

THE FOLLOWING IS AN E MAIL DISCUSSION BY TERRY SANDERS AND CHARLIE CONTRERAS REGARDING WOODEN WEAPON CARE SENT THROUGH THE KONDO NO SHOKAI CHAT GROUP

Hi Charlie,

Orange oil - thanks!

A correspondent from FAR away sent a fairly interesting reply, as follows, though the stuff about weapons being alive is a bit extreme.. Terry Sanders

Touch it with Polyurethane or Carnuba wax and I will beat you with them.

These smother the life in it. It needs to breathe. ONLY SAND IT BY HAND!!!... Minimum is always the secret. DO NOT DARE SAND IT till you have it conditioned or seasoned well with oil. The wood fibers are dry and need to swell back up. Any sanding prior is unnecessary and can even be detrimental.

Oils, the color of the oil can affect the wood color. I prefer RAW LINSEED OIL though it can be a little harder to find. It is darker than most and I like the way it brings out the wood for an older look. Look at the various oils and you can see the color differences. Olive regular, virgin, extra virgin... all a different color which does slightly affect the end color.

Tung oil is a surface oil and virtually useless IMO. Olive will penetrate but takes a great time to do so. Linseed is quicker to penetrate but some people are allergic to linseed oil. Raw linseed oil seems tackier (especially in the winter) though it is not sticky and seems to bond the fibers better to strengthen them.

Sand it with 80 grit for major removal and 180-240 grit for minor and finishing. Too fine a sand paper and it doesn't allow good gripping and makes the weapon slippery. I go 80 and 180. When you notice dents or splintering immediately sand and oil just the damaged areas and lightly sand if necessary. Alternate, oil and then sand then oil and sand till it is right... then oil it before putting it up.

Squeeze the wood while you sand and oil it. It warms it and it absorbs the oil better. It will strengthen your wrist and grip too.

During the winter it will not need as much oiling and in the summer heat will bring oil to the surface so it may need wiping more. I carry a cloth with me. If you want to heat it up so it absorbs more oil quicker, put in a car during the noon time with the windows up... but put a towel under it to prevent the oil getting on your car. Keep oiling it when you get it out as it cools it will hold more oil.

Your weapons are living weapons. They absorb energy from the practitioner. Be careful who you let use them because of this. The more you use them the stronger they get. Neglect them and they get brittle as their Life force weakens. Take care of them and use them and they will protect you.

You may think this weird... but look at a house... 100 year old homes that have not had adequate upkeep are often still very viable and solid, but let it stand with no human occupants and it will rot and deteriorate to nothing. Even a new home will quickly deteriorate without someone to dwell in it.

Over a short period you will find that the wood will strengthen up and you can do full kumite with it without fear of any damage (to you or it). DO not do anything but kata and work it with your hands till it is conditioned or seasoned.

The following comment by *Charlie Contreras, Hanshi*

I use a furniture oil called ORANGE OIL...that is the brand name and I find it at Home Depot in the paint department where they have the little cans of stain, etc...kinda pricey at about \$7 per 12 oz bottle. And the fact of the matter is, like anything else in karate...repetition of this procedure will only make for a better outcome. It takes time for that oil to work in. Charlie