

# DECK BUYER'S GUIDE





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# DECK PLANNING & DESIGN



Crafting your dream deck requires proper planning and thoughtful design to ensure that it seamlessly integrates with your backyard space and your lifestyle. Remember, a well designed deck not only expands your outdoor living space but adds significant value to your home.

During the planning phase, consider your deck's size, budget, and personal preferences. Whether it's a low maintenance oasis, an entertainment hub, or a tranquil reading nook, envision how you'll use the space.

### Some key questions to consider during the design process are:

- **Maintenance:** Consider the option of hassle-free, low maintenance decking materials.
- **Functionality:** What will we use our deck for (eg. entertaining, grilling, dining, relaxation)?
- **Family and pets:** Consider space requirements and material type.
- **Account for existing elements like trees:** decide whether to work around or integrate them into your design.
- **Future additions:** Consider what you may want down the line (eg. root removal/ pool/hot tub).

Having a 3D design prepared, customized to your backyard will help you to visualize your new deck and make informed decisions.

### Additional features to consider when designing your deck include:

- Railings
- Privacy screens
- Shade structure (eg. Gazebo, Roof)
- Stairs
- Lights
- Benches/seating
- Curves
- Floor patterns
- Hot tub
- Outdoor kitchen
- Planters
- Dry space





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# DECK PERMITS

Most deck projects will require a permit due to the municipal construction requirements. It's essential to check with your municipality to determine your obligations before you build, as building a deck without a required permit could subject you to fines and other penalties.

Regulations for permits vary across municipalities as do building codes required. The most common considerations include size, height, house attachment and property setbacks.



### Applying for a building permit for a deck includes:

- Contacting your municipalities building department and asking what documents you will need to submit with your application.
- Submitting two copies of your construction plans.
- Submitting a site plan.
- Depending on the features of your deck, you may need to obtain site specific engineering.
- You also may be required to meet various approvals prior to applying for the permit such as a minor variance, ministry of transportation, or conservation approvals.

**If you are building your deck with Hickory Dickory Decks, our experienced staff will go through the process of obtaining the permit for you.**



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# DECK MATERIALS

There is a wide selection of decking materials to choose from, ranging from traditional wood options to the increasingly popular low-maintenance products.

Conventional wood choices, such as pressure-treated or cedar, typically have a lower initial cost but require regular upkeep including sanding and refinishing. Wood decks are also subject to rot, and are not accompanied by a material warranty to preserve the deck's appearance.

Low-maintenance decking, crafted from either composite or PVC, is largely manufactured using recycled plastics. The wide range of finishes and colours available in composite and PVC decking today can create visually stunning decks that only require routine cleaning to keep their beautiful appearance.

### The benefits of composite and PVC decking include:

- **Durability:** Resists fading, staining, scratching, and mold; won't rot, crack, or warp.
- **Low maintenance:** No need for refinishing.
- **Aesthetics:** Mimics the look of wood with a wide range of colour options.
- **Sustainability:** Many composites incorporate recycled content.
- **Warranty:** Most low-maintenance decking materials start with a 25-year residential product warranty.

While low-maintenance decking often entails a higher upfront cost, the initial investment can pay for itself within 2-5 years based on the elimination of sanding and staining maintenance and replacing rotting boards.





# HICKORY DICKORY DECKS' PROCESS

If you choose to hire Hickory Dickory Decks to build your deck, here is what you can expect:

- 1. Our initial contact with you occurs either through phone or email,** during which we gain an understanding of the scope of your project. We answer your initial questions, and encourage you to view our online photo gallery.
- 2. Secondly, we schedule an in-person meeting,** typically at your home, to inspect your space and discuss ideas on your desired deck. Since this initial call plays a pivotal role in helping you design your dream deck, we strongly encourage all decision-makers to be present to provide input and address any questions.
- 3. After completing a comprehensive DDQ and reviewing samples of various low maintenance decking,** we are ready to schedule a second appointment to review designs and quotes.





# HICKORY DICKORY DECKS' PROCESS

- 4. During our next meeting, we present a deck design and quote to you.** The design presented can either be a 2D drawing or an advanced 3D model of your new deck. This meeting may take place at your home, our office, or our showroom in Hamilton, ON (depending on your location). During this meeting, we go through the design and quote with you step by step, share samples of decking materials, and answer any additional questions you may have.
- 5. Once you've signed the paperwork and officially become a Hickory Dickory Decks customer, you can relax as our professionals take over.** Our team handles permits, removal of the old deck (if needed), material delivery, installation of footings, and site preparation for our professional carpenters. When your carpenter is on-site, you can watch your dream deck come to life.
- 6. Enjoy the results!** Once your deck is complete, you are ready to relish your new outdoor living space for many years to come!





# MY DECK Checklist



### Features

List the features you wish to include in your deck (eg. low maintenance decking, aluminum or glass railings, lights, privacy, shade structures, floor patterns, outdoor kitchen, etc.).



### Budget

Set a budget range for your project. Remember that the size of deck and materials you use will have the most impact on your project cost.



### Contractor

If you are hiring a professional contractor for your project, view photos of their work, check their reviews, how long they have been in business, if they guarantee their work, and if they are licensed and insured.



### Design

Be sure the design you select meets your wants and needs. A professional contractor can create a 2D or 3D design to help visualize what the final product will look like.



### Materials

Select which materials you wish to use for your deck, from traditional wood options to a wide array of low maintenance materials.



### Permits

Check with your local municipality on the requirements for your area. If you are using a professional contractor, they can acquire the permits for you.



### Warranty

Ensure your deck materials are covered by a material warranty, and the contractor you choose guarantees their work.

### Notes:

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