



Timber Deck Building Guide

Timber decking has become increasingly popular as a way to maximise living space.

An elevated deck is ideal for sloping blocks. With the addition of bi-fold doors you can extend your interior entertaining area seamlessly into the great outdoors. Decks are also ideal where a concrete or brick construction would be too expensive. You can also use a deck to cover an old concrete patio or as an alternative to pavers. But make sure you are aware of council regulations before you start building.

www.latrobe.vic.gov.au/Services/Building/



Materials:

Timber used on decks must be able to resist the elements. So it is important that you use timber specifically treated for outdoor conditions. ProRent have found Bensons Home Timber & Hardware to be the most helpful with advise and price, you can find them at 69 Latrobe Road Morwell, or ph: 5133 9477

Softwood

- Compared to hardwood, softwood such as pine has low durability unless it is treated.
- Fortunately softwood can be used in all decking and pergola situations provided that it is properly treated.
- For example, timber used for ground posts needs to be stronger and more resilient than the timber used for the floor of the deck.
- Treated softwood (usually pine) is the most cost effective and popular timber option.

Hardwood

- Hardwood is the strongest choice for decking timber.
- Hardwood is generally more expensive than softwood.
- It is naturally resilient to insect damage and usually possesses a richer timber hue than softwood.
- Often hardwood is hard to treat but its natural durability means that it will stand the test of time.
- It is recommended that hardwood be seasoned (usually kiln-dried).
- Varieties of hard wood popular for decking include Asian hardwood Bartu and Jarrah.
- As with softwood it is important to protect hardwood decks by staining them regularly with a good quality timber finish such as decking oil or timber stain.

Synthetics

Timber is not your only choice for a deck. Compressed sheeting is a synthetic option that is durable, cost-effective and waterproof. You can cover the sheeting with any finishing material.

Hire Equipment

Kanga Mini Loader, Excavator, Post Hole digger, Laser Level, Nail Gun

Decking design

Your deck can become an extension of your living area. By building it adjacent to your living room and using bi-fold doors, you can create an entertainment area that can be used year-round. If the kitchen is nearby, all the better.

Shading and heating

A north-facing deck is best positioned to receive winter sun and summer shade. However, any lighting or heating problems can be worked around by shading the deck, or using an outdoor heater. If you have voyeuristic neighbours, block out their prying eyes with a lattice screen.

Railings

As well as being a safety feature, railings are a very visible part of your deck and there's a wide array of designs and materials to choose from. A closed-in deck is important if there are small children around and the deck is a long way off the ground - consider having a childproof gate installed at the top of any flight of stairs.

Bearers, joists and ground clearance

Ventilation for supporting bearers and joists is (or at least should be) provided by minimum ground clearance. Where the walls below the deck are enclosed, sub-floor ventilators must be also be provided. Additionally, the ground clearance must be increased where the deck/floor is to be constructed in a termite prone area. These requirements are regulated in the Building Code of Australia.

