted" or "punched" back into shape, as required.

Crate Designs cuts each piece of fabric individually to ensure perfect matching and tailoring. Under the fabric, we use only the best polyurethane foam (2 lb. seat cushions) and polyester fibre for long lasting comfort.

Full size seating has all removable cushioning, which allows installation of these pieces into all but the most difficult of access areas. And even there Crate Designs can guarantee delivery because

all seating pieces can be disassembled on site. Upholstery on all other items in the line is also easily removable which guarantees modest re-upholstery costs when the time comes.

Flexible, multi-use design, becomes more apparent as you look closer at the Crate Designs line. Many pieces are designed to mesh with the 42" width of a single bed and with each other, such as the 2003, 3000, 3005, 3010, 3105, 3905, 6400 desks, 6100, 7002, 7011, 7016, 8004, 8005, 8007 & 8008.

Crate Designs has not forgotten safety either. One of our biggest sellers, the 4017 day bed, can start as a child's first bed with a removable guard rail, and later be turned around to serve its named purpose and be the focal point of a teen's room or adults guest room.

And safety comes first with our Crate bunk beds, that all incorporate built-in end ladders, dual removable guard rails, steel joiner pins, and Crate Designs rigidity.

Mission bunk beds incorporate the same basic features but are equipped with removable ladders.

We finish all of this furniture with a penetrating oil finish that requires minimal maintenance to keep it looking fresh for as long as you own it. Crate Designs has chosen to use an "open" oil finish because scratches and abrasions are almost invisible on this surface compared to a "sealed" finish (such as lacquer or varnish). In keeping with the lifetime expectancy that we are confident that this furniture will have with its owners, we apply a finish that has a matching durability. An oil finish cannot chip or flake off, and can be renewed indefinitely with another application. While the trade-off is that staining agents (such as mustard and red wine) can discolor the surfaces if allowed to sit and penetrate, damaged areas can be "spot" repaired with a light sanding and re-oiling any time.

Normal recommended maintenance is dusting with a slightly water dampened cloth. Soiled areas should be cleaned with damp Scotchbrite. Badly soiled areas can be cleaned with Scotchbrite and a minimum amount of a cleaner such as "Fantastik" or "Orange Glo", and then re-oiled. Periodic re-oiling with any good quality furniture oil (such as Crate Oil or Min Wax) is recommended for high use areas such as table tops. Keep in mind that too frequent oiling will build a gloss finish.

As a premium finish we use a premium acid-catalyzed lacquer. Less expensive lacquer finishes may be nitrocellulose based, which is not as resistant to water, alcohol etc. and is softer and more easily scratched. We apply two coats, sanded in between coats, over top of the regular oil finish. The benefit of this finish is easy cleanup of just about any regular household product or food, and a soft smooth surface to the touch. While it is still possible to stain it, you almost have to work at it! The tradeoff for these benefits is that unlike our oil finish, if lacquer does get scratched or damaged it usually must be repaired or refinished by a professional (and we cannot provide this service). Normal recommended maintenance for lacquer finishes is dusting with a slightly water dampened cloth.

Standing behind your purchase is a strong Canadian Company that has been producing fine furniture for discriminating consumers, for over 100 years.