



Tips for a Well-Built Deck

Whether you are rebuilding a deck or building a new one, follow these tips for a deck that will look beautiful and last for many years to come.

1. Design

- Check zoning before construction – Extending a deck into a no-build zone can lead to building officials requesting it get moved or torn down.
- Permits are great ways to get inspector advice on structural and railing code issues. Building to code is good for resale value and insurance purposes, as well.
- Make sure deck accommodates walking area and fits furniture comfortably.

2. Framing

- Make sure deck framing is properly bolted into side of house.
- Lag deck framing 2” below door, to keep water outside.
- Verify deck joists are properly sized, spaced and sloped away from the house for drainage.
- Add sway blocking behind stairs and outside corners.
- If using pressure treated lumber for framing, be sure to add membrane between joists and metal fasteners and hangers, to prevent corrosion.
- Pro tip – Painted joists with membrane caps can sometimes be substituted for pressure treated framing. Be sure to prime the ends of the joists, too.

3. Finishes

- Flash the door pan, rim joist and blocking around posts before adding decking.
- If deck is near trees or gets a lot of dirt, be sure to space deck boards more than 1/8.”
- Deck boards that have been hand-nailed with hot dipped galvanized nails, or screwed with stainless steel fasteners, will last longer than gun-nailed decking.
- Consider wire cabling and metal post railing for maintenance-free finishes and open views
- A gas outlet for the BBQ and motion lights over the stairs is nice.
- Plastic patio roofs leak over time. For water tightness, glass is better.

4. Cost saving and green tips (Check with a pro first):

- Frequently the existing deck joists can be cleaned up, repainted and reused.
- It is cheaper to use more joists and 5/4” decking, than fewer joists and 1-1/2” decking.
- Ironwoods and engineered decking do not need to be finished. They might also be the last deck tops you’ll ever need, and help save Washington’s remaining cedars.

**For more in our “Well Built” series, visit the Resource Page at DLRees.com.
Or, call us for a free consultation at 206-719-9566**