



Custom Decks 101:
A Comprehensive Buyer's Guide to Decking Types and Design Options

Custom decks are an excellent way to revitalize your home. With an array of captivating deck types and features available, selecting the perfect options for your outdoor living space can be overwhelming.

In this guide, you'll discover everything you need to know about installing a custom deck for your home. We'll delve into decking materials, design options, and popular additions to help you navigate the process of creating a new outdoor living area. Our goal is to assist you in making the best decisions for your family.

Let's explore the incredible options that can enhance and transform your outdoor space with a custom deck!



What Is a Custom Deck and Why Would I Want One?

A custom deck is built according to your specific preferences and requirements. This means you get to choose the materials, design, size, shape, colors, details, and the overall functionality it adds to your property.

There are countless reasons to consider a custom deck:

- You have a specific vision for your dream deck and want it tailored to your lifestyle.
- You need a deck that fits perfectly in your backyard, regardless of its size or shape.
- You have a unique or small space that requires a custom design to maximize its potential.
- You want to select materials that complement your home's exterior.

Investing in a quality custom deck is about more than just adding space to your house. It's an investment in your lifestyle and the lives of those around you.



Things to Keep in Mind When Designing Your Custom Deck

When designing your custom deck, consider the following factors to make the most of your outdoor space:

Function Over Style

Think about how you want to use your deck. Will it be a space for entertaining, a play area for kids, or a place to relax and cook outdoors? Once you know the primary function, you can start planning the design.

Size and Shape

Consider the size and shape of your deck. How big do you want it to be? What shape will it take? Will it wrap around your house or be attached to it? Would multiple levels help maximize your space?

Future Needs

Think about how your family might change in the future. Do you plan on having more children? If so, you might need a larger deck. If you love cooking and want your kids to become pro chefs like you, consider adding an outdoor kitchen to your design!

Consider the Views

One of the best aspects of having a deck is enjoying the amazing views. If you have a beautiful backyard, position your deck to take full advantage of it.

Need Some Shade?

To enjoy your deck without worrying about sunburn, consider adding a pergola or another type of overhead structure. Not only does it provide shade, but it also enhances the deck's aesthetic appeal.

Now that you know what you want from your custom outdoor living space, it's time to start planning your dream deck!

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How to Choose the Right Decking Type for Your Custom Deck

Custom decks can be crafted from various decking materials, each offering unique benefits and drawbacks. Selecting the right one for your needs is crucial.

Types of Decking Materials

There are several decking materials, but the most popular are wood and composite. Wood decks are made from natural wood and are a classic choice, while composite decks are made from a mix of wood and plastic, offering a low-maintenance alternative.

Wood Decking

Wood decks are beloved for their natural beauty and timeless appeal. However, they require more maintenance than other types. Regular sanding, staining, and sealing are necessary to prevent deterioration. Despite the upkeep, well-maintained wood decking can be a worthwhile investment.

Composite Decking

Composite decks have become increasingly popular due to their durability and low maintenance. They offer an attractive appearance with minimal upkeep, making them a functional and aesthetically pleasing choice. Composite decking eliminates concerns about splinters or rot, ensuring a long-lasting investment.

Choosing the Best Material

The best decking material depends on your personal preferences and local climate. In Colorado, for instance, a combination of composite decking and kiln-dried Southern Yellow Pine framing provides excellent durability and weather resistance.

At DeckTec Outdoor Designs, we use southern yellow pine for framing and composite decking for the flooring. This combination enhances durability and weatherproofing, ensuring your deck remains in excellent condition for over 50 years. Investing in composite decking and yellow pine framing is the ideal choice for a long-lasting, beautiful deck.





Deck Railing Types: Which One Should YOU Get?

Your deck railing is a crucial element of your deck design. The railing you choose influences both the look and safety of your deck. Therefore, it's important to select a railing that meets your aesthetic and functional needs.

Here are key considerations when choosing railings for your custom deck:

- **Height:** The height of your railing depends on the height of your deck. For second-story decks, taller railings are required to meet building code standards and ensure safety. Ground-level decks offer more flexibility in railing height.
- **Style:** The type of railing should complement the style of your deck. For a modern look, consider glass or cable railings. For a traditional deck, wood or aluminum railings might be more suitable.

No matter what type of deck railing you choose, we can help bring your vision to life. Considering functionality, style, and budget, we'll find the perfect railing for your custom deck project.

Types of Deck Railings

Metal Railings: Sleek and stylish, metal railings, especially aluminum, are durable and provide a modern aesthetic.

Composite Railings: These railings are beautiful, durable, and low-maintenance. Available in various colors and styles, composite railings can match your personal taste.

Glass Railings: For an unimpeded view, glass railings are an excellent choice. They can be customized to fit your home and offer a sophisticated look.

Cable Railings: Installed within frames of wood, aluminum, or composite, cable railings offer an unobstructed view similar to glass railings. They are also durable and low-maintenance.

Wood Railings: A classic choice for custom decks and patios, wood railings are easy to work with and generally less expensive than composite options. However, they are less durable, and we don't typically recommend them for railings due to safety concerns and longevity.

By selecting the right railing type, you can enhance both the appearance and safety of your custom deck, creating a perfect outdoor living space.





Outdoor Living Features to Elevate Your Deck

While not essential, luxurious extras can make a great deck truly exceptional. When planning your deck, consider incorporating some of these outdoor living features:

Deck Lighting

Lighting is the finishing touch for your custom outdoor space. Proper lighting enhances your deck's ambiance and safety, preventing trips and falls. Options include solar lights, LED lights, string lights, and even under-table lighting. The sky's the limit when choosing deck lighting.

Underdeck Storage

If space allows, underdeck storage is a practical addition to keep your outdoor area tidy and organized.

Pergolas

A pergola or gazebo adds shade to your deck and creates a relaxing spot to enjoy the outdoors.

Outdoor Furniture

No outdoor living space is complete without furniture. From lounge chairs and dining sets to bar stools and benches, there's outdoor furniture to match every deck and personality.

Roof Structures and Screen Rooms

To take your deck to the next level, consider adding a roof structure or screen room. These features provide protection from the sun and elements while allowing you to enjoy the outdoors.

Sunrooms

A sunroom offers significant improvement over screens and open air. It allows you to enjoy your deck year-round, regardless of the weather, including during snow and rain. By incorporating these features, you can transform your deck into a versatile and luxurious outdoor living space.