SAUNA CARE & MAINTENANCE GUIDE

Indoor & Outdoor Saunas · Domestic & Commercial Use

Life's short. Live Better. Experience EIRA®.

Thank you for choosing an EIRA® sauna. Every EIRA® sauna is engineered to an exceptionally high standard and made to endure — and a small amount of regular care will keep it performing and looking at its best for years to come.

This guide covers everything from preparing for delivery through to day-to-day use, routine care and periodic maintenance. Sections 1–3 apply to every EIRA® sauna. Sections 4 and 5 then set out the maintenance regimes for indoor and outdoor saunas respectively, each split into domestic and commercial use — find the combination that matches your sauna and follow that regime.

Where your heater manufacturer's manual (HUUM or Harvia) gives specific instructions, that manual always takes precedence over the general guidance here.

1. Before Your Sauna Arrives — Pre-Installation Checklist

Please read this section as soon as your order is confirmed. Completing these checks before delivery day is the customer's responsibility, and it is what allows our team to install, commission and test your sauna in a single visit.

1.1 Access — getting the sauna in

It is the customer's responsibility to ensure there is sufficient access to bring the sauna, or its component segments, to the installation location.

- Indoor saunas are delivered in segments. Some components — particularly the glass panels — are large and rigid, and cannot be flexed around tight corners, narrow staircases or low ceilings. Please walk the route from your entrance to the installation room and consider doorway widths, hallway turns, stair dimensions and ceiling heights.
- As well as getting the segments in, our team needs sufficient room to build the sauna in position. If the area the sauna is going into is particularly tight, you must let us know in advance — in very constrained spaces, installation may not be possible.
- If you are in any doubt, send us photographs or video of the access route and the installation area together with measurements before delivery, and we will gladly review them and advise.

> *Please note: while we are happy to review access on request, responsibility for confirming adequate access ultimately rests with the customer.*

1.2 The base — what your sauna sits on

The customer is responsible for ensuring the base is adequate before delivery. Saunas are very heavy, and the base must be capable of bearing that weight permanently without movement.

- **Indoor saunas:** our indoor saunas do not include a floor. They must be installed on a hard, level surface — for example tile, concrete or a properly supported solid floor.
- **Outdoor saunas:** the base must be hard, flat and level. We recommend a concrete slab. The sauna must not be installed on any surface that could flex, settle or warp over time — for example bare ground, gravel alone, or lightweight decking that has not been engineered for the load.

An inadequate base can cause doors and glass to fall out of alignment and timber to twist. Issues arising from an unsuitable base are not covered by your warranty.

1.3 Clearances, ventilation & electrical connections

Both our indoor and outdoor saunas have their air vents at the back of the sauna. These vents must never be covered, and the sauna must not be pushed hard up against a wall — without clear airflow behind the sauna, it cannot ventilate and dry properly.

- **Indoor saunas:** leave a minimum of 10 cm between the back of the sauna and the wall so the rear vents can breathe. The electrical connections are made on the roof of the sauna — please also ensure there is adequate clearance and access above the unit as specified for your model.
- **Outdoor saunas:** leave at least 40 cm of clear space behind the sauna. This keeps the rear vents clear and allows a person to get behind the sauna to reach the electrical connection box, which is also located at the back.
- Keep these clearances permanently — don't store items behind or on top of the sauna after installation.

1.4 Power supply — ready before delivery day

Before our team arrives, the customer must have in place: a sufficient power supply for the sauna and heater; an isolator switch; and a cable connected to the isolator switch, ready for our team to complete the final connection.

Commissioning and testing form part of your installation, so all electrical work must be completed before delivery day. Without power on the day, we will be unable to test the sauna or complete commissioning.

1.5 After installation — the first 24 hours (indoor saunas)

Indoor saunas must not be used for at least 24 hours after installation is completed. The structural bonding that secures the glass panels needs this time to fully set. Using the sauna — or heating it — before the bond has cured can compromise the glass installation.

1.6 Commercial installations — site logistics on the day

For commercial installations in particular, please plan the practicalities of delivery day:

- **Parking:** consider whether the site has adequate parking close to the entrance. Our team will park up and unbox in the car park, bringing the sauna in piece by piece — they need space to do this, and a workable route from vehicle to installation area.
- **Public safety on the route:** consider how safely our installers can bring segments through your building if members of the public are present — for example, carrying large, heavy glass segments through a busy gym floor. We kindly ask that the route is cordoned off while segments are being brought through.
- **The build area:** please also block off the area where the sauna is being built. Our team needs space to work, and for health and safety reasons they cannot have members of the public around them while they are handling heavy segments and glass.

1.7 Commercial installations — your ongoing obligations

Where the sauna is used commercially, it is the customer's responsibility to ensure the installation and its ongoing operation comply with the most up-to-date health and safety requirements and any other rules or regulations that apply to their premises and business — including risk assessments, signage, supervision policies, electrical inspection regimes and any local authority licensing requirements.

> *Important: this guide is not a statement of your legal or regulatory obligations, and you should not rely on it for that purpose. Guidance, rules and regulations change all the time and vary by location and business type. Always verify your current obligations directly with your local authority, your insurer and your own professional advisers.*

2. Using Your Sauna — All Models

- Only throw water on the heater stones — never on the walls, ceiling or benches.
- Use only clean tap water on the stones. Never use pool, spa, chemically treated or heavily mineralised water — it can damage the stones, elements and heater. Empty and rinse water buckets after use.
- Sauna fragrances and essential oils must only be used diluted in the steam water, following the fragrance manufacturer's instructions. Never pour oils or fragrances neat onto the stones — undiluted, they can ignite.

- Always sit or lie on a towel or seat cover — this keeps the benches fresh, protects the timber from sweat and body oils, and is more comfortable when the timber is hot.
- We recommend white or light-coloured, colourfast towels. The dye in coloured towels can transfer onto hot, damp timber and permanently stain the benches.
- We recommend not wearing wet swimwear in the sauna — water and residues from wet fabric soak into the bench timber and shorten its life. If your sauna is installed near a shower, pool or cold plunge, we recommend drying off as best you can before entering, for the same reason.
- Never dry towels, swimwear or other textiles in the sauna. This is a fire hazard, and the excess moisture can damage the timber and electrical equipment.
- Do not heat the sauna beyond the maximum temperature specified by the heater manufacturer — excessive heat can create a fire risk and cause the timber to warp.
- Before switching the heater on, always check that nothing has been left on or near it, and that nothing sits within its safety clearances.

3. The Golden Rule — Dry and Ventilate After Every Use

If you take only one habit from this guide, make it this one. The single most important thing you can do for your sauna is to dry and ventilate it properly after every use.

Timber that gets very wet and then stays wet is far more likely to crack, warp and — over time — rot or develop mould. Warm, damp, closed-up timber is exactly the environment in which this happens fastest. A sauna that is routinely shut up while damp will deteriorate far more quickly than one that is dried after every session.

- Open the air vents after every session — never leave the vents closed on a damp sauna.
- We recommend leaving the heater running for at least half an hour after your session with the air vent open and the door and windows closed. This drives the residual moisture out of the timber and out through the vent.
- Wipe the benches down with a clean, damp cloth. Don't use running water, and make sure no water is left pooling on any wooden surface.
- Remove wet towels and seat covers after every session — never leave them to dry in the sauna. Drying textiles in the sauna is a fire hazard, and the trapped moisture works into the timber.
- Once the drying cycle is complete, leave the vents open (or the door ajar for indoor saunas) so air can continue to circulate as the sauna cools.

> *Warranty note: cracking, warping, rot or mould resulting from benches being left wet, or from the sauna not being dried and ventilated after use, is not covered by your warranty. Section 7 explains the difference between this kind of preventable moisture damage and the normal, natural behaviour of sauna timber.*

4. Indoor Sauna Maintenance

4.1 Domestic use

After every session

- Follow the drying routine in Section 3 in full — vents open, drying cycle, benches wiped.

- Make sure the room housing the sauna is itself well ventilated, so the moisture you drive out of the sauna has somewhere to go. In enclosed rooms, consider extraction or simply opening a window during the drying cycle.

Monthly, or as needed

- Deeper clean with a specialist sauna cleaning product (we recommend Tikkurila Supi Saunapesu — see Section 8), following the instructions and always rinsing benches with clean water afterwards. Never use household disinfectants or chlorine-based products — they bleach the timber and can spoil its surface.
- Never use a pressure washer or running water inside your sauna. Excessive moisture can permanently damage the structure and surface of the timber.
- Check benches, backrests and fixings; tighten any screws that have loosened as the timber moves with heat and humidity.

Annually

- Treat the benches with a suitable sauna bench oil. Treat the undersides as well — mould typically starts to form underneath benches — and pay particular attention to the end grain, where water absorption is greatest. New benches should also be treated before first use.
- Clean all interior surfaces — benches, walls and ceiling — with a soft brush or cloth and a specialist sauna cleaning product.
- Treat wall and ceiling panels with a suitable sauna panel finish where appropriate. Panel finishes (such as Tikkurila Supi Saunasuoja) are not suitable for benches — benches take bench oil only.
- For deeper stains, gently sand the bench with fine sandpaper, then re-treat the sanded area with bench oil.
- The exterior of our indoor saunas is painted and does not need oiling or timber treatment — just dust or wipe it with a soft, dry or slightly damp cloth. The treatments in this section are for the interior timber only.
- Keep the clearance around and above the sauna (including the roof-top electrical connections) free of storage and clutter.

4.2 Commercial use

Everything in the domestic regime applies — but a commercial sauna may run for many hours a day and host dozens of bathers, each introducing sweat, body oils and traces of cosmetics into the timber. Where the sauna sits near showers, a pool or a cold plunge, bathers will inevitably carry extra water onto the benches too — we recognise it isn't always practical to get every client to dry off fully, but the wetter the benches run, the shorter the timber's life. This is exactly why the regular oiling cycle below matters: well-oiled timber absorbs far less water. The care cycle must be significantly more frequent than domestic, and it should be documented.

Daily

- In commercial settings we recommend leaving the internal vents open during use as well as after — with heavy, continuous bathing the sauna needs a constant path for moisture to escape throughout the day, not just at closing time.
- Wipe down all benches — including the undersides — and complete a full drying and ventilation cycle at the close of each operating day.

- Empty, rinse and invert (or hang) all water buckets and ladles. Standing water left overnight harbours bacteria and develops odours.
- Remove all towels and textiles from the sauna at the end of the day, and check nothing is on or near the heater. Sauna fires have been caused by towels left near heaters igniting when the heater was switched on the next morning — for the same reason, avoid switching the heater on automatically while the sauna is unoccupied and unchecked.

Weekly

- Scrub all timber surfaces with a suitable sauna cleaning solution, diluted per the instructions, using a medium-stiff brush — and rinse benches with clean water afterwards.
- Carry out a detailed visual inspection: bench stability and fixings, signs of scorching or darkening near the heater, condition of the door and hinges, and light fittings — check they remain fully sealed and vapour-proof, as heat and humidity quickly compromise a fixture with a broken seal.

Every 3–6 months

- Lightly sand bench surfaces, backrests and steps to restore fresh, clean timber, then re-treat with paraffin-based bench oil (undersides and end grain included). For high-traffic facilities — busy gyms, hotel spas, public wellness centres — work to the quarterly end of this range.

Operations & housekeeping

- Require users to shower before use and to sit on bench towels — clear signage and a visible standard of cleanliness dramatically reduce how quickly organic matter accumulates in the timber, extend the intervals between sanding, and reduce odour build-up. Provide or require white / light-coloured, colourfast towels.
- Keep a dated maintenance log covering daily, weekly, monthly and periodic cleaning, inspections and treatments. Many local authorities license premises containing saunas and expect cleaning and maintenance records to be available for inspection — and your insurer may expect the same.
- Have your electrical installation inspected and tested periodically by a competent electrical contractor.
- Operate a defect-reporting procedure: if there is any doubt about the condition of the sauna or heater, take it out of service until it has been checked by a suitably qualified person.

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5. Outdoor Sauna Maintenance

5.1 Domestic use

Interior

The interior of an outdoor sauna is cared for exactly as an indoor sauna: follow the drying routine in Section 3 after every session, and the domestic cleaning and treatment regime in Section 4.1. Drying and ventilation matter even more outdoors, where the sauna also has weather working on it from the outside.

Exterior — charred larch (Signature range)

The charred larch cladding on our Signature outdoor saunas is finished in the tradition of yakisugi (shou sugi ban): the charred surface layer is itself the protective finish. Caring for it means preserving that layer, not scrubbing it.

- Never pressure wash, scrub, sand or aggressively brush charred cladding — this strips the protective char. If cleaning is needed, a gentle rinse with a hose on low pressure and, at most, a very soft brush is sufficient.
- Expect some carbon transfer. The char can mark clothing, hands and objects that rub against it — avoid leaning items against the cladding, and site the sauna so people don't routinely brush past it.
- Re-oil the charred surface periodically with a suitable exterior wood oil to nourish the timber, reduce dusting of the char and refresh the depth of colour. In typical UK conditions, plan to re-oil roughly every 2–3 years, and inspect annually — sooner if the surface looks dry, grey at the edges or is shedding char.
- Some variation is part of the finish: gradual softening of the char, subtle silvering on the most exposed faces, and differences from board to board are natural characteristics of charred timber, not defects.

Exterior — thermowood (Montclair and other non-charred models)

Outdoor saunas with a thermally modified timber (thermowood) exterior, such as the Montclair, are naturally more stable and decay-resistant than untreated softwood — but the surface still weathers. You have a genuine choice here:

- **Let it silver:** left untreated, thermowood gradually weathers to an even silver-grey. This is purely cosmetic and many owners like it. The timber does not need oil to survive — only to keep its colour.
- **Keep the brown tone:** apply a UV-protective exterior wood oil approximately once a year. South-facing elevations and the most weather-exposed faces will need it more often; sheltered faces less.
- Whichever you choose, inspect the exterior annually: check end grain, corner trims and around windows and doors, and re-seal or re-oil locally where the surface looks dry or worn.
- As with all our timber: no pressure washing. Clean with a soft brush and water, working with the grain.

Roof, gutters & surroundings — at least twice a year

- Keep the roof gutters clear of leaves, moss and debris — exactly as you would a household gutter. Blocked gutters and downpipes overflow, and repeated overflow soaks and stains the cladding below and can drive water where it shouldn't go — and water left constantly pooling on top of the sauna is not good for the structure either. Always clear after autumn leaf-fall, and more often if the sauna sits under or near trees.
- Check the roof covering: make sure the membrane, shingles or boards are intact and sitting flat, and that nothing has lifted in high winds.
- Check door hinges, handles and any seals, and adjust or lubricate as needed — outdoor doors work hard through freeze-thaw cycles.
- Keep vegetation cut back from the walls and base so air can circulate around the structure.

5.2 Commercial use

An outdoor sauna in commercial use carries both workloads at once: heavy bather traffic inside and the weather outside. Apply the full commercial interior regime from Section 4.2 — daily wipe-down and drying cycle, weekly scrub and inspection, sand-and-oil every 3–6 months, towels and heater checks at close of day, maintenance log, and periodic electrical inspection.

In addition, for the exterior:

- Bring the exterior inspection forward to at least every six months — gutters, roof covering, door hardware, cladding condition and the base — and log it alongside your interior maintenance records.
- Expect exterior treatment intervals (thermowood oiling, charred larch re-oiling) to shorten with heavy use and exposure; let the condition of the timber guide you rather than the calendar.

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5.3 Coastal & exposed installations

If your sauna is installed by the sea, on high ground, or in any particularly exposed position, expect the weather to work harder on it — salt-laden air, wind-driven rain and stronger UV all accelerate surface weathering and can corrode metal fittings and heater surfaces over time. For these installations:

- Halve the inspection intervals above — inspect the exterior at least every six months (domestic) or quarterly (commercial).
- Expect to re-oil or re-treat exterior surfaces more often than the typical intervals, guided by what the timber is telling you.
- Rinse salt deposits off exterior surfaces and metal fittings from time to time with fresh water (gently — no pressure washers).
- Be especially disciplined about drying and ventilating the interior after use — heater manufacturers note that sea air and persistently humid conditions can corrode the heater's metal surfaces over time.

6. Heater Care — HUUM & Harvia

EIRA® saunas are fitted with HUUM or Harvia heaters. The guidance below summarises the key care points common to both manufacturers. Your heater's own installation and operation manual always takes precedence — please keep it with this guide and refer to it for model-specific instructions, stone quantities and safety distances.

6.1 Stones

- Restack the stones at least once a year for domestic use — and every 1–3 months in commercial settings, where you should also expect to replace stones far more frequently. The large temperature swings of normal use cause stones to gradually crack, crumble and settle.
- When restacking: remove any broken pieces and debris from the bottom of the heater, and replace disintegrated stones with new ones. A simple check — knock stones together; ones that crack or sound hollow should be replaced.
- The heating elements must never be visible through the stones. Stones settle over time (most rapidly in the first couple of months after stacking) — if an element becomes exposed, restack so it is fully covered. An exposed element is both a performance and a fire-safety issue.
- Use only stone types recommended by your heater manufacturer (for example olivine, olivine diabase or peridotite sauna stones). Never use ceramic ‘stones’, decorative stones or soapstone — they don't hold enough heat and can damage the heating elements. Using non-approved stones can void the heater manufacturer's warranty.

- Wash new stones free of dust before stacking. Stack them so they support each other rather than resting their weight on the elements, and never wedge stones between the heating elements. Don't pack the stones too tightly — air must be able to circulate.
- When you first heat a new heater or new stones, some smell is normal — ventilate the sauna well during the first heating.

6.2 Elements, controls & servicing

- All service and repair work on the heater and its controls must be carried out by suitably qualified professionals. Always isolate the heater from the power supply before any maintenance.
- If the sauna heats slowly, a panel near the heater darkens quickly, or the overheat protector trips, stop using the sauna and contact us. These symptoms are often stone-related (settled, wrongly stacked or exhausted stones) but must be checked properly.
- Wipe the heater body occasionally with a damp cloth to remove water marks. Never hang anything on, or place anything over, the heater.

7. How Sauna Timber Behaves — What's Normal, and What Isn't

Wood is a natural material, and a sauna subjects it to extreme, rapid swings in temperature and humidity. The following are normal characteristics of sauna timber, not defects:

- Fine surface cracking (checking) and slight bending or cupping of boards can occur over time — the effects are more visible in wider boards, and depend on the timber and how intensively the sauna is used.
- Timber in the areas most exposed to hot steam may gradually darken.
- Thermally modified wood has a distinctive scent when new. It diminishes over time — more quickly if the sauna is heated for extended periods while ventilated — and treating the wood with a suitable oil also softens it. Avoid washing untreated thermally modified wood with water, as this intensifies the scent.
- Handle thermally modified boards with care during any work on the sauna — avoid scratching the surface or sliding boards over one another, as the richly coloured surface layer can mark.

Distinct from all of the above is preventable moisture damage: significant cracking, warping, rot or mould caused by benches being left wet, the sauna being closed up damp, or the drying and ventilation routine in Section 3 not being followed. As set out in Section 3, this kind of damage is not covered by your warranty.

8. Recommended Care Products

The following products are suitable for EIRA® saunas and are the ones we use and recommend. Always read and follow the manufacturer's instructions and safety information on the packaging.

Product	Use	Key points
Tikkurila Supi Laudesuoja (bench oil)	Protective paraffin oil for wooden benches — protects against moisture and dirt	Apply with brush or clean cloth; heat the sauna and wipe off surplus oil. Treat undersides and end grain. Benches only.
Tikkurila Supi Saunasuoja (panel finish)	Protective finish for walls and ceilings in steam, washing and dressing rooms	Not suitable for benches. Pre-heat and ventilate the sauna well before first use after treatment.
Tikkurila Supi Saunapesu (cleaner)	Sauna cleaning detergent for benches, panels and wet rooms	Dilute per instructions; always rinse benches with clean water after treatment. Never mix with chlorine products. Wear gloves and eye protection.
SAICOS Ground Oil Extra Thin 3001 (colourless)	Deeply penetrating natural-oil ground coat for hardwood and thermowood	Apply along the grain and remove unabsorbed surplus after ~20 minutes. Ensure good ventilation while drying. Store used cloths in an airtight container — oil-soaked cloths can self-combust.

Care products for charred larch and thermowood exteriors: contact us and we will recommend the right exterior oil for your specific cladding and finish.

9. Quick-Reference Maintenance Schedules

9.1 Domestic use

When	What
Every session	Water on stones only (clean tap water) · white/light towels or seat covers on benches · after use: open vents, run heater ~30 min to dry, wipe benches with damp cloth, remove wet towels, leave to air
Monthly, or as needed	Deeper clean with sauna detergent (rinse benches after) · check benches and fixings
Twice a year (outdoor)	Clear gutters and downpipes (always after autumn) · check roof covering · check door hardware and seals · clear vegetation around the walls and base
Annually	Restack heater stones, remove debris, replace exhausted stones · oil benches (undersides & end grain) · treat interior panels where appropriate · inspect exterior timber; re-oil thermowood if keeping the brown tone; inspect charred larch (re-oil typically every 2–3 years) · tighten fixings
Coastal / exposed sites	Halve the exterior inspection intervals · more frequent exterior treatment · rinse salt off surfaces and fittings with fresh water · extra discipline on drying and ventilating after use

9.2 Commercial use

When	What
Daily	Internal vents open during use as well as after · wipe all benches incl. undersides · full drying & ventilation cycle at close of day · empty, rinse and invert buckets and ladles · remove all towels; check nothing on or near the heater · log completed tasks
Weekly	Scrub all timber with diluted sauna cleaning solution and medium-stiff brush; rinse benches · detailed inspection: fixings, scorching/darkening near heater, door, light-fitting seals
Every 1–3 months	Check heater stones: restack, remove debris, replace exhausted stones
Every 3–6 months	Light sand of benches, backrests and steps, then re-oil (undersides & end grain) — quarterly for high-traffic facilities · outdoor: full exterior inspection (gutters, roof, doors, cladding, base)
Ongoing	Shower-before-use and bench-towel policy with signage (white/light colourfast towels) · dated maintenance log available for inspection · periodic electrical inspection by a competent contractor · defect-reporting procedure; out of service until checked · verify current regulatory obligations with your local authority, insurer and advisers

10. Support

Every EIRA® sauna is designed in-house in the UK and supported by our own team. If anything in this guide is unclear, if you'd like product recommendations for your specific model, or if you spot anything that doesn't look right — contact us and we'll help.

EIRA® • hello@eiratherapy.co.uk · eiratherapy.co.uk

> *Keep this guide, together with your heater manufacturer's manual and your proof of purchase, somewhere safe. Where this guide and the heater manufacturer's manual differ, the manufacturer's manual takes precedence.*