

Guidance for one of your most exciting projects.



Make your outdoor living space beautiful and comfortable.

Accessorizing Your Deck

You've spent the last few weekends in back of your house building the deck of your dreams. Your craftsmanship is second to none—a real work of art, if you do say so yourself! So why does it seem that something's missing when you stand there in the middle of all that lumber? Because you're not finished. It's time to accessorize!

Whether you've just built a new deck or you're working with an existing one, make your outdoor living space more beautiful and comfortable with a little thought—and a few finishing touches. Just like the inside of your home, furnish and accessorize your deck to really make it come to life. Then it will truly become an extension of your indoor living areas for you and your family and friends to enjoy.

Clean It Up, Spruce It Up, Trim It Up

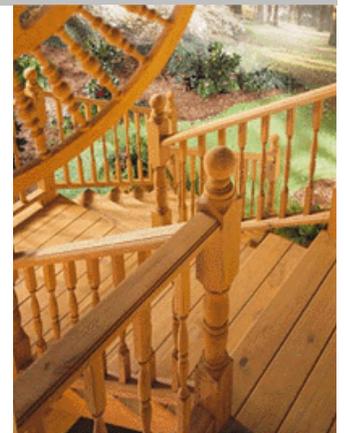
If yours is an older deck, before you begin adding accessories, take time to do a little outside-the-house cleaning by renewing and brightening the wood surfaces. It's a good idea to thoroughly [clean and seal](#) your deck to prolong its life and enhance the natural beauty of the wood.

- [Many products are available](#) for cleaning the wood; many which require no scrubbing. Penetrating sealers are also available for protecting the wood. Follow the manufacturer's instructions.

Accessorizing Poles and Posts

With all the wonderful wooden elements now available, there's no excuse for having an uninteresting deck! Look for turned posts and rail components to add architectural distinctiveness.

- Top posts with decorative caps can be plain or clad in brass or copper.
- Top off post caps with wooden shapes such as elegant acorn toppers and ball finials.
- Conceal the space between your deck's perimeter and the ground below (and gain useful semi-concealed storage space underneath) by installing pre-constructed decorative [lattice panels](#).
- For a custom look, construct your own screens using lattice strips framed in a pattern of your own design. Paint or stain the screens to match your deck for a unified appearance.



Turned posts and rail components add architectural distinctiveness.

Outdoor Furniture and Accessories

If you built your deck from scratch, you probably took time to size up your needs to determine what kinds of activities—dining, relaxing, grilling, etc.—you'd be doing there. And from that assessment, [plan the furnishings and accessories](#) just as you would for an interior room.

- Take time to think about not only furniture arrangements, but the traffic paths and circulation spaces.
- Choose furniture that is appropriately scaled for your deck as well as pieces that will seat the required number of people.

- No matter what type of furniture you choose, look for styles and colors that blend with those of your house to achieve a unified look with your home's exterior decor.

Outdoors the scale of your accessories may need to be "pumped up" to increase their impact and functionality.

- Candles and candle holders should be large and heavy enough to remain stable even under wind-blown conditions.
- Wall plaques made from pottery or stone-like material add visual weight and architectural character to your exterior.
- Substantial planters designed to hold [groups of plants](#) provide great fill-in elements. Those large enough to hold tall plants add height to the predominantly horizontal space.

Getting the Most From Your Surroundings

When you're outside on your deck, you're there with the wind in your face, the sun on your arms and the sounds of nature all around. You can take advantage of all the good things by choosing accessories for your deck that enhance what nature has already provided.

- If you're a bird lover, hanging [birdhouses](#) in strategically located spots increases visits from feathered friends. [Many styles are available](#)—natural wood and bark constructions, painted wood, sturdy plastic styles and decorative metal structures.
- As the wind blows, capture more than just a breeze by hanging [wind chimes](#) from an eave or a nearby tree branch. The gentle tinkling of the chime provides a relaxing melody that becomes soothing background music.
- Mount a flagpole on a nearby surface to display colorful flags that are available in a wide variety of seasonal patterns.



Add to your comfort level by adding to what nature has already provided.

Plants and Flowers

Your deck is the perfect place to showcase lots of beautiful plants. Plants add a natural softening element to the hard-edge components of a wood deck. The lush, green and/or blooming color is a sure way to make your outdoor space come to life.

- Place the plants in and around furnishings or hang them from overhangs and posts, to provide interesting textures and shapes to complement other furnishings.
- If space for freestanding planters is a problem, use wrought iron shepherd's hook hangers that can either be mounted in the ground or attached to nearby walls, posts or rails.
- Attractive planters are available that include hooks that fit over deck railings. Fill these planters with cascading blooming plants for beautiful color all season long.



Flowers and plants add a natural softening element to a wooden deck.

To Swing, To Bounce Or Perhaps To Glide

One of the most important elements of furnishing your deck is the kind of seating you choose. The great thing about outdoor furniture is that it's not only designed for function (such as dining), but for fun and relaxation as well. Seating can be stationary, but it can also bounce, glide back-and-forth, swing or rock. Many pieces are designed not only for one, but for two or more people.

Take time to consider how you'll use the seating pieces and then try out available styles.

- Stationary or cantilevered chairs are a good choice for dining or general use.
- Gliders, rockers and swings are wonderful for just sitting or relaxing.
- For the ultimate in relaxation, choose chaise lounges or hammocks. If your deck is under a roof, swings and hammocks can be hung from the joists in the ceiling.
- Cushions and covers designed for most outdoor furniture styles add even more comfort while adding color and pattern.

The Best Dining Room Under The Sun Or The Moon!

A deck is the perfect place to enjoy warm-weather meals with friends and family. A great selection of tables designed for 2, 4, 6 or more people are available. Think about the size of your deck when choosing outdoor furniture.

Add to your dining atmosphere by choosing accessories that complement not only your exterior decor, but the mood of special occasions as well.

- Look for colorful table linens, dinnerware and glasses to create a festive atmosphere.
- Choose natural fabrics and textures for a more subtle, relaxed effect.



Enjoy an outdoor dining room.

Illuminating Experiences

One of the great things about sitting on your deck at night is enjoying the special effects that only night lighting can provide. Install low-voltage lighting to illuminate steps, paths and add sparkle to plants and trees.

- Affordable deck lighting kits make creating pools of light on steps and rails an easy way to achieve just the right amount of night light.
- Nothing beats candles for providing soft illumination. Those made with citronella can also help to keep insects from invading your space.
- Torches mounted to bamboo poles are especially effective for setting a party mood. (Be sure to use proper care when lighting torches and don't forget to extinguish the flames before you go inside.)



Illuminate your deck for evening gatherings.

Was this information helpful? Please [let us know](#) your do-it-yourself experiences. We'd love to hear from you!

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