



SUGGESTED DECKING INSTALLATION INSTRUCTIONS

IMPORTANT FACTS:

These products are kiln-dried hardwoods. They are different, in many respects, from cedar, fir, pressure treated lumber, or synthetic decking products.

This timber will not shrink appreciably after installation. It will expand slightly, from side to side, when it becomes wet.

Proper ventilation, and airflow beneath the deck must be incorporated into your design, to avoid problems that may occur when wood naturally expands and contracts as it assumes and expels moisture.

JOIST SPACING FOR DECKS, PORCH FLOORS:

16" on center, for 1x4 lumber

24" on center, for 5/4x4 and 5/4x6 lumber

Closer spacing, while not necessary, will increase the strength of your deck.

SITE SELECTION AND PREPARATION; VENTILATION:

Design your deck to allow the deck boards to dry evenly from beneath and above the surface of the deck. Uneven drying of the tops and bottoms of deck boards, during periods of rapid climatic change is the main cause of "cupping."

Your deck should be raised a minimum of 18" off the ground.

Decks that are less than 3 feet off the ground should be constructed with 4" deck boards.

Allow air to flow freely beneath the deck. Use lattice, or other skirting that permits air to flow beneath, and cross-ventilate the underside of the deck.

Provide sufficient drainage beneath the deck. Standing water can be absorbed into the bottom surfaces of deck boards.

Properly gap boards, side to side, to allow air to flow freely out the top of the deck.

Also ask your lumber dealer about Deck Grates, which enhance airflow.

SPACING DECK BOARDS:

Kiln-dried hardwoods will swell slightly, from side to side, when they become wet.

For proper spacing when applying deck boards:

Space 5/4x6 deck boards 1/4" apart, from side to side.

Space 5/4x4 and 1x4 boards 3/16" apart, from side to side.

Butt boards tightly, end to end.

SAWING, FASTENING, NAILING:

Blue Star products saw and work easily. You will not need carbide, or other special saw blades or drill bits.

The interlocking grain of this timber holds fasteners exceptionally well. (It's also the reason our timber takes, and holds finishes so well.)

Fasteners are a small part of the overall cost of your deck, so please don't economize when you make your selection.

DO NOT USE "deck clips," Eb-ty fasteners, or any other mechanical fastening systems with these products – especially those which fasten from the underside of boards. Despite manufacturers' claims, we have determined that these products do not provide adequate anchoring of hardwood deck boards to the substructure.

Brass or stainless screws or nails, made specifically for decking, are the best fasteners for these products. Stainless screws are convenient; they provide a clean, secure, long-lasting performance, and are less likely than nails to cause splitting.

Our timber does not contain tannins. It will not react with metal to create black stain. Galvanized fasteners may eventually rust, and stain the lumber. Coated steel screws often lose their coating during application, and may eventually rust and cause staining.

Fasteners should penetrate approximately 1-1/2" into the substructure of the deck. Sink them at an angle of about 10 degrees, away from the edge of the board.

Drive screws or nails 3/4" from the edges and ends of the boards. Use 3 fasteners across the face of 6" boards; two for 4" boards. This configuration, along with proper board spacing and adequate ventilation, is the best assurance of a flat, smooth deck.

When fastening the ends of boards, consider drilling pilot holes to minimize the potential for small splits.

If air-driven fasteners cause splitting, adjust your air pressure.

There is no need to "crown" the grain of these boards.

Either side may face up or down.

Examine both faces for appearance, and select the face most pleasing to you as the top face of the deck board.

FINISHING:

A proper coating of top-quality finish will help your deck boards acclimatize without disturbance. We suggest an initial application on all surfaces of the boards, including the ends.

There are dozens of brands of available finishes, many of which work well. Most are some combination of natural or synthetic oil and turpentine (or some other penetrating agent). Deck finishes do not "seal" lumber. Rather, they penetrate the wood fiber and help slow the absorption and expulsion of moisture, thereby diminishing the shock that wood fiber may experience during a period of rapid drying. Finishes also help set, and retain the natural color of the timber.

Should you wish to maintain the original color of the timber, re-treat the deck according to need. Prior to re-treatment, clean the deck and allow the timber to dry before applying the new coat.

After the initial application of finish, you may elect to let your deck turn silver. If this is your choice, we still suggest the initial application of finish be performed.

Use a top-quality finish for top-quality results.

We have experienced excellent results with finishes that contain mildewcides, fungicides, and U.V. inhibitors. We suggest the finish contain a slight pigment, to help diminish discoloration or fading from sunlight – especially for decks that face directly into the afternoon sun. Your local paint store or lumber dealer can recommend available brands in your area.

JOB SITE PREPARATION:

Blue Star products should be delivered to you clean and dry, with well-trimmed ends.

Keep the lumber clean and dry, prior to use. Stack lumber flat, and off the ground, until ready for use. Do not leave individual boards lying loose, exposed to the weather.

Once you apply your initial coat of finish, fasten the deck boards without much delay.