

DECK BUILDING TIPS

SMART FROM THE START

PRO TIPS FOR LONGER LASTING DECK BUILDS

Ensure that your wood is suitable for its intended use. Check the lumber tag for "Above Ground" or "Ground Contact" and "KDAT" (kiln dried after treatment) or wet lumber.

- To avoid cupping and ponding of water on deck surface, do not use lumber greater than 6 inches in nominal width (5 1/2" actual).
- For sufficient ventilation, deck must be properly elevated. If enclosing the underside of the deck, lattice allows for proper ventilation to help prevent cupping of deck boards.
- Before fastening, lay out your deck boards with the best-looking faces exposed. Decide which pieces you want for visible areas, and which pieces for understructure.
- Space deck boards accordingly to allow for expansion and contraction: If heavy and wet, butt boards tightly together, as they will shrink when dried. If light and dry (KDAT), space boards at least 1/16" but no more than 1/8", as some expansion may occur.
- Avoid long spans. The greater the distance between supports, the more force develops within the wood as it dries. Also, avoid designs with long cantilevers unsecured at one end. 2x decking material floor joist should not exceed 24" and with 5/4x, no farther than 16".
- Orient embedded support columns so only treated ends are in ground contact.
- Cover upper ends of posts with post caps or cut them at angles to shed water.
- For maximum protection, coat cut ends with wood preservative (required with western species to validate warranty).

- Screws offer advantages over nails for attaching decking to joists. Screws remain tight over time and allow for easy replacement of decking.
- Minimize the use of metal connectors by stacking deck structural members directly on top of each other (e.g., decking on joists, joists on beams, and beams on posts).
- Hot-dip galvanized fasteners are recommended for above-grade applications and should meet ASTM A153. Connectors should meet ASTM A653, Class G185 with 1.85 ounces of zinc coating per square foot minimum. For coatings other than galvanized (e.g., powder- or ceramic-coated) check with the manufacturer to ensure the fastener is recommended for use with pressure-treated lumber.
- Type 304 or 316 stainless steel fasteners and connectors, commonly used in severe exterior exposures, provide maximum corrosion resistance.

FASTENER SCHEDULE						
DECKING	COMMON PRACTICE			SUPERIOR PERFORMANCE		
	5/4 x 6	2 x 4	2 x 6	5/4 x 6	2 x 4	2 x 6
NAILS	(2) 8d	(2) 10d	(2) 10d	(3) 8d	(2) 10d	(3) 10d
SCREWS	(2) 2 1/2"	(2) 2 1/2"	(2) 2 1/2"	(3) 2 1/2"	(2) 2 1/2"	(2) 2 1/2"

- To reduce end splitting, pre-drill ends of deck boards anytime within a widths distance from the end of the board.
- For superior performance, seal KDAT deck boards on all six sides with a quality oil-based stain or paint.
- Before applying finish to pressure-treated southern pine, wood must be clean and dry.



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