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How much is composite decking per square foot

What is the cost per square foot for composite decking. How much does a 12x12 composite deck cost. How much is composite decking per square foot canada.

Decking Collection Select a Decking Collection Trex Transcend® Lineage™ Trex Transcend® Trex Select® Trex Enhance® Naturals Trex Enhance® Basics Collection Color Select a Color Railing Collection Select a Railing Collection Trex Signature® Trex Transcend® Trex Select® No Railing Change Collections Selections in with Starting at Email My Detailed Results *Trex actual material costs and install costs can and will vary based on geographic area, site location, seasonality, design complexity, whether the product is stocked locally, and additional features such as stairs, angles, curves, lighting, etc. For most professionally installed projects, materials constitute up to one third of the total cost. Don't let your remodeling budget go over-board by hidden surprises – understand what the average installed costs for Composite Decking is in your zip code by using our handy calculator. If you're looking for the Cost of Composite Decking materials and what installation cost might be, you've come to the right place. As an experienced licensed home improvement contractor, I know first hand what it should cost for various levels — from Basic, Better, and of course the best. The Composite Decking estimator will provide you with up to date pricing for your area. Simply enter your zip code and the square footage, next click update and you will see a breakdown on what it should cost to have Composite Decking installed onto your home.



Material cost is for decking boards only with installation. This does not include: frame, fasteners, railings, footings, etc. The average cost of composite decking is \$4-\$8 per square foot. Azek - the average cost per square foot is \$7.82. Trex - the average cost is \$6.78 per square foot. TimberTech - the average cost per square foot is \$7.48. CertainTeed - cost \$7.50 per square foot. Evergrain - \$6.47 per square foot. Fiberon - \$5.42 per square ft.



Get at least 3-5 estimates before hiring a Composite Decking contractor — estimates are typically free, unless it's a service call for a repair. Expect the Composite Decking prices to fluctuate between various companies – each and every company have different operation expenses and over-head. Try to get prices in late Fall, early winter – you should expect aggressive pricing discounts by waiting for a contractor's down season. Try to budget and additional 7-15% more on top of what our calculator gives out - I.e; difficult configurations, patterns, the additional complexity of your home will add to the Composite Decking costs. Visit every supply house that sell your particular brand of Composite Decking and try to negotiate a better price with each supplier - I save on average 20%. Remember, there are multiple styled homes in the U.S – from: Contemporary, colonial, cape-cod style, ranch, bungalow, victorian, etc. So keep that in mind and try to budget a little more, before starting your Composite Decking project. External References: SaveWith the price of wood nearly doubling, low-maintenance composite decking looks better than ever.



As you research the options and compare prices, keep in mind that many manufacturers offer different product lines at different price points, i.e., “good, better, best.” In addition, most composite decking is priced in linear feet, but since the width of decking can vary, comparing prices based on square footage will give you more accurate results. Most contractors use square footage to price their bids.Limit your search for composite decking to companies that have a current engineering report. Many building authorities won't issue a building permit without one. (The reports summarize the test results of the manufacturer's products.) Another important factor is local availability. It's best to find composite decking stocked by a local distributor, lumberyard, or another retail outlet. This will make returns and future purchases more convenient.How Much Does Composite Decking Cost?A big, beautiful deck is ground zero when you're entertaining guests outdoors. From cookouts to the conversation, nothing gets more use than a nice deck on a beautiful day. And, as the price of natural wood and composite decking approaches parity, it's important to understand the advantages of composite decks over natural wood.So how much does composite decking cost? On average, a composite deck costs between \$4.50 to \$13 per square foot for the decking alone, or about \$30 to \$60 per square foot installed, including the substructure (joists, posts, and beams). Natural wood decks cost \$25 to \$43 per square foot installed. More desirable woods like cedar, redwood, and ipe (a tropical hardwood) will skew higher.Deck Cost FactorsDecks also typically include rails, stairs, and fascia. As a result, the final cost of a deck isn't reflected in the cost of the decking alone. Much will depend on the building site, deck size, and design choices.Other factors to consider:Warranty. Wood doesn't come with a warranty, but most of the leading composite decking manufacturers guarantee their products for 25-50 years or longer.Maintenance. Most wood decks require deep cleaning and refinishing every few years, which cost time and money. A composite deck is easy to clean with a brush and mild detergent.Composite Decking vs Wood Cost: Is a Composite Deck Worth The Money?Based on these averages, it can cost between \$12,000 and \$24,000 for a composite deck versus \$10,000 to \$17,000 for a wood deck. While that may seem like a large difference upfront, composite decks are less expensive over time because they last longer, look better longer, and require less upkeep than natural wood. In fact, better durability means the cost of a composite deck like Trex can be easily offset over time.Compared to natural wood decks, which may last only 15 years with diligent maintenance, composite decks may last 25 to 30 years or even longer. That's due to their mixture of synthetic and organic fibers that are wrapped in a protective synthetic shell, which enables composite deck boards to resist mold, warping, and staining. They are also scratch- and fade-resistant.The Rising Price of WoodThe cost of wood jumped 275% starting in 2020. While prices are lower today, wood still costs nearly double what it used to.



Meanwhile, the cost of composite decking hasn't changed much.



This makes composite decks very competitive, even compared to pressure-treated pine, the least expensive wood option. In fact, the price gap between composite and wood decking has never been so narrow.SaveComparing Prices of Composite Decking BrandsComparing prices is important to ensure you get the best product that meets your budget. Many composite decking brands offer a range of products at different price points. Consult the manufacturers' websites and visit your local distributor or retailer to see how price relates to appearance and performance.In most cases, you should also be able to pick up samples of composite decking materials from your local lumberyard or dealer - order them online. It's a good idea to do some practical testing at home to see how easily the surface can be scratched with a key or stained with some grease or ketchup.Some materials tend to fade more than others. If your deck will be subject to intense sun and little shade, look for a finished project or outdoor display that has been exposed to the elements for a few years. Compare its deck boards with new ones to see how well they have resisted fading.Check out our comprehensive composite decking comparison pricing chart for the most popular brands available, including the average cost of Trex decking. Trex's low-maintenance decks cost roughly two to five times more than wood, depending on the performance tier which ranges from low-cost to premium, but they last for decades and offer a lower total cost of ownership over their lifetime.SaveComposite Decking Brand Price Comparison ChartCost to Replace Deck Boards with CompositeThe cost to replace wood deck boards with composite can run between \$15 to \$25 per square foot. A variety of factors may impact this range in costs, including the cost of composite materials, size of the deck, the complexity of the deck's shape or patterns to lay the decking, and the cost of labor. If you plan to install new composite decking yourself, the costs may range between \$8 and \$22 per square foot.Due to the upkeep required by wood decking, many homeowners decide to later remove wooden deck boards and replace them with lower-maintenance composite decking. It's possible to just replace wood decking with composite, but if your deck's original structure and framing materials are made from wood, you want to ensure its structurally sound and the joists aren't rotted. Typically, it's not recommended to only replace the boards. Consider replacing the structure of your wood deck with composite framing.Get started by calculating the cost to build your deck here.When you're ready to build your deck, find a contractor near you or find a retailer to buy composite decking. August 10, 2023New deck installation costs \$2,200 for a 10' x 10' deck, \$6,200 for a 14' x 20' deck, and \$8,800 for a 20' x 20' deck. The cost to build a deck with pressure-treated wood, hardwood, or composite is about \$25 per square foot, for both materials and installation. The final price depends on the materials, size, level built on, and any extra options like built-in seating or stairs.Cost to build a deck - chartCost To Build A Deck National Average Cost \$6,300 Minimum Cost \$1,200 Maximum Cost \$14,000 Average Range \$3,600 to \$8,400 Average Deck Cost Per Square FootThe average cost to build a deck is \$25 per square foot with most homeowners spending between \$4,400 to \$10,100. An entry-level deck with basic materials costs \$15 per square foot.A deck built with premium materials costs \$35 per square foot.Cost to build a deck - chartDeck Cost Per Square FootDeck QualityCost Per Square FootBasic Materials\$15Average Materials\$25Premium Materials\$35Cost To Build A Deck By SizeBelow are the most common deck sizes and the average cost to build based on a range from basic to premium materials:Average Deck Cost By Size Deck Size Square Feet Average Cost 8' x 10' 80 \$1,200 - \$2,800 10' x 10' 100 \$1,500 - \$3,500 10' x 12' 120 \$1,800 - \$4,200 12' x 12' 144 \$2,200 - \$5,100 12' x 20' 240 \$3,600 - \$8,400 14' x 20' 280 \$4,200 - \$9,800 16' x 16' 256 \$3,900 - \$8,900 20' x 20' 400 \$6,000 - \$14,000 New wood deck installation stained sealed natural woodLabor Cost To Build a DeckThe labor cost to build a deck is \$8 to \$22 per square foot, making up the bulk of the cost. The total cost depends on the size, materials used, level built on, conditions of the area, and any extra options like built-in seating or stairs. Labor cost to build a deck - chartCost Of Lumber To Build A DeckLumber costs range from \$6 to \$8 per square foot for the most common woods used in decking. Premium hardwoods and composite materials cost \$20 to \$35 per square foot.Cost To Build A Deck YourselfBuilding a 10' x 10' ground-level deck yourself costs about \$700 for the materials versus paying a professional around \$2,200 total. You could use pressure-treated lumber to build a 16' x 16' foot deck for \$1,500 or hire a contractor to do the labor for you for about \$6,400.Cost to build a deck yourself - chartUsing premium materials for your DIY deck such as Trex, Ipe, or Tigerwood to build a 16' x 16' foot deck yourself would run about \$5,100. Hiring a deck builder instead would cost about \$13,620 for both labor and materials.Building a small 10x10 deck with pressure treated lumberMaterial Costs To Build A DeckMaterial costs to build a deck range from \$6 to \$8 per square foot. The three most popular materials for the construction of outdoor decks in the US are pressure-treated wood, hardwood, and recycled composite.Deck material cost - chartDeck Material Cost Estimator Deck Material Average Cost Per Square Foot Bamboo \$3 - \$4 Cedar \$4 - \$8 Pressure-Treated Wood \$5 - \$8 Redwood \$7 - \$8 Tigerwood \$6 - \$15 Ipe \$10 - \$15 Composite Decking Cost \$10 - \$15 Trex Decking Cost \$8 - \$20 Large wraparound deck painted stained and sealedPressure Treated Deck CostA pressure-treated wood deck costs \$6 to \$8 per square foot for materials or \$12 to \$18 per square foot installed. Almost 75% of all decks in the US today use pressure-treated wood (PT). Chemically treated under pressure, it is fabricated to make the wood more resistant to mold, insects, and rot.DisadvantagesPressure-treated wood is generally made from low-grade fir or pine that tends to warp and crack over time, creating an ongoing need for a rigid maintenance schedule. When pressure-treated wood meets water, any metal used in the construction of the deck like aluminum flashing, galvanized nails and screws, fasteners, joists, and deck hangers will begin to corrode and cause dangerous structural instability in your deck if left unrepaired.A pressure-treated wood deck requires regular sanding, sealing, and staining.Raised wooden walk out deck construction with railing stairs and stepsWood Deck CostsA natural wood deck costs \$3 to \$15 per square foot for materials, with most homeowners spending \$6 to \$8 per square foot. Wood decks are beautiful and a top choice for homeowners. However, they require more maintenance such as staining and sealing regularly. The most common woods used for decking include:Cedar - Cedar costs \$4 to \$8 per square foot and is naturally resistant to weathering, insects, and rot. It requires yearly maintenance of sanding, sealing, and staining.Bamboo - Bamboo costs \$3 per square foot on average and is the cheapest material used in decking. Like cedar, it requires annual maintenance to keep it healthy.Redwood - Redwood decking costs \$7 per square foot and is the most common wood used in deck building. Without regular maintenance, it can develop mold and get damaged by the sun.Ipe - Ipe, a Brazilian hardwood, costs \$10 to \$15 per square foot. It typically lasts over 40 years and is resistant to mold. However, it's by far the most expensive wood to use.Tigerwood - Tigerwood costs \$6 to \$15 per square foot, making it one of the most expensive hardwoods used in decking. Like Ipe, it lasts longer than 25 years, and special tools are needed to drill holes for installation.Large multi walk out deck building overlooking trees and hillsRedwood Deck CostA redwood deck costs \$15 to \$21 per square foot installed and around \$7 per square foot for just the materials. Redwood is just a little more per square foot than pressure-treated wood.ProfYou avoid all the downsides of infused copper and corrosion.It is just under half the cost of recycled composite lumber.Redwood is excellent for either painting or staining.It is naturally resistant to pests and fire.It does not warp easily and is long-lasting.Multiple level redwood deck with railingsConsRedwood can develop mold and get damaged by the sun if it isn't maintained regularly with staining and sealing.Cedar Decking CostCedar decking costs \$4 to \$8 per square foot for the materials depending on the grade selected. Cedar is a natural softwood that comes treated or untreated. Most cedar planks are left untreated because of their natural resistance to weathering and rot.ProfOne of the most cost-effective materials used in deckingNaturally resistant to weathering, rot, and wood-destroying insects such as termitesEasy to stain, seal, and will not warp from agingConsNot as strong as other hardwoods; scratches and dents easilyRequires annual maintenance of sanding, staining, and sealingIpe Decking CostIpe decking costs \$10 to \$15 per square foot. Ipe is a Brazilian hardwood also known as Ironwood.ProfHas a life expectancy of 40+ yearsThree times harder than oak and won't scratch or dent like other kinds of woodRequires little maintenance, other than applying oil yearlyConsRequires special tools to drill holes into the wood and installCan cost up to three times as much as standard pressure-treated woodComposite Decking CostThe average cost of composite decking is \$23 to \$38 per square foot installed, and between \$10 to \$15 per square foot for just the materials. Most homeowners spend between \$5,821 to \$10,826 to install a 12' x 24' composite deck with railings.Recycled composite is fabricated to look like real wood, and it's growing in popularity as deck building material. It's made from recycled plastic with two of the most common options including polyethylene, polypropylene, and polyvinyl chloride or PVC.ProfWill require very little maintenanceNever splinters or rotsHas no chemicals in it that will corrode metal fastenersAvailable in a range of colorsDoes not need to be stained or sealedSome composites are available as "hollow core" planks which allow for either electrical or audio cable to be run through the core.Composite decking patio with living room designConsOne of the most expensive options.Not as easy as wood to restore because it cannot be sanded.May be a warmer surface underfoot in high temperatures when compared to woodTrex Decking CostTrex decking costs \$4,244 to \$10,826 for materials and installation for a typical 24' x 12' deck. Trex decking materials alone cost between \$8 to \$20 per square foot.ProfNaturally resistant to fading and staining, as well as mildew, mold, and even termites Won't warp, rot, crack, split, or splinterComes with a 25-year warranty on the product and its ability to remain stain and fade-freeNo need to treat your deck for insects, stain, seal, or to waterproof itLuxury deck built with trex decking ConsTrex decks cannot be refinished or recolored.Like most composite solutions for decks, materials are more expensive.Additional Decking Options & Construction CostsDecks can be customized to your exact preferences. Here's an average breakdown of costs to add bells and whistles to your deck:Decking Options & Costs Deck Feature Average Cost Portable Heaters \$100 - \$500 Fire Pit \$200, Custom built: \$2,700 - \$6,000 Outdoor Fireplace \$1,500 - \$6,500 Railing \$26 per linear foot Privacy Screen \$20 per panel Custom Screened In Deck \$600 - \$3,500 Patio Enclosures \$8,112 - \$18,748 Flooring \$2.50 - \$14 per square foot Stain and Seal \$0.40 per square foot Pre-manufactured Seating \$350 - \$1,100 Custom Seating \$2,000 - \$5,000 Stairs & Steps \$210 - \$290 Planter Boxes \$120 each Hot Tub \$4,000 - \$15,000 Sauna \$3,000 - \$10,000 Outdoor Shower \$800 - \$1,000 (\$4,000 with privacy enclosure) Outdoor Kitchen w/ Sink \$1500+ Roofing / Pergola Framing \$0.70 - \$1.30 per square foot Cover \$1,000 manual, \$1,700 motorized Deck Skirting \$30 per square foot Deck painting cost \$2 - \$5 per square foot Cost To Build Deck StairsAdding stairs to your deck costs \$150 more on average depending on the number of steps required. A rough rule of thumb to calculate your final price is \$40 per step. The addition of some steps makes a nice transition from the yard onto the deck. Depending on the size of the yard, one set may be sufficient, although you may choose to add the steps on either side of the deck.Cost To Build Deck Stairs Number of Steps Average Cost 2 Steps \$110 - \$165 3 Steps \$100 - \$140 4 Steps \$140 - \$190 Deck in backyard with stairs and built in lightingThe variance in cost depends on whether you want an open vertical space between each step or if you'd instead close it up with a matching riser. Also, concrete footing for each set of steps for support (excluding excavation) costs \$50.Cost To Install Deck RailingThe average cost to install deck railing is \$20 per linear foot depending on the material used. Normally a railing will not be on all four sides of the deck because one of the sides of the deck will be along the house. For a 42"-high handrail, one 2' x 4" horizontal top rail, and one 2' x 6" placed on the edge directly below the top rail, prices with balusters are:Deck Railing Cost Deck Railing Material Average Cost Pine, pressure treated \$15 per linear foot Redwood, select heart \$19 per linear foot Recycled composite lumber \$36 per linear foot Deck Fireplace & Fire Pit CostTo add a fireplace or a fire pit to your deck, a store-bought heater costs \$200 to \$500, while a custom built-in solution runs \$2,700 to \$6,500. There are many options to choose from, including the following:Deck Fireplace & Fire Pit Cost Heating Solution Average Cost Tall Butane Heaters \$100 - \$500 Fire Pit \$200+ Custom Fire Pit \$2,700 - \$5,000 Outdoor Fireplace \$1,500+ Custom Outdoor Fireplace \$6,500+ Fireplace options start with a small, wood-fired, self-enclosed metal structure with metal-mesh side panels that allow the heat to escape on all four sides.A firebox costs \$1,000 on average and is like an indoor fireplace that only allows the heat out through the front.Patio Enclosures CostThe average cost of a patio enclosure is \$900 for a pre-built kit or between \$8,112 and \$18,748 to enclose a deck or create a custom sunroom. At around \$70 per square foot, you can either partially enclose or fully enclose your deck.Screened In Deck CostThe average cost to build a screened-in porch on an existing deck is about \$4.50 per square foot. This would bring you to a total of \$600 for a small porch with basic materials up to \$3,510 for a large wrap-around porch with high-end materials.As a budget alternative, you can also choose to install a privacy netting screen. This is available to the consumer in 15' x 3' lengths and is almost 3 feet high. Generally, each panel will run around \$20, will still need deck posts to tie to at each end, and will typically be attached to a top rail with screws and washers through grommets.Deck Flooring CostsOnce your deck is built, you can add flooring at an average cost of between \$2.50 and \$4.00 per square foot installed, and even pay \$1.00 per square foot extra to add diagonal pattern decking. Prices below are based on a deck with 200 square feet of area.Deck Flooring Costs Flooring Type Average Cost Pine, 5/4" x 6" thick, pressure-treated deck flooring \$2.50/sqft Redwood, 2" x 8" thick, select heart deck flooring \$4/sqft Recycled, 5/4" x 6" thick, composite lumber decking \$8/sqft Recycled composite lumber decking 2" x 8" thick \$14/sqft Add for stain with sealer finish \$0.40/sqft Additional cost for diagonal pattern decking Deck Flooring Type Average Cost Pine decking, pressure treated \$0.40/sqft Redwood decking \$0.70/sqft Recycled composite lumber decking 5/4" x 6" thick \$1.00/sqft Recycled composite lumber decking 2" x 8" thick \$1.90/sqft Built-In Deck SeatingDepending on your desire to go upscale with some unique custom-designed seating designed and built by your installer, or to add your own bench style options, there will be something for every budget.On the lower end of the spectrum, you can expect to pay:\$350 to \$1,100 to add premanufactured, waterproof bench-style seatings\$2,000 to \$5,000 or more to have an L-shaped bench built and installedMulti level deck with built-in seatingDeck Planter BoxesThe average cost to add deck planter boxes is between \$80 and \$150 each depending on the type of materials. Wide, narrow, rectangular planter boxes are available in wood, metal, and a range of plastic composites. Taller, deeper planter boxes which hold less are also available for roughly 15% less than the rectangular options.From \$80 for woodFrom \$120 for plasticFrom \$150 for metalCost To Add Hot Tub To DeckThe average cost to install a hot tub to a deck is \$4,000 and \$15,000 depending on the size, features, and model. Depending on the number of people you want to accommodate in the hot tub; the number of jets; how long you want the product to last; the type of inner shell; and features like drink holders, colored LED lighting, etc., you will see a range of prices:Cost To Add Hot Tub To Deck Hot Tub Type Average Cost Entry Level \$2,000 - \$4,000 Mid Level \$5,000 - \$8,000 High End \$9,000 - \$12,000 Luxury \$13,000 - \$15,000 For the hot tub installation, you can simply set the hot tub right on top of the deck, or, if you have a slightly raised portion of the deck, it can be set down into a cutout. If the hot tub is going to be recessed, then some form of entry will need to be created to provide access for any maintenance that the hot tub pumps or electrical setup might need.Alternatively, building an outdoor sauna costs \$5,500 to \$34,000.Deck with hot tub built-inOutdoor Deck Shower CostDepending on the type of shower you want to install-allowing you and your family to rinse off after using the hot tub or pool-and the distance from the nearest water line, your costs will be:\$800-\$1,000 for a nice

wall-mounted shower with a small 3’ by 3’ wood floors\$4,000 or more if you want to install one with a privacy enclosure-like an interior showerOutdoor Kitchen On Deck CostsIf you just want a sink cabinet and counter area that you place your grill next to, you are likely to spend:\$600-\$900 for an entry-level, medium-sized, mid-priced sink\$1,500 and up for a larger sink with an exquisite faucet\$7,000-\$17,000 if you want to go all out and create a complete outdoor kitchen with a small fridge, counter space, and cabinetsCost To Build Pergola or Roof Over DeckThe average price to build a roof over your deck, or add pergola framing is between \$0.70 and \$1.30 per square foot. Include \$40 to \$50 for supporting posts and concrete, and an additional \$2.60 per square foot for flat asphalt roof covering. Another option is a manual deck cover which costs \$500 to \$1,500 or \$1,700 and up for a motorized cover.Cost To Install Deck SkirtingThe average cost to install deck skirting is between \$25 and \$30 per square foot.

Adding a skirt can finish out the look of the deck from your walking surface down to the ground and protect that space from large rodents.Trellis - \$25 per square footPrivacy fence style - \$30 per square footThe finished product will look like a privacy fence-with little to no gap between the boards-or it will be more like a trellis with the wood in either a diamond or square configuration. A complete absence of gaps will rule out the space becoming home to rodents or snakes, while the trellis option is more suited to being a visual addition.Cost To Repair, Rebuild Or Replace Your DeckWith a natural wood deck, annual maintenance, repairs, and rebuilding is part of the game. With lots of upkeep, your wood decking can last 25 to 40 years before you need to replace it. However, not maintaining your deck drastically reduces its lifetime to 10 to 15 years.Deck Repair CostsPlan ahead for maintenance and deck repair costs, which include:Deck Repair Costs Maintenance & Repair Average Cost Damaged deck boards \$1,280 Loose deck stairs \$150 - \$300 Missing deck nails \$5 - \$10 Mold, mildew, and rot \$200 - \$500 Damaged deck railing \$400 - \$500 Termite and pest treatment \$100 - \$300 Stain and seal \$3.50/square foot Cost To Stain A DeckThe average cost to sand, stain, and seal a deck is \$1 to \$3 per square foot. If you only have a small area that needs to be repaired, you can buy the sealant and stain and complete that portion of the project in your own time.Stain - Available as an opaque or semi-opaque stain in acrylic latex, oil, or latex. Covers 400 square feet of wood surface and costs \$30 to \$45 per gallon.Wood finish - Available as a transparent or waterproofing finish.

Covers 400 square feet of wood surface and costs \$16 to \$80 per gallon.Deck stained and sealed to be water resistantCost To Seal A DeckYou should strive to reseal your deck annually.

An average wood sealer costs about \$20 per gallon and can easily be applied yourself.Wood water clear sealer - covers 225-325 square feet of sanded wood and 125 square feet for the initial coat on rough-sawn wood costs\$16 to \$18 per gallon.Wood preservative - covers 100 to 300 square feet and costs \$24 to \$29 per gallon.Deck Removal CostDeck removal costs between \$5 and \$10 per square foot depending on the size and condition of the old deck. If you have a multi-level, built-in seating, or railing, removal prices will increase. An average 12x12 deck that consists of 144 square feet costs between \$720 and \$1,440 to remove.Estimating The Cost Of Building Your DeckIf you’re tired of walking out your back door and having nothing decent outside to relax on, never mind hosting a BBQ or enjoying a stint in the hot tub, a deck can meet your outdoor living space needs.Build one level, or include some raised portions; stretch it the full width of the back of the house or contain it to the area by the back door. No matter how large you go, make sure it meets your home improvement needs.Luxury deck with privacy wallsDeck SizeThe main thing you need to choose before you start is the size of the deck. The standard advice is to make a deck a minimum 12’ by 12’ to make it a usable space for an average size family.Many home builders will include an upgrade of a small 10’ x 10’ deck, but many people either regret going with one so little, or they upgrade before the home and deck are built.In general, if you want a large deck, consider keeping it around the same size as the largest room in your house.You may elect to have one or two raised portions on the deck and possibly add a hot tub, which will increase the deck’s visual appeal, cost, and overall value of your property. Another option is to continue the deck to a second floor.To get an idea of the size that fits your plan of use, look up the average sizes of furniture for the number of people you want to entertain. If you plan on having a dining section on the deck, then allow around 3’ around that table. Add square footage for any firepits, butane heaters, grills, or other accessories.Ground Level Vs. Second Story DeckIn general, a deck will be built no more than two inches below the bottom of the door used to access the deck.Types of decks:Low elevation deck - for houses built at ground levelMid-elevation deck - for raised housesHigh-elevation deck - for split-level homes deck with split levelsA high-elevation deck with space under it less than eight feet tall could be used for storage for lawnmowers and yard equipment. If the space is at least eight feet high, then you could create an additional living area with a deck floor and ceiling leaving a balcony for the top, which will add an additional cost per square foot.HOA & Neighborhood RestrictionsCheck with your local governing authorities and homeowner’s association, to see what regulations and building codes you need to adhere to and to see if you need a building permit.

Some restrictions are created to regulate the minimum distance between your deck and a well, a septic tank or its drain field, and even a neighbor’s house.TaxesBecause the deck will increase the value of the home, it will also raise your property taxes. That amount will depend on the total cost of the project and your local property tax rate. Have a tax assessor come and inspect the deck once it’s built. It is not uncommon to be notified of any changes in your tax estimate while they are at your property.InsurancePolicies will already allow for coverage of an additional deck when it is attached to your home, just like it would cover damage to a garage or any other attached structure within the covered hazards portion of the policy. While there are some differences between states, according to the Insurance Information Institute, most homeowner insurance policies cover standard hazards from weather damage, fire, and other damage.Deck Styles & TypesSize OptionsDining Area Size - If your plans are more centered around eating on your deck, build your deck an average size of 12’ x 14’ to comfortably seat 6-8 people around a 48” round table and still have room around the table for foot traffic.Living Room Size - To replicate an average living room, build a deck of 16’ x 18’ or 12’ x 24’ . With a deck of this size, you can furnish it with ample lounge chairs, a coffee table, and an outdoor sofa.

Also, you could add an outdoor gas fireplace for the colder months. Alternatively, you could mix it up and have a love seat and table and chairs for four people.Table dining chairs view from deckLocation OptionsLocation relative to your house - The vast majority of decks will be constructed entirely against the house or via a connected patio.Intended deck use - Access to the deck from the back door is convenient and gives easy access to your indoor kitchen, but an additional extension to the deck could wrap around the side of the house-granting access via a door to the primary bedroom and adding a separate quiet spot to relax in during the evening.Seclusion - While the back of the house is the most private location on your property to build a deck, some homes are built on alternating elevations that can put neighbors’ houses somewhat higher than yours. It should be possible to increase the degree of private space with the installation of a lattice trellis on one or more sides of your deck, adding an extra layer of privacy.Surrounding scenery Consider adding an extension or elevated area if it will give you a chance to enjoy the view of nearby hills or woods.Direct sun exposure - If you live in a region that typically allows for more cold days than hot, then the ideal location for the deck is a spot where the sunlight falls for the majority of the day. Alternatively, if you live in a hotter region like Arizona or Texas, the typical preference would be a location with as much shade as possible during the day.Existing trees - Sometimes there could be one or more trees in the desired deck installation site. You may have to cut them down if that is permitted by local governing authorities.

Depending on the maturity of the tree(s), though, it may be possible to incorporate the tree into the deck, resulting in a more organic relaxation zone.Wind - The most ideal location for your deck is one that has the least amount of wind regularly.Landscaping - If you were also planning to landscape the yard, schedule it at the same time as the deck design to make both the deck and the yard a fluid thing of beauty.Hiring a Deck BuilderReturn On InvestmentProfessionally installed decks will almost certainly increase the value of the home. No matter if the housing market is up or down, the addition of a deck generally translates to a higher sales price for your home. In a survey conducted in the Remodeling magazine:In the mid-Atlantic region of the US, a wood deck addition of approx. \$10,350 will get back up to 70% of the cost when the home is sold.A composite deck which cost approx. \$15,580 will get back 68% at the time the home is sold.When hiring a deck builder near you, make sure the company you select has as many of the following criteria as possible:High ratings and reviews on HomeGuide and GoogleProvides a detailed estimateIncludes setup and cleanup in the bidProvides a start and end dateLicensed, insured, and bonded5+ years of experience building decksAn extensive portfolio of past decks completedProvides references with contact informationOffers a warranty on parts and labor