

Timber Retaining Wall Maintenance

You should regularly carry out a visual inspection to ensure your wall lasts its maximum lifetime. Things to look for when inspecting are:

- Cracks opening up in the timber.
- Insect infestations.
- Cracking or shifting of landscape around wall (i.e. pools, decks, patios).
- Excessive movement in the wall.

Any signs of these things should be immediately rectified. There are a few other main things that can drastically effect the structural life of a retaining wall.

Note- Due to the nature of timber retaining walls a significant degree of rotation may be expected. This is accounted for in the design by the initial battering of the wall.



Oiling

All external timber that is exposed to the elements should be oiled once or twice a year to ensure it holds off the effects of weathering such as splitting, warping, fading and surface discolouration. A good quality natural timber oil or similar product should be used, read the manufacturers recommendations as to how often to reapply.

Drainage

Many of the failures of timber retaining walls can be traced back to drainage issues. Ensure the soil behind your wall remains free draining, saturated soils can add extra force to the wall and can cause it to bow or start to lean. Ensure the ground below the wall slopes away and doesn't allow water to sit at the base of the wall.

Soil stability

Ensure the soil below the wall isn't removed or lowered in any way. A timber retaining wall relies on the footings holding the posts in the ground to keep it in place, by removing any soil around or near these footings can cause the wall to start to move.

