

FAQ, Prolam products

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the timber in Prolam?

MERBAU (KWILA), Species Intsia bijuga Green Density 1200kg/m³ Air Dried density 850kg/m³

What is its durability?

In ground 3 - expected 8-15 years (not recommended)

Above Ground 1 - expected 50+ years

Naturally termites resistant

Can it be used in Bushfire areas in Australia?

Yes it is deemed to be a Bushfire resisting timber and can be used in areas up Bushfire BAL 29

Where does Prolam Merbau come from?

Prolam products are from South east Asia, with the majority coming from Indonesia

Is Prolam Merbau certified?

1. Yes, the manufacturing process is certified to comply with the Australian Standard and is a registered member of GLTAA. Glue Laminated Timber Association of Australia.
2. The Merbau used in the manufacture of Prolam products are certified Indonesian legal wood products. (insert indo legal logo)

Where should I store it?

Prolam products should be kept dry out of the weather until they are installed. If they are not stored inside, they will need to have the plastic sheet laid on the ground to prevent raising damp, plus completely wrapped in plastic to prevent rain getting to the products. Prior to installation ensure the moisture content is between 12-15%.

Is it easy to handle?

Merbau is a very stable and durable hardwood, but it is a natural product and needs care to be taken when handling it. Prolam products should not be dropped or pack lifted from a single point. Evenly support the pack or pieces until they are placed on gluts which are placed no wider than 1.2m apart.

Can Prolam posts be put in the ground?

No, as they are only durability class 3.

Where can I find the range of profiles available?

Contact your nearest ITI office or visit the ProLam website (www.prolam.com.au (add link to website))

Where can buy Prolam products?

All good building supplies stores, best place to start is on the 'where to buy' section of the website.

Should I pre drill Prolam?

Yes for best practices pre drill all holes for screws, nails or bolt, this will prevent splitting over time.

When should I apply my first coat of oil?

First coat should be applied prior to installation once cut to size and holes are drilled, this gives maximum protection for the timber.

Who often should I oil or stain my ProLam products?

Oiling should be completed regularly to prevent cracking or surface deteriorating, the time frame between coats is dependent on the exposure of the product to weather and the oil / stain applied.

What type of oil should I use on ProLam products?

We recommend the use of good quality oil, Best contact your oil/ stain supplier to ensure you have the best product for you application.

Will ProLam grey off over time?

Yes if regular maintenance does not occur

Does tannin leach out of Prolam products?

Yes, but as it has more wet dry cycles from the weather the effect should reduce.

What about rain and saltwater?

Merbau timber is resistant to them, and can be used around pools or near the ocean. Just keep in mind maintenance may be required more regularly if they are being frequently wet.

How strong are Prolam beams?

Prolam beams are GL17 and posts are GL 13, Span table for these product can be found on the website www.prolam.com.au

Good Design Practice for Prolam

Most wood products undergo some degree of expansion and contraction with changes of weather and season. To compensate for these effects the following installation recommendations should be followed to ensure optimum performance of the deck.

1. **Underside Ventilation** — it is recommended that you build your deck a minimum of 300mm off the ground. This allows the deck to 'breathe' and will mitigate mould and mildew issues that occur as a result of humidity build up under the deck.
2. **Prevent ponding under the deck** – water must be able to drain away from under the deck to allow it to dry out
3. **Gap spacing's**
 - Between deck boards — minimum 3mm
 - Beside a building — 10mm minimum
 - Around a post – 5mm Minimum
 - Between deck board Ends —2-3mm gap.
4. **Fall** — your deck should have adequate fall to stop pooling of surface water. We recommend a minimum of 10mm fall per lineal metre of deck.

Note: All Prolam products are manufactured from natural timber species, therefore climatic changes will effect there long term performance. This is not limited to the appearance but includes movement as boards will expand and contract as temperature and moisture content varies.