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The Facts on Decking

Guideline for timber decking installation

We don't just retail decking per say! Not only have we been vending timber for over 20 years locally in the Ringwood area. Chippy's Timber has tried and tested many different forms of timber decking's. We have become leaders in our field with numerous displays and hands on experiences to draw from in both the building and supplying timber decking's. We have put together a few handy hints and recommendations' to assist you with your special project, if you require any further information, please don't hesitate to ask! Before commencing your decking project we do suggest that you check with your local governing authority regarding current regulations of permits and requirements.

Stumps

Stumps can be concrete, cypress pine and H4 CCA (In ground use, Copper Chromate Alkaline) treated pine. Timber stumps are easier to attach bearers and base boards to, sole plates of "in ground" timber or a minimum of 100mm thick concrete – dependant on soil stability testing and local requirements. The placement of stumps is relevant not only to the load upon it, consideration for heights; design and attachment to existing buildings of the load should also be factored in.

Bearers & Joists

Structurally graded F5 or F7 Kiln Dried treated pine (KDTP) or F17 - 27 Kiln Dried Hardwoods (KDHW). KDHW should be of a durability rating of Class 1 – 2. Check timber spans and codes for appropriate sizing. **Only** use hot dipped galvanised bolts or stainless steel fixings with KDTP protected with CCA.

Decking Timbers

- Merbau:** South East Asian Timber. Dark Reddish colour, oil based hardwood timber. Durability rating Class 1 – 2 and available in these sizes using maximum joist spacing's of 450mm; 42 x 19, 70 x 19, 90 x 19, 140 x 19
Alternately we stock a 90 x 32, 140 x 32 and 190 x 32. Whilst these boards will span greater joist spacing's it is wise to consider that the sub floor product at 450mm will be cheaper to purchase.
- Mahogany:** Fijian plantation grown. Light brown in colour, ACQ (Alkaline Copper Quandary) Durable strong timber with soft texture. Available in both a 90 x 21 and a 130 x 21 widths and still requires maximum 450mm joist spacing's.
- Treated Pine:** Plantation grown Kiln Dried ACQ treated. Durable softwood. Sizes available 70 x 22 and 90 x 22.
- Iron Bark & Spotted Gum:** Northern N.S.W. and Q.L.D. Hardwood. Varies in colour from greys through to rosy red, structurally dense and durability Class 1 rated. Current sizing in 64 x 19, 86 x 19, 136 x 19 and 140 x 35.
- Australian Hardwoods:** Northern N.S.W. and Q.L.D. Hardwood colours from light brown through to deep brown. Dense durable hardwood Class 1 – 2. Available in 64 x 19, 86 x 19, 136 x 19 & 140 x 35.

Our Installation recommendations;

- Reeded side to face down – due to extra skid / slip lengthways in decking. Reeds trap dirt, dust and grime and are harder to keep clean! Classifications of first grade products are to the dressed side of a reeded decking board, with occasional chattering on the reeded side.
- Calculation of quantities of decking required is a simple mathematical formula. The formula can be used in a pro rata basis for each different width and sequence of decking sizes required. E.G. When laying a 70mm board with a gap space of 3.75mm (75mm Gal nail diameter is 3.75mm) = 73.75mm therefore it takes 13.5 x 73.75 to physically cover 1 metre of decking. Put simply if you have a deck which is 2.4m in width and 7.8 long. The equation would be as follows. $2.4 \times 13.5 \times 7.8 = 252.72$ (No waste factor included – staff will assist in requirements of waste which should be included depending on species of timber selected.)
- Change will occur in the spacing requirements for the 32 and 35mm decking boards. Suggested spacing minimum of 4.5 – 5mm for greater tolerance to accommodate climatic conditions.
- Hand nailing using a 65mm Gal / Stainless Steel twisted shank decking nail is recommended for the 19 and 21 mm decking boards rather than the use of a gun nail. Screwing is as good again though it is stressed that 65mm be a minimum requirement into a softwood joist.
- The thicker heavier timbers should be fixed with a Galvanised or Stainless Steel 14 gauge bugle batten screw with a minimum length of 100mm into a softwood sub floor.
- Ground clearance providing sufficient ventilation is essential under the Australian Hardwoods such as Iron Bark, Spotted Gum, Yellow Stringy and Black Butt. A minimum of 400mm clearance above the ground with adequate drainage will ensure good long term performance. Sealing of the underside and cut ends of these products with a good quality oil based product will also assist in prevention of moisture absorption. (Refer to Technical Data Sheet – Residential Timber Decks close to or on the Ground, issued by Timber Queensland Limited Feb 2004) Is also available upon request from Chippy's.
- As discussed earlier, all of the 19 and 21mm decking boards irrelevant of species require support (joist) be spaced no greater than 450mm. The shortest decking length used on a deck should always have true attachment to a minimum of 3 joists beneath it ensuring equal strength / weight displacement.
- A well laid deck with consistent spacing's will stand the test of time and look fantastic for years to come. The first decking board laid should be parallel with the edge or house. Pre drill hardwood decking boards before fixing, remembering to offset the hole pattern. This prevents the likelihood of splitting the joists. Take the time to then measure from this board the next 3 to 5 set or units (width + gap + width + gap = X, obviously dependant on the pattern or widths you have chosen.) Mark all of the dissecting joists with a straight edge (chalk line on long decks) Fix the last board of your set. Place the remaining relevant decking boards in the space between the boards now attached. Fix these boards down incorporating the consistent gap chosen i.e. 3.75mm diameter 75mm gal nail. Repeat until you have completed your deck.
- Once completed, your decking timber maybe left to weather naturally in which case most of the hardwoods will go a silver grey colour. You may like to transform the colour of your treated pine decking timbers by using a pigment based stain or simply enhance and protect your hardwood decking boards with a clear. It should be noted at this point that retention of the timbers original colour cannot be guaranteed when a clear is used. (All timbers contain oils and tannins and being hydroscopic will retain a certain amount of these substances). Bleeding will occur in all hardwood and exotic timbers, so care should be taken in certain applications eg: Over swimming pools, paving, balconies, against masonry etc. (For further advice contact Chippy's Sales Staff)
- Nourishment with good quality preservatives, oils, stains etc will increase the life and performance of your new decking timbers. Exposure to weather will increase frequency of maintenance required.