



Japanese Ofuro Tubs

By Zen Bathworks

Rectangular Ofuro Installation And Care Guidelines

Before getting started – Keep your new ofuro tub protected with the original wrap and packaging as long as possible while transporting, carrying and installing. Avoid touching the fragile finished tub with dirty hands or tools.

1. This style of ofuro tub is typically installed as a **freestanding tub**. Ofuros can be installed along a wall, in a corner, in an alcove, or recessed. Fill fixtures are not included. A simple floor drain is included. Air circulation around the tub is important – see the details below. We do not recommend using the ofuro as a combination shower/bathtub.
2. Our ofuro is designed to be **used like a typical bathtub** – filled with hot water for a bath, then drained afterward. Because the thick wood walls insulate and hold heat well there is very little heat loss during a bath. A cover will help hold the heat as well – allowing the same water to be used again within a couple of hours. We do not recommend a recirculating heating system for the ofuro because we believe that simply filling and draining is much more practical. However if you require a recirculating heater, we can provide one.
3. A **good water heater** is important for supplying a sufficient volume of hot water to fill your bath. Consult your plumber about water flow rates and what will work best for your situation. Consider the “tankless” style heaters as they produce unlimited hot water.
4. **Bathroom floor:**

There are two options for designing your tub area:

“Wet floor”: The traditional ofuro takes full advantage of the depth of the tub by allowing the water to fill right to the rim. To do this the tub does not have an overflow drain and water can spill over the sides. If your ofuro does not have an overflow, it must be installed on a draining floor (sometimes called a wet floor or shower pan). This means the floor is designed with a waterproof membrane and with a slope to a drain. Trench or trough drains are recommended. Very often the Japanese bathroom includes an open shower in the same area.

“Dry floor” : Choose the optional overflow drain if you do not want to install a wet floor. If an overflow drain is installed, then the tub can be installed on a regular bathroom floor that is water resistant.



5. **Tub Drain:** The drain provided is constructed of solid brass. Finish options are chrome, oil rubbed bronze or brushed nickel. Our recommendation for tubs with non-overflow drains: use a drain connection that is known as an “indirect drain” or a trough drain. This method is simple and can allow one drain to do two jobs – drain the tub and drain any floor water from the overflow. An indirect drain is often used in a commercial kitchen

sink – meaning that the waste pipe below is oversized to accept the tub drain to easily slip inside. This makes installation very easy and has the advantage of allowing the tub to be moved for cleaning in the future. Floor should be sloped to the drain. The tub drain we supply is 1.5 inch NPT standard thread. About 1.5 inches of thread are exposed below the tub floor. The floor drain should be oversized to 3 or 4 inches to allow easy alignment and sufficient room around the smaller tub drain. Consult with a plumber about this for more information. See cut away diagram.

6. **Flush the water lines:** Plumbers MUST flush water lines with warm water for several minutes prior to filling the tub to remove construction debris such as flux, solder, glue, pvc, and metal shavings from all pipes. Failure to do this may result in tub stains.
7. **Floor and walls - airspace:** Your tub is designed to install directly on a finished floor. The rails attached to bottom of the tub allow for air circulation under the tub. We recommend at least ½ inch clearance from walls for air circulation. Avoid tiling contact with the wood, and remember that some air circulation is very important. If the floor is sloped, the tub can be leveled by shims under the rails or by scribing and trimming the rails themselves. We do not recommend caulking or sealing the tub to adjacent walls.
8. **In-floor heating:** In-floor heat under the tub is unnecessary and not recommended. Do not install in-floor radiant heat beneath your tub. Disable that heating zone if it is already in place. In-floor heating can be surrounding the tub area. Failure to do this will void the warranty. (we have never seen a problem with this, but as a precaution, it makes sense not to apply heat under the tub.)
9. **Ventilation:** One of the most important features of any bathroom is good ventilation to reduce that water vapor and humidity in the room after use. We strongly recommend a good quality bathroom fan that is on a 60 minute timer or an automatic humidity switch. This will insure that excess moisture in the bathroom is removed. High humidity is the cause of mildew. We strongly recommend putting a top quality ventilation fan in your tub area – such as the Panasonic Whisper fans.

10. **Exterior Maintenance:** The tub exterior is treated with 3 coats of Dalys Teak Oil in our shop. This is both a penetrating and sealing oil. Included with the purchase of each tub is a small amount of extra teak oil. Teak oil is also available for purchase from marine suppliers. We recommend an annual recoating of any surfaces that are easily reached. This will help preserve the beauty of the wood. Application is with a clean white cotton rag. This oil will dissolve and remove most exterior marks and stains.
11. **Interior Maintenance:** The inside of the tub is left untreated! DO NOT treat the inside surfaces with any finish such as an oil, stain, or other coatings. Most common bath products such as salts and oils used in moderation are fine. We do not recommend using the wood ofuro as a “shower tub” due the high volume of shampoo, conditioner and soaps used in showering. Warning – there are many varieties of bath products and we cannot guarantee that all of them are safe to use with a wood tub. In general a Japanese ofuro is used for a relaxing hot soak after showering. If you choose to use products in the water, we recommend to give the tub an extra rinse after each use.
12. **Cleaning:** Rinsing after each use eliminates the need for cleaning. Good ventilation prevents mildew in your entire bathroom. If mildew is noticed, use a mild (1 tablespoon per gallon of water) diluted household bleach solution and wet down the surfaces of the tub. Let stand for 5 minutes and rinse. Inside stains or marks can always be sanded off with 120 grit sandpaper and a sanding block.
13. **Typical use:** Fill the tub with hot water. Shower first, then soak in the ofuro.
14. **Draining:** Drain the tub completely when finished. Rinse with the shower wand. Squeegee to the drain or towel the last bit of water. Turn on the bathroom fan for 60 minutes. If you follow this simple pattern, your tub will be simple to maintain.
15. Failure to follow these instructions will void the tub warranty.
16. **Most importantly - Enjoy your tub!** It will give you many years of pleasure.