

SMART SHOPPER

20 QUESTIONS TO ASK, BEFORE YOU SHOP

BEFORE YOU GO SPENDING ALL YOUR HARD EARNED MONEY
ON BEAUTIFUL OUTDOOR FURNITURE, CONSIDER THESE
20 ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS AND LISTEN CAREFULLY TO THE ANSWERS.

Osier Belle

OSIER BELLE TEAK
ROUNDED TABLE



1. WHERE WAS THIS PIECE OF FURNITURE MADE?

No matter how big or small your purchase is, always ask this question! If the response is Australia, Italy, USA or similar, dig deeper for proof. Remember, you're investing your money in a product and if a company or brand is not honest or transparent, you have to wonder what else they are hiding. At Osier Belle, our talented team displays incredible weaving skills that are not present in these countries. Neither is the beautiful teak, so the real answer may be Asia or China. Do your research.



2. HAS THIS FURNITURE BEEN SPECIFICALLY DESIGNED FOR THE AUSTRALIAN CLIMATE?

It sounds impressive when you hear the words 'Belgium designed' or 'Created by an award-winning designer' but it is worth considering this; If the furniture is made for a European or USA climate, is it really going to stand up to the incredibly harsh climate here? All the furniture at Osier Belle has been specifically designed with the extreme Australian weather in mind.



3. WHAT IS THE WARRANTY - BY MATERIAL?

When it comes to outdoor furniture, expect a 5-year warranty - anything less means the company is not convinced it's going to last. All retailers should be able to provide you with a detailed warranty (by material) used in the creation of your furniture. Also ask them what qualifies for a replacement or a repair, what the process is, and how quickly it will be resolved. Ensure you have clear instructions on how to maintain your chosen pieces so you can look after them correctly. When you press for answers, you will get a good idea of how they'll really respond to a claim. If your retailer is evasive or generalised, stating things like 'any manufacturing fault', beware!



4. CAN I CUSTOMISE IT SO IT FITS?

Customisation is key. If something looks too big or too small, it is going to feel wrong in your space and don't forget, this is an outdoor sanctuary you're creating. Mass produced furniture has not been made for you, with your outdoor



OSIER BELLE
BULLE ARMCHAIR

space, personal height or comfort in mind. Buying customised furniture means it can be made to suit all your essential needs, as well as choosing material combinations that complement your home and style. Osier Belle was founded on this need. Our ethos is to create beautiful pieces that fit impeccably into your lifestyle, with the essential balance, proportion, and blend.



5. CAN THE CUSHIONS STAY OUTDOORS ALL YEAR ROUND?

Never invest in outdoor furniture that suggests you should bring the cushions inside or your warranty will be void. This is not true outdoor furniture. There are brands that provide outdoor furniture with cushions that can stay outdoors, regardless of the conditions. At Osier Belle, our cushions are made to stay outdoors all year round. Every element we use in our cushions has been chosen for this purpose.



6. CAN YOU SHOW ME HOW TO TAKE THE FURNITURE COVERS OFF AND PUT THEM BACK ON?

Getting a member of staff to show you how easy (or tricky) it is to remove a furniture cushion cover is a great test to witness what you're going to have to go through at home. The covers should be easy



7. WHAT FABRICS DO YOU USE?

Only 100% Solution Dyed Acrylic will stand the test of time in Australia. Do not compromise on any fabric such as Olefin, Polyester mix or Linen - these fabrics will fade, harden and stain. Read our guide on Understanding Outdoor Fabrics and Caring For Them for more useful information.



8. WHAT THREAD IS USED IN THE CREATION OF THE CUSHIONS?

This might seem like a small detail, but it can cause major problems surviving in the elements and washing. Thread will be one of the first things to deteriorate and fail if not manufactured for the outdoors and you could be blamed for over-use of your cushions if the seams break. Every element used in the making of your cushions should be able to manage harsh Australian conditions, right down to the thread.

If attention to detail does not include a good quality outdoor yarn, your cushion covers will fall apart.

✓ **9. ARE THE COVERS MACHINE WASHABLE?**

It is essential you can easily remove your cushion covers and throw them in a machine wash without it resulting in shrinking or fading. Cushions will naturally get dirty with food, sweat and environmental sources, but you want them looking beautiful and hygienically clean for years to come. Brands such as Sunbrella, Dickson Constant, Agora and 3Beaches can be thrown into the washing machine and, if necessary, put on a bleach solution wash. They will not lose their colour which is testament to their excellent quality.

✓ **10. WHERE IS YOUR TEAK FROM AND IS IT CERTIFIED?**

The general industry reply to this question tends to be 'A Grade'. However, this doesn't really provide the detail you require. Read our article, *A Guide to Understanding Outdoor Timber*, for more information. Always ask to see the official certification for teak. Legitimate brands will have this and proudly show it to you. If they cannot, please do not purchase as this timber does not support and protect the planet, the wildlife or the people of the country it's from.

✓ **11. IS THE TEAK PROTECTED TO WITHSTAND THE AUSTRALIAN CLIMATE?**

Due to the severity of our weather, Australian timber experts recommend applying protection on outdoor furniture prior to usage. Architects and builders alike use this to maximise the longevity of their creations. Even if you prefer your timber to silver, buying furniture that has been pre-treated ensures it will be protected from the inside out, and we all know that makes sense. As a customer, we believe you should not be responsible for completing this messy and critical step. Rather than using a varnish (which sits on the surface and will flake), we directly export the industries' most reputable brands, Semco and Cutek, to our factory and apply it ourselves to minimise cracking and ensure your teak furniture will last.

✓ **12. IF MY FURNITURE GETS DAMAGED, WHAT HAPPENS?**

Outdoor furniture is vulnerable to hiccups. Honest mistakes are often made when cleaning or the teenagers are left home alone (well, that's the story the parents tell us!). Whether it is a rip in the cover, a puppy chewing the wicker or a fly away cushion, never to be seen again, a good retailer will understand and want to help. At Osier Belle, if we can solve it for

you, we will. If the issue is beyond repair, we can reorder for you at cost-price and where possible, we will fix it without any charge. We want you to enjoy our furniture for many years to come.

✓ **13. ARE THE MODULES SOLID IN DESIGN OR DO THEY NEED ASSEMBLY?**

Some retailers choose to buy furniture that needs assembly to minimise space in containers and warehouses and maximise profit margins. Unfortunately, it doesn't provide you with the strongest and most resilient furniture. If your furniture is flat packed in any way, ensure the cost reflects this. Solid build is an essential characteristic for outdoor furniture to prevent that frustrating wobble and ensure it won't fall apart over time.

✓ **14. IS THE FURNITURE ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY?**

We all want to do our bit for the environment and finding out if all the materials used in making your furniture are environmentally friendly is a question worth asking. For example, Urecel Quick Dry foam is environmentally-friendly while other foam products are not. All Sunbrella, Dickson Constant, and Agora fabrics do not impact our planet, and we can confirm Viro and Rehau synthetic wickers are made from PET plastics. We are proud to say all materials used in the making of Osier Belle furniture have been specifically sourced for their environmentally friendly properties.

✓ **15. HOW LONG DO I NEED TO WAIT FOR MY ORDER?**

All industries have been heavily impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic and shipping lines crippled, however, this should not prevent the honest answer being provided. We often talk to customers who have been promised 16 weeks delivery and six months later, they are still waiting for their furniture. Make sure you ask for a realistic timeline. If it is going to be more than four months, it might be worth shopping around. If it is going to be an extensive period of time, and you're 100% happy with your purchase, ask if they could provide a discount for your patience. Do not pay for your furniture in full as this is your



OSIER BELLE ARMLESS DINING CHAIR WITH TEAK ROUND DINING TABLE

power if they fail to deliver. At Osier Belle, we own our factory and can confidently provide an accurate wait period of 10-14 weeks (in Summer months even sooner!) on furniture that needs to be ordered. Drop into our destination showroom in Sydney to see what's possible.

✓ 16. DO YOU HAVE SAMPLES WE CAN TAKE HOME?

Artificial lighting in showrooms in comparison to the brightness in your own outdoor space can be very different. Your walls, floors, and reflective sources will impact the colour and tones in your furniture. Getting samples of fabrics, wickers, concrete, and timbers are really useful, not only to test this out but also to help you decide what works best in your space and characteristics of your home. For example, a chalk-coloured concrete table might look stunning in the store, but too glaring in your exposed area. We love giving out free samples to our customers; it allows them to play with different options, ask family and friends their opinion, and helps with the decision process.

✓ 17. DO YOU HAVE FURNITURE WE CAN BORROW FREE OF CHARGE?

If you are impatient (like us!) and your desired pieces are not immediately available, ask the store if they have something they can offer as a complimentary loan until your order arrives. You shouldn't be pressured to buy what they have in stock if it's not what you really want. We love creating exactly what our customers desire and never encourage them to compromise. We always offer complimentary rental pieces so they can enjoy their outdoor retreat immediately.

✓ 18. WHAT IS INCLUDED IN DELIVERY?

The desired location for your furniture may require for it to be carried through your home, maybe up a flight of stairs, and possibly through restricted areas. Enviably, outdoor furniture is sizable and heavy so trying to manage this yourself is far from ideal, not to mention dangerous if you are not experienced. The delivery cost of your furniture should include the company carrying everything to



OSIER BELLE LUX ARMCHAIR AND SOFA

your chosen position and not left at the door. Brand new furniture will be heavily packed to protect it so again, removal of all the cardboard and protective materials should be included in the price.

✓ 19. WILL YOU PROVIDE A FREE CONSULTATION OR DELIVER SAMPLES SO I CAN SEE THEM IN MY HOME?

Consultations are really helpful as they provide you with recommendations from an experienced interior designer, which could provide ideas you hadn't considered. You should not be charged for this service or held to a deposit on a potential order. You are asking for help and that should come for free! We provide complimentary consultations at Osier Belle to all our potential customers, and these are mostly

completed by owner, Penelope Camplisson. Yes, you get the designer and owner to your home for free advice, with no catches.

✓ 20. ASK THE STAFF, 'WHAT DO YOU LOVE ABOUT THIS BRAND AND WHY SHOULD I INVEST?'

This is a great question to ask as the reaction and response will tell you a lot! Ask if there are any downsides to the brand or design you are considering. Realistically, there are pluses and minuses to everything so hearing this feedback is very useful. ✨



We've taken the guesswork out of shopping. Turn to page 96 for your smart shopper checklist.

YOUR SMART SHOPPER CHECKLIST



Osier Belle
www.osierbelle.com.au

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|--|--------------------------|---|--------------------------|
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