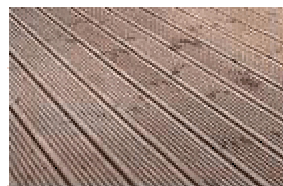




Building a Deck



Choosing your materials you can use softwood or hardwood for decking. The most popular choice in the UK is softwood that's been pressure treated with a preservative to prevent rotting.



Our Decking Boards are treated softwood, 125mm (5'') wide X 38mm (1 ½'') Therefore to get the number of boards you need, get the 'width' of the deck in Meters and divide it by .125 (I.E. if your Deck is 3 meters wide, simply divide 3 by .125 = 24 Deck Boards. Or come down to our shop counter and ask one of our friendly staff for some help on calculating the materials needed.

Grooved boards are available; these offer better grip particularly when it's wet and help also prevent splitting. Our decking boards have been treated with Osmose Nature Wood, and this gives a green tint to the decking, although you can always paint the decking once it's built. All of our deck boards have rounded edges to protect feet and improve drainage.

Tools required

- Drill
- Saw
- Screwdriver
- Set square
- Spade
- Spirit level
- Tape measure



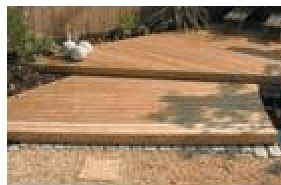
Materials required

- Ballast
- Cement
- Blocks for the posts to rest on
- Bolts to support the outer frame
- Decking boards
- Joist hangers
- Decking screws (specially treated against rust)
- Wooden joists
- Wooden posts

Site preparation

After working out the size and orientation of the deck, clear and prepare the site. Nothing spoils a new deck more than weeds growing through cracks in its boards, so before you start clear all vegetation and turf from the area. Compact and level the ground, leaving a gentle slope towards the outer edge of the deck (running the length of the deck boards, so water can run down the grooves) to allow for drainage. Lay a weed-suppressing membrane, also known as 'Landscape Fabric' over the surface and cover with a cheap gravel.

Step by step



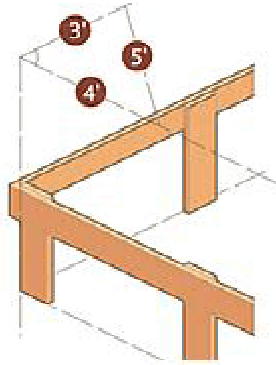
The basic principle of constructing a deck is to attach the decking boards to a timber frame that consists of horizontal joists attached to vertical posts. It's always advisable to consult a professional when undertaking a major building project. However, here's a guide for constructing a small decking area.

1 Measure out the area the deck will cover and work out where the posts will go. A deck should be supported by posts on all corners and every 1.5m (5ft) around the perimeter, although more posts are required if the deck will be supporting heavy loads.

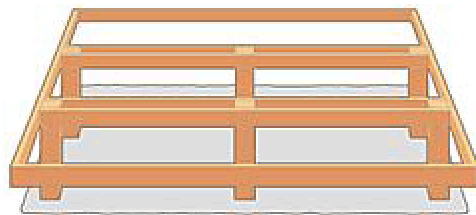
2 Dig holes 300mm to 400mm (12in to 15in) deep and 300mm (12in) wide for the posts. Put a building block in the bottom of each hole and place the post on top of this. Use a spirit level to make sure the posts are upright, and then fill the holes with concrete. You must wait for the concrete to harden before continuing with construction, which should take one to two days, or use 'Post Mix' which is fast setting and will dry in half a day, recommended one bag per hole/post.



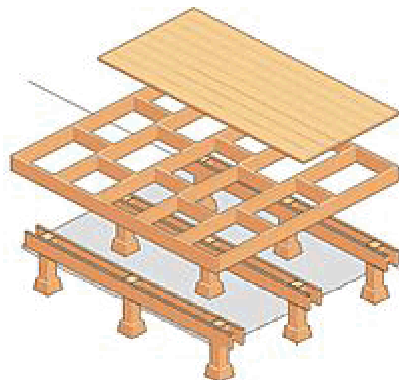
3 Using bolts, attach the joists to the outside of the posts at the desired height to form the outside edge of the frame. Leave the posts long, as you can attach rope later to form a banister. Or use newel posts, which will be the desired height to attach a handrail from, available in both turned or square.



4 Attach joists (150mm x 50mm/ 6" x 2") to the inside of the frame every 300mm to 450mm (12in to 15in), using either joist hangers or screws.



5 To improve the stability and prevent any sideways movement from the deck, add shorter lengths of wood (150mm x 50mm/ 6" x 2") every one to two metres (4ft to 6ft), perpendicular to the inside of the joists. Known as 'noggins' or 'wedges'.





6 Screw the decking boards to the joists, leaving a gap of 6mm to 10mm between each board. This will allow the boards room to expand during wet periods. It will also ensure sufficient drainage and ventilation. Decking boards are laid at 90 or 45 degrees to the joists (running them at 90 degrees is easier, as it involves fewer cuts. Always lay decking when the boards are dry.

7 Once the decking boards are attached, use string to form a straight line along the edges of the deck and saw them all off in one go. Allow the boards an overlap of about 5cm (2in) over the frame. Paint the cut ends with a sealant to prevent water penetrating the deck.

Care and maintenance

- Furniture should be placed on rubber feet or mats to minimise damage.
- Put pots on bricks to allow the air to circulate and to prevent a build up of mould.
- Check bolts and screws regularly and tighten if necessary.
- Regularly clean the deck with a brush to remove dirt. A stiff brush should also remove mildew and algae.
- Occasionally remove mildew, algae and dirt with a pressure hose or deck-cleaning liquid (see in store for recommended products).
- Once a year, add a clear water repellent.
- Check for damaged boards and replace as necessary.