

A photograph of a wooden deck with a table and chairs, surrounded by lush greenery. The deck is made of light-colored wood and has a railing. A round table with a glass top and metal frame is set with plates of food and drinks. Two metal chairs with white cushions are on either side of the table. The background is filled with various plants and flowers, including a large pink flower in the upper right. The lighting is warm, suggesting late afternoon or early morning.

What Type of Wood Should I Choose For My Deck?



JACK HOME CONSTRUCTION

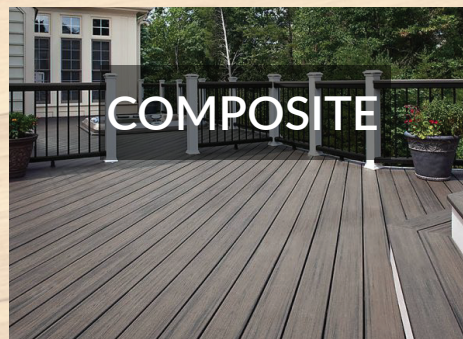
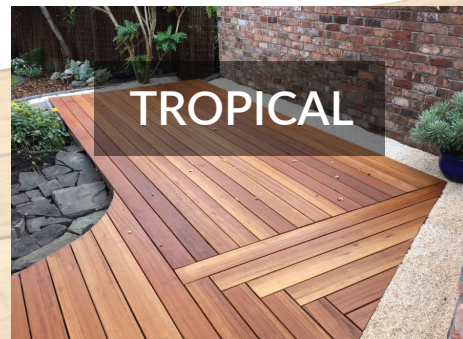
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What Type Of Wood Should I Choose For My Deck?

April 27, 2021 Shawn Jack Post in Decks, Remodeling, Woodworking on the Jack Home Construction Blog

Spring is here and summer is around the corner! Maybe you're thinking about building that deck you always wanted. But what type of wood should you choose for your deck? The type of wood you choose can have an affect on how the wood holds up to moisture and insects and, of course, it will also affect the price of your deck.

Today we'll look at six types of decking that are the most popular options. We will consider:



Cedar

Cedar wood is a popular choice for a deck for various reasons. Even though it's a soft wood, which means it will acquire dents and scratches through normal use, it will adjust its moisture content to match the amount of moisture in the atmosphere around it. This ability to adapt makes it less likely to warp and crack as the weather changes. For this reason, it's a popular choice in the Pacific Northwest area of the US, or anywhere with freezing temperatures. Cedar is also popular for its natural color, which varies from being a very light wood color to a bit darker brown color, depending on what type of cedar you get. On the other hand, if you want a specific color, cedar is very easy to stain. As for maintenance, cedar needs to be pressure washed about once a year, and may require re-staining about every two or three years. If cedar is not stained, over time, it can develop a natural silvery look, which some people find appealing. Depending on the size of your deck, decking with cedar boards can cost from \$3,000 to \$9,000. The average lifespan of a cedar deck is about 15-20 years.



image source: <https://www.realcedar.com/blog/cedar-decking-vs-composite-decking/>



image source: <http://loslifenceanddeck.com/gallery/cedar-decks/>



image source: <https://www.realcedar.com/decking/>

Redwood

Redwood is another good choice for a deck. It's also a softwood, but contains natural oils and tannins, making it resistant to rot and insects, and weather damage. It retains its shape well, and absorbs stain well. Redwood has deep reddish color tones to it, making it a beautiful choice for a deck. If left unsealed, it may turn yellowish-gray, and then black. Sealing your redwood will help prevent this. Like cedar, you may want to pressure wash redwood, and stain it or re-stain it every few years. One downside to keep in mind with redwood is that it's a bit more susceptible to rot in areas where there's a lot of rain. Also, redwood is more expensive the further away you live from the Southwest, where it's grown, and can be a more expensive option than cedar. The average cost of a redwood deck is \$5,000 – \$10,000 depending on the size of your deck, and how far the Redwood has to be shipped to your home. The average lifespan of Redwood is about 15-20 years.



image source: <https://www.teakmaster.com/redwood/>



image source: <https://www.woodweb.com/galleries/project/posts/1083.html>



image source: <http://www.calpreserving.com/gallery/>

Pressure-Treated Wood

Pressure-treated wood is made by putting wood into a chamber, and then forcing a waterborne copper preservative through pressure to infiltrate the wood. The wood that's typically used for this is either yellow pine, or douglas fir. Pressure-washed wood is usually a lot less expensive than other wood options, making it a popular option. It's less susceptible to dents and scratches and very durable. But it's more susceptible to splitting and warping than other woods, and so is sometimes used only for the supports of the deck while other types of wood is used for the deck floor itself. But plenty of people are happy using it for their entire deck as well. Pressure-treated wood is pale in color, and over time, can develop a greenish color, if it isn't re-sealed regularly. You will need to make sure that this type of wood is completely dry before applying any stain or sealant. Pressure treated wood is costs an average of \$2000 – \$5,000.



Tropical

Tropical wood, such as mahogany, ipe, and teak, are naturally very beautiful, and are resistant to moisture, insects, and warping. This is the most expensive type of wood to purchase for your deck, since it's imported. It might be hard to find at your local lumber yard, but it's definitely a stunning option that will last a long while. A tropical wood deck will generally cost you around \$8,000 – \$14,000.



image source: <https://www.mataverdedecking.com/blog/tropical-hardwood-is-well-hard-pro-tips-for-cutting-ipe-decking>



image source: <http://grgdavenport.info/9155-yellow-balau-tropical-hardwood-decking/>



image source: <https://www.houzz.com.au/photos/ipe-decking-tropical-deck-orange-county-phww-vp~5400534>

Composite Wood

Composite wood is made from recycled plastics and wood fibers. It's long-lasting, and doesn't require a lot of maintenance. You won't have to paint, re-stain, or re-seal it, and you won't have to worry too much about washing it. While the color you choose is permanent, it comes in a large variety of colors. The downside is that it doesn't quite have the same aesthetic as real wood does. Another thing to watch out for is that it will be extra slippery when it's wet, and it will get really hot in the sun, so be careful if you walk out on your deck barefoot during the summer! Composite wood will cost around \$5,000 – \$9,000.



image source: <https://www.hancocklumber.com/blog/2018/05/07/hancock-lumber-now-featuring-trex-decking/>



image source: <https://www.choice-dek.com/products/composite-decking/>

Vinyl (PVC) Decking

Vinyl decking is completely synthetic and contains no wood at all. It's very durable, moisture and insect resistant, and is very long-lasting. Vinyl decking, much like composite wood, doesn't have the same look as real wood. But it's still a look that you may enjoy, and it comes in a variety of colors and styles. Also, like composite decking, it's more slippery when wet, and will get hot in the sun. Vinyl decking is generally a bit more expensive than other options, because of how long-lasting it is. It costs generally somewhere from \$6,000 – \$9,000.



image source: <https://shanghaiwpc.com/products/pvc-decking>



image source: <http://www.decks.com/how-to/668/genovations-vinyl-decking-reviews>



image source: <https://pvcfencesupply.com/vinyl-deck/>

What kind of decking do you think is best for your deck? Do you have more questions?

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