

THE AUTHENTIC **DECK GUIDE**



THE 411 ON YOUR **REAL** WOOD DECK

WOOD
IT'S REAL



YOUR BACKYARD IS YOUR OASIS,



your place to get away from it all and home base for your family. Why introduce something artificial to such a genuine setting? For decades, homeowners have chosen real wood to build their backyard projects. Pressure-treated wood is real, durable, beautiful, natural and it stands the test of time.



Like all natural building products, wood needs a little TLC to keep it healthy and performing well. No decking product is maintenance-free, but preserved wood decking is more environmentally friendly than other options. Think of it this way: you wash and wax your car, you clean your windows in the spring and you'll need to pressure-wash your deck when it gets dingy.

Keep reading for tips and design suggestions guaranteed to make the most of your real wood deck, whether it's one month old, one year old or one decade old.

4 DECK DETAILS WE LOVE



WHY REAL WOOD?

Your deck is an extension of your home: an outdoor living area perfect for summer parties, fall football BBQs or for just leaning back and watching nature. Outdoor entertaining has become an art form and, as with all art, an important element is the canvas. Go natural and choose real pressure-treated wood for your deck. Wood has been the decking material of choice for decades; it's what you grew up with; it's what you know.

WHEN CHOOSING YOUR DECKING MATERIAL, LOOK FOR THE TOTAL PACKAGE:

BEAUTY. Your deck should be a natural extension of your home and should blend in effortlessly with your surroundings. Why choose "like wood" instead of the real thing? "Like wood" isn't wood. That's why artificial decking products try their best to resemble real wood.

STRENGTH. Pressure-treated Southern Pine is the strongest softwood on the market, and the industry's number one choice for pressure-treated wood. Check under your neighbor's deck: even if the deck platform is made of something other than treated wood, chances are that's pressure-treated wood holding it up.

DURABILITY. The density of pressure-treated Southern Pine makes it a natural for outdoor projects. Other decking materials conduct high levels of heat and can be damaged easily by foot traffic or pet claws.

ENVIRONMENTAL FRIENDLINESS. Wood is a renewable resource, meaning that new trees are constantly planted to replace the ones we use. Alternative decking might use recycled materials, but they're made with petroleum, a finite resource. Once these finite resources are gone, they're gone forever. Plus, the manufacture of wood products requires exponentially less energy and yields far less air and water pollution than the manufacture of plastic and composite decking. Meantime, growing forests absorb carbon dioxide, and wood products hold that carbon, thus reducing greenhouse gases.

EASE OF USE. No special tools or skills are required to install wood decking.

WORRIED ABOUT FORESTS IN THE U.S.?

No need. Healthy, managed forests that follow sustainable forestry practices keep our air healthy and vibrant. The U.S. forest industry plants more trees than they harvest each year. Fact is, our forests are in better shape - and there are more of them - than there were 100 years ago.

WHAT'S UNDER YOUR DECK?

No matter what decking material you choose, chances are there's real pressure-treated wood underneath, providing support for the various elements. Pressure-treated wood has been the go-to building material of choice for deck support for decades. Why not bring it out in the open and use it for the deck flooring and rails?



MAINTAINING YOUR REAL WOOD DECK

Whether it's brand new or over a decade old, your real wood deck will need minimal levels of care to maintain its beauty. Wood swells and shrinks with changes in moisture levels, which causes some maintenance to be necessary. These things happen because you're dealing with a natural product. Here's a quick overview of how to maintain your investment with an easy annual check-up.

KEEP IT SHARP. Clean your deck with a deck brightener or pressure-wash it as needed. Apply a water repellent coating every year or so, and you're good to go. A quick wash refreshes the clean wood look and gets rid of surface contaminants like mold and mildew. Water repellent protects against moisture damage.

FASTENERS. Building a brand new deck? Be sure to choose fasteners compatible with treated wood. Got an existing deck? Once a year, check each fastener for premature corrosion. If you see a fastener slightly popped up, grab a screw gun or hammer and set it back into place. Install a new fastener next to the old one for extra security, if you like.

SPLINTERING/CHECKING. To keep your wood deck boards from splintering along the edge grain, protect them with a water repellent. Proper maintenance of your deck, just once a year or so, will go a long way to prevent the splintering and checking associated with wood decking.

WHAT'S IN MY PRESSURE-TREATED WOOD?

For pressure-treated wood used in residential applications (decks, gazebos, raised garden beds, etc.), preservatives are forced into the wood to prevent termite infestation and mold and fungal decay. These waterborne preservatives offer a clean appearance and are odorless, paintable/stainable and are EPA-registered for both interior and exterior use.

HAVE QUESTIONS ABOUT THE SAFETY OF PRESSURE-TREATED WOOD? The EPA, charged with reviewing the safety and effectiveness of wood preservatives, has never found any unreasonable risk to human health and the environment from the preservatives used to treat the pressure-treated wood you buy at your favorite retailer.

TREATED WOOD IS GREEN, TOO: Wood preservation supports forest conservation by extending the life of wood products in service, which helps balance overall demand on our abundant forest resources.

HANDLING PRESSURE-TREATED WOOD

When handling pressure-treated wood, follow the same precautions you would with untreated wood or any other composite/alternative decking:

- Wear goggles when using power saws
- Avoid frequent or prolonged inhalation of sawdust
- Wear gloves
- Wash your hands after working with the material

Pressure-treated wood can be disposed of by ordinary trash collection or burial. Do not burn pressure-treated wood in open fires, stoves or fireplaces.

DECK SAFETY

The number one reason decks fail? They're not connected properly to a ledger board. If you're building a deck yourself, visit a few online resources to learn correct fastener spacing and ledger board connection.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Real wood decks and outdoor projects
Pressure-treated wood
Deck safety

www.realoutdoorliving.com
www.southernpine.com
www.nadra.org