

# LIBERTY BELL BUILDERS – DECK CARE & MAINTENANCE GUIDE

## A DECK THAT LASTS: WHY MAINTENANCE MATTERS

A deck can bring more enjoyment to your home and backyard while increasing resale value. But decks—especially wood and pressure-treated lumber—require routine maintenance to protect against rot, mold, moisture, and insect activity. Because a deck is exposed to the elements year-round, regular care is key to preserving its beauty and structural integrity.

## COMPOSITE VS. WOOD DECKING

- Composite decking requires less upkeep than wood because its core is made of wood fibers blended with synthetic materials, and its outer coating protects against moisture and insects.
- Wood decking, however, is fully natural and more vulnerable to:
  - Moisture absorption
  - Rot and mold growth
  - Weathering and cracking
  - Termite or insect infestation
  - With consistent maintenance, a wood deck can last for decades—remaining safe, strong, and beautiful.

## MAINTENANCE COMPARISON CHART

Task	Composite	Wood / Pressure Treated
Cleaning	Recommended Semi-Annually	Recommended Semi- Annually
Sanding	Not Required	Required Every 2-5 Years
Sealing	Not Required	Required Every 2-5 Years
Staining	Not Required	Required Every 2-5 Years
Painting	Not Required	Optional Every 2-5 Years



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## PROFESSIONAL DECK CARE BY LIBERTY BELL BUILDERS

Let us handle the hard work for you! Liberty Bell Builders proudly offers:

- Professional pressure washing (deck-safe, low-pressure method)
- Deck sanding for surface rejuvenation
- Staining and sealing with premium weather-resistant products
- Winter inspections to identify rot, frost damage, or safety concerns
- Full seasonal maintenance packages to protect your investment year-round

# LIBERTY BELL BUILDERS – DECK CARE & MAINTENANCE CHECKLIST

## I. INSPECT FOR ROT OR DECAY

- Use a screwdriver to gently probe boards for soft or easily penetrated spots.
- Look for tiny holes that may indicate insect activity or termites.
- Examine the ledger board—improper flashing makes this the most common area for rot.
- Inspect joists and support posts for moisture damage.
- Check both topside and underside of deck boards for splitting, softness, or improper gapping.

## 2. MAKE SURE FASTENERS, STAIRS & RAILINGS ARE SECURE

- Ensure the ledger board is tightly fastened to the home or structure.
- Check all nails, screws, and anchors for looseness or corrosion.
- Inspect stair risers, stringers, and railings for stability.
- Replace rusted fasteners with stainless steel when possible.

## 3. CLEAN THE DECK & REMOVE DEBRIS

- Sweep weekly or bi-weekly to remove dirt, pollen, and leaves.
- Remove debris trapped between deck boards using a putty knife.
- Check for stray or raised nails/screws and secure them.
- Pressure wash responsibly or hand-clean using the correct cleaning solution.
- Schedule a full cleaning at least once or twice annually.

## 4. STAIN & SEAL (WOOD / PRESSURE-TREATED DECKS)

- Clean the deck and allow a full 48 hours of drying time.
- Sand with 80-grit if multiple stain layers have built up.
- Apply stain/sealer during dry weather between 50°F–90°F.
- If stain does not include a sealing agent, apply clear sealer afterward.
- Move all furniture, plants, and décor, covering surrounding landscaping before staining.



## WINTER CARE & SNOW/ICE MANAGEMENT

- Use plastic shovels only to avoid scratching the wood.
- Shovel in the direction of the deck boards—never across them.
- Avoid traditional rock salt, which can damage wood fibers and fasteners.
- Use pet-safe ice melt or calcium-based products safe for wood structures.
- Keep snow from piling against railings to reduce moisture exposure.
- Do not use grill mats or rubber mats that trap moisture in winter.

