

# ChoiceDek®

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**Before you build, carefully consider all that goes into creating your perfect deck. To help you get started, here's a handy checklist:**

## ✓ **MAKE A PLAN**

- Please check your building codes requirements to be sure you are in compliance in your area.**
- Use graph paper to sketch a rough drawing.
- Determine your property lines. Hire a surveyor if needed.
- How will you access your deck from your home?
- Do you need stairs? Where will they be?
- Will you need any electrical or gas hookups?
- Check the drainage and grading and fix any problems before work begins
- What is your overall budget?

## ✓ **CHOOSE A SIZE**

- A general rule of thumb is to allow for about five feet per person regularly using the deck. Add extra space to accommodate parties and guests.
- How high will your deck be from the ground?
- Determine your deck's orientation with regards to sun, wind, trees and privacy.

## ✓ **CHOOSE A STYLE**

- Research deck design books and magazines
- Some deck styles to consider:
  - Tiered – Create multiple levels for eating, relaxing, swimming, etc.
  - Elevated – Enjoy great views, but allow for railings and safety concerns.
  - Ground Level – Blends in and makes your yard look larger. It's also a great option for young children.
- Consider features like built in seating, planters, etc.

## ✓ **CHECK YOUR FOUNDATION**

- What type of soil will your deck be built on?
- Will the deck be anchored to the house or stand-alone?
- Are you prepared to do major excavation work?
- What type of foundation are you considering:
  - Concrete piers with/without sills
  - Prefabricated deck blocks
  - Foundation piles or screws (no digging required)

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## ✓ **ADDITIONAL BUILDING CODES**

- Double check your local building codes requirements to be sure you are compliance in your area.**
- Residential minimum handrail height is generally 36-inches.
- Multi-family minimum handrail height is sometimes 42-inches.
- Baluster maximum spacing is generally 4-inches (clear distance between balusters\*\*).
- Maximum gap between bottom rail and deck surface is generally 4-inches. \*\* Some codes require a 2-inch maximum gap for multi-family applications.

**\*\* Spacing note:** The precise language is generally “do not allow passage of a sphere 4-inch in diameter”.

## ✓ **CHOOSE TOOLS & SUPPLIES**

- [Review the ChoiceDek 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** – [Consult this interactive quantity calculator.](#)