



Pros and Cons of Common Decking Materials

When it comes to building a new deck, you have many options to choose from for the decking material. Each material has its own advantages and disadvantages, depending on your budget, preferences, and maintenance needs. Here are some of the most common decking materials and their pros and cons:

Wood. Wood is a traditional and popular choice for decking, especially hardwoods like cedar, redwood, and ipe. Wood has a natural and warm look that complements many house styles and landscapes.

- Pros: Wood is easy to get and relatively affordable compared to other materials. Wood stays cool in summer and feels comfortable underfoot. Wood can be stained or painted to match your desired color scheme.

- Cons: Wood requires regular maintenance to prevent rotting, cracking, warping, and fading. Wood can also splinter, attract insects, and be prone to mold and mildew. Wood may not last as long as other materials, depending on the quality and treatment.

Composite. Composite decking is made from recycled plastic and wood fibers, making it an eco-friendly and durable option. Composite decking mimics the look of real wood without the hassle of maintenance.

- Pros: Composite decking is easy to clean with soap and water and does not rot, splinter, or warp. Composite decking comes in a variety of colors, textures, and designs to suit your taste. Composite decking is resistant to insects, mold, and mildew.

- Cons: Composite decking is more expensive than wood and may fade over time due to sun exposure. Composite decking can also sag under heavy weight or heat and may stain or scratch easily. Composite decking may not look as natural as wood.

Plastic/PVC/polyethylene. Plastic or PVC decking is another synthetic option that offers low-maintenance and high-performance benefits. Plastic decking is made from pure plastic or vinyl without any wood fibers.

- Pros: Plastic decking is lightweight and easy to install with hidden fasteners or screws. Plastic decking is stain-resistant, water-resistant, and UV-resistant, making it ideal for harsh climates. Plastic decking does not rot, splinter, or warp and does not need painting or sealing.

- Cons: Plastic decking is the most expensive option among synthetic materials and may look artificial or cheap. Plastic decking can also get very hot in summer and slippery when wet. Plastic decking may crack or fade over time due to temperature changes or wear and tear.

Aluminum. Aluminum decking is a metal alternative that offers strength, durability, and modern appeal. Aluminum decking is designed with interlocking panels that create a watertight surface for your deck.

- Pros: Aluminum decking is virtually maintenance-free and does not rust, rot, crack, or warp. Aluminum decking is fire-resistant, insect-resistant, and mold-resistant. Aluminum decking stays cool in summer and can handle heavy snow loads in winter. Aluminum decking comes in various colors and finishes to match your style.

- Cons: Aluminum decking is the most expensive option among all materials and may not suit every budget or aesthetic preference. Aluminum decking can also be noisy when walked on or during rainstorms. Aluminum decking may dent or scratch easily if not handled carefully.