

BAMBOO TREATMENT

CURING, SOAKING, DRYING, SMOKING & STORAGE

Traditional and affordable techniques for **bamboo farmers and builders** in the tropics.

Choose the method that matches the resources available around you.



HARVESTING

Use poles that are 3–4 years old (mature, not shiny; mark new culms to indicate their age).

Harvest during the dry season only.

Cut close to the ground, just above the first or second nodal joint.



TREATMENT OPTION #1

IMMERSION

Clean the culms and puncture the nodes (or drill holes in thinner poles)

Allow culms to dry to ~30% moisture content

Mix a solution with water and 5-10% borax and boric acid

Soak in room temp. water for 7-14 days or hot water for 24 hour cycles

Use weights or sandbags to ensure submersion



TREATMENT OPTION #2

VERTICAL IMMERSION

Similar to full immersion with borax solution

Freshly cut poles with branches and leaves still intact to ensure thorough and efficient saturation

No need to puncture the nodal joints (diaphragms)

Can be done in a bucket or barrel, using far less space than a full immersion tank

Soak in room temp. water for up to 14 days



TREATMENT OPTION #3

BOUCHERIE

A portable pressure system — tank, hose, and a sealed fitting over the cut end — forces preservative solution through the pole, displacing sap and carrying the solution through the vascular bundles.

Requires freshly harvested material

Faster, deeper saturation, with no need to puncture the nodal joints



POST-SOAKING DRYING TECHNIQUES

IN SHADE (IDEAL OPTION)

Allow 2–3 months
for complete drying

Use a well-ventilated,
shaded area and protect
from rain

Rotate regularly and
space for good airflow

Elevate off the ground
and inspect for mold

OR

IN SUN

Drying typically takes
1–2 weeks

Elevate off the ground
and rotate daily

Cover the top to keep
rain out

Monitor closely to avoid
over-drying and cracking

Proper drying **prevents cracking** and ensures strong,
durable bamboo for construction.



ALTERNATIVE OPTION

CURING

The easiest method for preservation

Cut the culm, and leave it resting on the stump exactly where it was.

Leave the leaves and branches intact, and the plant continues to metabolize the sugar content.

When the leaves start falling after 2 to 3 weeks, cut off the branches and store the pole.



ALTERNATIVE OPTION

SMOKING

A traditional method that **protects bamboo** and also serves as **long-term storage** above cooking areas.

Smoke, not flames, preserves the culm keep a safe distance from the fire

Use green leaves and wet wood for dense, lasting smoke

Smoke for at least two days, rotating for even exposure

Storing above cooking areas extends lifespan and keeps bamboo ready to use



STORAGE

Keep in a **shaded, roofed** area
Avoid direct sun and rain

Stack with **gaps for airflow**
Prevents moisture buildup

Elevate off the ground
Protects against humidity and rot

Inspect regularly and keep clean
Detect issues early and deter termites



LEARN MORE

BambuBatu.com

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Sources:

housing-now.org

bamboovillagetrust.earth

wububamboo.com

