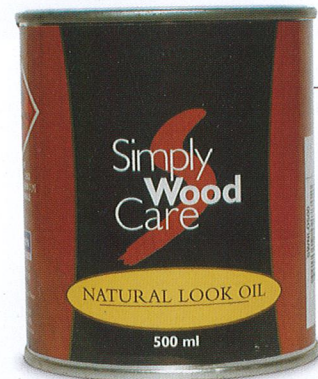


Intergrain Tung Oil Finish

Intergrain, Cabot's and Feast Watson products are all made by the multinational Australian-based Orica group, formerly ICI. My query to their helpful PR people whether this meant they simply put the same oil mix into three differently named cans met with a firm 'no'. The three different oil mixes are marketed at different groups: Intergrain for a commercial market, Feast Watson for the traditionalist and experienced user, and Cabot's for the less experienced DIY user. The Tung Oil Finish is also intended for flooring where several coats are applied without rubbing off excess in between coats. Supposedly containing over 20% tung oil, it performed well on the tests I did, was easy to use and gave a nice satiny finish. It repaired and revived especially well and is also very competitively priced (\$27.95/1L).

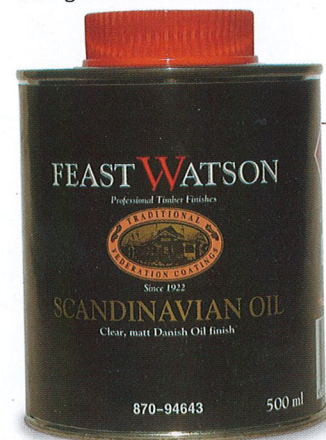


Simply Wood Care Natural Look Oil

This little known product made by Haymes Paints in Ballarat, Victoria, is not widely available but can be found in paint specialist shops. Modified urethanes and penetrating clear oil are listed as its main ingredients. Its useability and performance were almost identical to the Intergrain finish, although it is not recommended for floors. Another useful quality it shares with the Intergrain product, Feast Watson Scandinavian Oil and Orange Tung is low odour, an important factor if you use oil finishes regularly. Its ease of use and excellent repairing and restoring abilities may make the higher price (\$40.95/1L) worth paying.

Cabot's Danish Oil

According to the manufacturers Cabot's wood finishes are made for DIY users 'who may never have opened a can', which explains why these products are easy to use. They also give good results: I use them occasionally in my work as a furniture maker and restorer. Most people can achieve good results with them and the Danish Oil is no exception. Hard to say what's in the tin; the Safety Data Sheet lists 30-60% kerosene, 30-60% synthetic polymers and 10-30% turps among the ingredients, which makes the 'Oil Rich' label dubious. But you can't argue with good results, and this product gave those on all the tests.

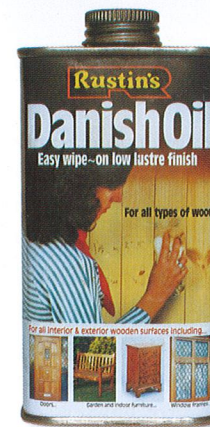
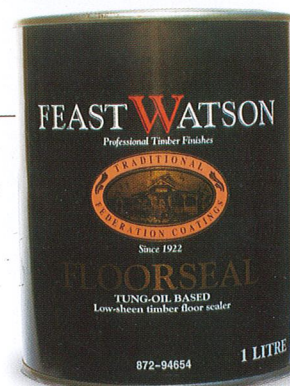


Feast Watson Scandinavian Oil

Not to be confused with Watty! Scandinavian Teak oil, which is for polishing estapols, this oil is an effective finish by itself. The instructions say simply brush one or two coats on without wiping off but you won't get a hand-rubbed look using that method. It was included in this review because the tin states the 'Danish Oil finish' contains polyurethane oils and resins, a typical wiping oil mix. It's a milky mixture out of the tin but dries quite clear and is easy to use. Its top-shelf price (\$42.45/1L) seems hard to justify considering its unexceptional results from the tests I did, but as the label says it is ideal for bathrooms and saunas so it may have superior water resistance qualities over other oil finishes.

Feast Watson Floorseal

At about \$25 for a one litre tin, Floorseal is a lot cheaper than other oil mix products, which may explain its popularity as a furniture finish. Although it is sold specifically as a floor and fittings finish, my understanding that it is widely used by furniture makers when a tung oil based hand-rubbed finish is wanted explains its inclusion in this review. Like the Scandinavian Oil, it can be applied by brush or used as a wipe-on wipe-off oil. It has a high content of polyurethane solids (or something similar) which need to be dredged from the bottom of the tin and thoroughly mixed in before use. Application is easy but it has high 'grab'; oil mixes like these are best applied to small sections at a time when working on large furniture items, rather than oiling the entire piece in one go.



Rustin's Danish Oil

This very easy to use product is made in the UK and was one of the first Danish oils to appear in Australia about 25 years ago. It is especially popular with woodturners and gives a very appealing low sheen finish that suits turned items. The Safety Data Sheet says heavy naphtha (petroleum) is the main constituent (70-90%); the tin says tung oil and other special ingredients provide the durable and water resistant seal. It seems unlikely it has any kind of polyurethane in it as it has none of the stickiness of the other oil mixes. Whatever it's made of, it is a reliable product that has stood the test of time.

Organoil Danish Oil

According to the manufacturers, Organoil Olde Style Danish Oil contains 40% tung oil, 30% linseed oil and 30% citrus peel oil. It is extremely thin and its lack of solids or build makes it very different to use from other Danish oils. Having no synthetic component would, it seemed to me, make it less durable and moisture resistant. Its makers say this isn't so, and the product did achieve similar results in the tests I conducted. One promoted advantage over other Danish oils, and pure tung oil and linseed oil for that matter, is that it won't harden or gel in the can. It's very sweet smelling, presumably due to the citrus ingredient, but this odour can be overwhelming on a large piece and lasts for several days.

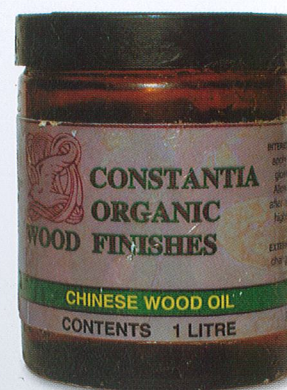
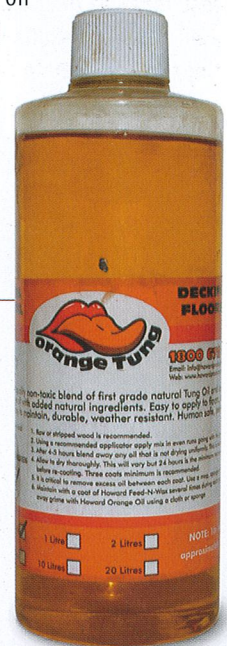


Organoil Hard Burnishing Oil

Organoil's Hard Burnishing Oil is another all natural oil mixture with tung oil the main ingredient. Maximum durability and moisture resistance is achieved when friction is generated during application, either on a lathe or using an orbital sander on flat surfaces. This method would need to be used on a bench or table top to get satisfactory results. It is used instead of Organoil Danish oil when a harder finish is required. I found it to be identical to the Danish oil regarding ease of use and performance, and even stronger smelling.

Howard Orange Tung

Tung oil and orange oil are the main ingredients of this Australian made product. Its high viscosity and other qualities—the way it dries around the cap when opened, its odour and low grab—indicate a high percentage of tung oil. The orange oil contributes a pleasant citrus element to the odour and presumably the orange colour. Apart from furniture it is marketed as a durable and weather resistant finish for decking and flooring. It would make a reasonably priced (\$35/1L) and perhaps better performing alternative to pure tung oil when a natural oil finish is wanted. Call Howard Woodcare Products on 1800 672 646.



Constantia Chinese Wood Oil

The Constantia group of furniture craftspeople in South Australia developed this product. A natural oil finish similar to it was used to finish the Central Table they made for the House of Representatives in Canberra, where it is regularly pounded during Question Time. It stood up well during my less severe testing and like Orange Tung behaves just like a pure tung oil. The pleasant odour indicates citrus oil is also in the mix. It's suitable for projects of all sizes as container sizes range from 175ml to 200L.

Jamie Bell is sub-editor for AWR and is also a furniture maker and restorer in Cooran, Qld.

