



FAQS — DECKING

What is Decorators composite decking made of?

Our patented Surestone® Technology found in Voyage and Vault mineral-based composite (MBC) decking delivers the industry's best strength-to-weight ratio and has virtually no thermal expansion or contraction. This same technology can also be found in our Picture Frame deck board and porch flooring. It's powerful and stable, it doesn't absorb moisture, and the durable polymer cap stock won't stain or fade. Since its creation in 2007, Surestone™ technology has perfected the substrate found in Decorators® Voyage and Vault decking. This unique process starts with a mixture of polypropylene and calcium carbonate that's pull-extruded for cavitation. Cavitation creates tiny air pockets that keep the boards lightweight but with a fiber-like structure similar to wood, giving it unmatched strength.

Decorators Vista and Venture composite decking lines are made of wood and plastic and are co-extruded with a durable polyethylene top layer for ultra-low-maintenance performance.

Can Decorators Decking be used for planters or as edging?

Yes, Decorators Voyage and Vault decking, as well as Picture Frame Board, can be installed in or in contact with the ground or water. Our mineral-based composite (MBC) decking is upheld with our new 50-year Structural Warranty and made with patented Surestone® Technology, which has the industry's best strength-to-weight ratio. These boards are powerful, are stable and don't absorb moisture.

What's the benefit of using Decorators grooved decking instead of standard composite decking?

Decorators grooved decking comes with a pre-machined 5/32" groove along the sides of the board to accommodate the Stowaway™ hidden fastener. This hidden fastener was designed to properly space the boards at a ¼" and allow for the expansion and contraction on the length and width that naturally occurs on composites. The screws provided with the hidden fasteners have black painted heads to greatly reduce the potential glare caused by the sun, keeping the fasteners truly hidden.

What joist spans should I use for my deck when using Decorators decking?

In residential applications, Decorators decking should be installed on joists spaced 16" on-center when the boards are running perpendicular to the support joists. Decking boards running on a diagonal pattern should be installed on joists spaced 12" on-center. Contact the Decorators customer service team at 800-556-8449 for commercial applications. For more details, refer to the installation instructions.

We recommend using ProWood® professional-grade treated lumber when building the understructure for your deck. ProWood pressure-treated lumber is made for ground contact and backed by a Lifetime Limited Warranty against termite infestation and rot.

Can Decorators composite decking be cleaned with a power washer?

Power washers can be used to clean Decorators decking products; however, a fan-tip nozzle should be used on the lowest setting.

Can I use the Sleeper System with any type of decking or are there specific requirements?

The Rooftop Sleeper System is compatible only with Decorators decking or porch flooring that features Decorators Surestone® technology. This includes products such as Voyage, Vault, and Porch Flooring. Please ensure you use compatible decking materials to get the best results and maintain the integrity of your deck.

DECKORATORS FAQs — DECKING

How does the Sleeper System address water and moisture issues on ground-level and rooftop decks?

The Deckorators Sleeper System addresses water management and air circulation challenges by allowing for proper drainage and ventilation. This design helps protect deck boards from damage caused by moisture build-up, ensuring the longevity of your deck.

What is the purpose of the Sleeper System, and where can it be used?

The Deckorators Sleeper System is designed to create additional outdoor living space, especially on concrete slabs or rooftops. It provides a solution for converting these spaces into functional and attractive outdoor areas.

Can Deckorators products be used in contact with water or the ground?

Yes, Deckorators Voyage and Vault decking, as well as Picture Frame deck board, can be installed in or in contact with the ground or water. Our mineral-based composite (MBC) decking is upheld with our 50-year Structural Warranty and made with patented Surestone® Technology, which has the industry's best strength-to-weight ratio. These boards are powerful, are stable, and don't absorb moisture.

Does Deckorators composite decking fade?

Deckorators Voyage and Vault decking have a stain- and fade-resistant cap stock and are backed by the industry's best warranty: 50-year Structural, 25-year Stain & Fade, and 25-year Removal & Replacement.

Is static electricity an issue with composite decking?

While all synthetic decking can be subject to static electricity, experiencing static to the point of getting a shock on new composite decking is rare. There's no chemical way to reduce static on a deck. As time passes, exposure to the weather will reduce the likelihood of experiencing a static discharge.

Can I place an outdoor area rug on my composite decking?

Due to heat/sun exposure, area rugs with rubber or vinyl backings can leave residue on the capped decking surface that may not be easily removable. Woven synthetic-fiber indoor/out area rugs without backings also tend to wick water between the rug and the decking. Any dirt under the area rug should be cleaned with mild soap and water. Moving the rug periodically to avoid shadow lines is recommended.

Is Deckorators decking fire-rated?

Yes, Deckorators decking retains a Class C fire rating, which is the same class as many species of natural wood. Deckorators Vista fire-rated decking retains a Class B fire rating. This is available via special order and may require an extended lead time.

Is there a compatible hidden fastener system?

Our Deckorators grooved-edge deck boards work perfectly with Deckorators StealthLock™ Universal Deck Clips, providing a fastener-free look. These fasteners install between the grooved edges of deck boards, which eliminates the need for pre-drilling, automatically spaces deck boards with the appropriate gap, and makes installation quick and easy.

If traditional fastening through the top of the decking is preferred but a fastener-free appearance is still desired, Pro fastening systems are the fastest, easiest way to hide deck screw heads on stairs, on perimeter boards, or when replacing a deck board.

DECKORATORS FAQs — DECKING

Does Deckorators decking require gapping between boards?

Yes, all Deckorators® decking requires consistent spacing between boards to allow for water runoff. However, the specific gapping requirements vary by product line due to differences in thermal expansion and contraction.

For Voyage Decking, Vault Decking, and Porch Flooring: Our patented Surestone® Technology minimizes thermal expansion and contraction (approximately ¼" over a 20' board in extreme temperatures). This means end gapping is less critical, but consistent spacing is still recommended. Please refer to each product line's installation instructions for precise gapping guidelines.

For Vista and Venture Decking: Gapping at the ends and between boards is necessary to accommodate expansion and contraction. At the ends of the deck boards, allow a minimum of a 1/16" gap for every 20°F difference between the installation temperature and the hottest temperature expected. Additionally, allow a 1/4" gap between the deck boards and between all decking and any permanent structure or post for water runoff. Please refer to each product line's installation instructions for detailed gapping requirements based on the installation temperature.

What type of fasteners and nails are recommended with Deckorators decking?

Major fastener manufacturers produce screws made specifically for composite decking. The use of these screws will reduce the amount of pre-drilling and countersinking required. For ease of installation, we recommend using 2½" corrosion-resistant composite wood deck screws. These screws help minimize the common "mushroom" effect that sometimes occurs when using standard fasteners. We recommend the StealthLock™ Universal Deck Clips. We recommend using broad-head stainless steel 2" nails with Fastdry. If traditional fastening through the top of the decking is preferred but a fastener-free appearance is still desired, Pro fastening systems are the fastest, easiest way to hide deck screw heads on stairs, on perimeter boards, or when replacing a deck board. For more information, refer to the installation instructions.

Does Deckorators composite decking meet building code requirements?

Deckorators Surestone® Technology decking has been evaluated by an independent third-party evaluation report writer known as Intertek to be code-compliant under Intertek's CCRR-0195 Evaluation Report. See report for complete details. For projects in Canada, please refer to NRC-CNRC Evaluation Report CCMC 14092-R.

Deckorators traditional composite (WPC) decking, manufactured by UFP Ventures II, Inc., has been evaluated by an independent third-party evaluation report writer as code-compliant under Building Product Evaluation Report BPER-100. See report for complete details. For projects in Canada, please refer to NRC-CNRC Evaluation Report CCMC 13378-R.

How much space is recommended for proper ventilation underneath a deck?

A clear 2" space between the bottom edge of the joists and the grade is recommended to allow proper ventilation. We recommend using ProWood® professional-grade treated lumber when building the understructure for your deck. ProWood pressure-treated lumber is made for ground contact and backed by a Lifetime Limited Warranty against termite infestation and rot.

Do you recommend pre-drilling and countersinking when fastening Deckorators decking?

Pre-drilling and countersinking prior to driving screws achieves the best results for ease of fastening and the appearance of the finished project. Because wood decking is not as dense as Deckorators, screws driven into wood decking crush the wood fiber and self-countersink. Screws driven into Deckorators displace the material, causing it to mushroom around the screw head. Most consumers do not like the resulting appearance using this installation method. If using ordinary coarse-thread deck screws, pre-drilling a pilot hole and countersinking prior to driving screws achieves the best results. For more information, refer to the installation instructions or call 800-556-8449.

DECKORATORS FAQs — DECKING

Can I use a nail gun to install Deckorators composite decking?

We do not recommend using nails or a nailer when installing Deckorators composite decking. The material is very dense, and getting nails to penetrate to a proper depth without bending can be a challenge. A bigger issue concerns the fastening on the end of the boards. We recommend that all holes be pre-drilled to help reduce mushrooming. Also, it's necessary to pre-drill the end of the boards to avoid splitting. When using nails or a nailer, the concern is that the ends would not be pre-drilled and possibly lead to cracking and splitting.

What type of fasteners and nails are recommended with Deckorators decking?

Major fastener manufacturers produce screws made specifically for composite decking. The use of these screws will reduce the amount of pre-drilling and countersinking required. For ease of installation, we recommend using 2½" corrosion-resistant composite wood deck screws. These screws help minimize the common "mushroom" effect that sometimes occurs when using standard fasteners. We recommend the StealthLock™ Universal Deck Clips. We recommend using broad-head stainless steel 2" nails with Fastendry. If traditional fastening through the top of the decking is preferred but a fastener-free appearance is still desired, Pro fastening systems are the fastest, easiest way to hide deck screw heads on stairs, on perimeter boards, or when replacing a deck board. For more information, refer to the installation instructions.

What glue works well with Deckorators composite decking?

Glue is a supplemental adhesive and should never replace a fastener, especially in structural applications. Heavy-duty construction adhesive can be used, but we recommend testing on a small portion of your deck before using the adhesive throughout your whole application.

Do I need special tools to install Deckorators decking?

Conventional tools for cutting, drilling, and nailing can be used with Deckorators decking. We recommend using a sharp carbide-tipped saw blade for cutting. For your safety, remember to wear protective clothing and safety glasses.

How do varying weather conditions affect Deckorators decking during install?

Deckorators decking performs well in varying weather conditions—especially mineral-based composite, which has the lowest thermal movement of any wood-alternative decking available. During installation, Deckorators decking will contract only slightly in cold weather. In hot weather, it expands. We recommend that the material be on the job site for 48 hours prior to installation to acclimate. Follow the spacing guidelines in the installation instructions to ensure proper room for expansion and contraction.

Can I put Deckorators decking over a concrete patio?

Yes. For this application, we recommend using the Deckorators Sleeper system as support beneath the deck boards in conjunction with our mineral-based composite decking. Arrange the sleepers on the existing patio and install decking.

If using wood-plastic composite, we recommend 2x6 boards standing vertically on edge as support joists over the concrete. Next, fasten the decking to the support joists.

Be sure to allow a ¼" gap between the long edges of the deck boards. Drainage and ventilation are necessary for best product performance. To level the deck, we recommend shims that allow a clear 2" space between the bottom edge of the joists and the concrete. You'll need to check with your local building code agency on foundation footing requirements. See the installation instructions for full details.

Can Deckorators decking be used for structural applications?

No. While Deckorators decking does provide superior surface integrity and strength, it is not suitable for structural applications. We recommend using ProWood® professional-grade treated lumber when building the understructure for your deck. ProWood pressure-treated lumber is made for ground contact and backed by a Lifetime Limited Warranty against termite infestation and rot.

DECKORATORS FAQs — DECKING

Can I fasten Deckorators decking over an existing deck, balcony, or porch?

Composite decking is intended to be installed directly to the structural joists. DO NOT fasten to the top of old existing deck planks or balcony and porch floors.

Will Deckorators decking rot, splinter, or decay like wood?

No. Deckorators decking has been tested under accelerated weather conditions and is weather-resistant. Deckorators employs a time-tested technology that provides superior protection against UV degradation and water absorption.

How do I clean my composite deck or rail?

It's important to keep leaves and other materials that can stain off your deck year-round. Sweep off the deck boards and make sure to clean out the spaces between the boards. We recommend using soap or detergent mixed with water to remove any marks or dirt from your deck boards. Power washers can be used to clean deck boards; however, a fan-tip nozzle should be used on the lowest setting.

What are snow and ice removal recommendations for Deckorators decking?

Care should be taken when removing snow from your deck to avoid damaging the deck surface. We recommend using a plastic snow shovel without a metal edge. A stiff-bristled push broom can work very well and minimizes lifting. Light snow can also be cleared using a leaf blower. Do not attempt to break up or scrape ice from the deck surface; use ice-melt products when needed. We are not aware of any adverse effects from the temporary use of ice-melting products on Deckorators decking; however, we recommend using an ice-melt product that's less harsh on the surface. These types of ice-melt products may indicate "safe for pets," "will not harm concrete," or "will not kill grass." Ensure that after the ice and snow melt, you brush off any residual ice melt product.

Will chlorine or other swimming pool chemicals damage Deckorators decking?

While no formal testing has been done, we have not seen or heard of any ill effects from standard pool chemicals.

What's the difference between Deckorators composite decking and wood?

Deckorators decking combines the look of wood with the durability of plastic. Unlike wood decks, which require continuous maintenance, there's no need to apply weather protectant or water seal products to Deckorators decking.

Why is composite decking more expensive than treated wood?

Composite decking is more expensive to manufacture. Over time, however, the maintenance, repair, and/or replacement costs associated with wood outweigh the initial investment in Deckorators deck products.

What would you recommend using for the understructure of a deck?

We recommend using ProWood® professional-grade treated lumber when building the understructure for your deck. ProWood pressure-treated lumber is made for ground contact and backed by a Lifetime Limited Warranty against termite infestation and rot.