

I received my rack and there is checking in the wood. Is this typical? Do these cracks affect the structure or sturdiness of the rack?



When Northern White Cedar loses moisture and dries out, small cracks will appear in the exterior of the wood. These small cracks are called “checking” and are a natural and expected part of the drying process. As the logs dry out, they also shrink in size slightly. And because the logs are round, somewhere along the perimeter there has to be a give point, and that’s where checking occurs. Again, this is a natural process. Checking will not affect the log and does not crack through to the other side, only as far as the middle. This process will stop as soon as the log is completely dry. Checking is also what gives cedar log furniture part of its rustic appeal. The logs will weather to a silvery gray with approximately 2 years of sitting outdoors, and still keep the smooth feel they had when they were first placed.

Structurally, checking is not a concern. This is why white cedar is the first choice for outdoor structures—such as fencing, raised garden beds, outdoor log furniture, etc—that must stand up to extreme elements like humid summers and dry winters.