



Before you start building, think about everything that goes into making your ideal deck. Here's a simple checklist to get you started:

✓ **MAKE A PLAN**

- Please verify your local building codes to ensure you are in compliance. Create a basic sketch on graph paper to visualize your deck layout.
- Define the boundaries of your property. If you need to, hire a surveyor.
- How will you get to your deck from within your house?
- Do you require the use of stairs? Where will they be?
- Are you going to require any electricity or gas hookups?
- Before beginning work, inspect the drainage and grading and correct any issues.
- What is your total spending budget?

✓ **CHOOSE A SIZE**

- Allow five feet each person who uses the deck on a regular basis as a basic rule of thumb. To accommodate parties and guests, add additional space.
- What is the height of your deck above ground level?
- Determine how the sun, wind, trees, and privacy will affect your deck's orientation.

✓ **CHOOSE A STYLE**

- Look through deck design books and magazines.
- Consider the following deck styles:
 - Tiered - Make several levels for eating, relaxing, swimming, and so on.
 - Elevated — Take in the scenery, but keep in mind the rails and safety considerations.
 - Ground Level — Blends in and gives the illusion of a larger yard. It's also a fantastic choice for small children. Consider built-in chairs, planters, and other such elements.
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✓ **CHECK YOUR FOUNDATION**

- On what kind of soil would you build your deck?
- Is the deck going to be attached to the house or will it be free standing?
- Are you willing to perform extensive excavation?
- What kind of foundation do you want to use:
 - Concrete piers with/without sills
 - Prefabricated deck blocks
 - Foundation piles or screws (no digging required)

✓ **ADDITIONAL BUILDING CODES**

- Check your local construction codes to ensure you are in compliance in your location.

✓ **CHOOSE TOOLS & SUPPLIES**

- Review the AGGTEDeck Installation Guide.
- Hammer
- Screw gun
- Circular saw (carbide-tipped blade with fewer than 20 teeth is recommended)
- Level
- Tape measure
- Rasp
- Blue chalk line
- Fasteners – Each post requires two, 1/2-inch, carriage bolts 8-inches minimum length with 1-1/4-inch flat washer on back with nut. For deck board fasteners, we recommend #7, 2-1/4-inch stainless steel trim head screws for the decking and railing.
- Deck Clips
- Pre-mixed concrete
- Gravel or crushed stone
- Cinder blocks
- Joist hangers
- Concrete forms
- Shovel
- Carpenter's square
- Plumb bob
- Wheelbarrow (for mixing concrete)
- Safety glasses
- Scrap lumber for bracing

✓ **CHOOSE MATERIALS –**