



Recommended Installation Practices:

When working with hardwood decking we recommend:

- Safety:** Always adhere to proper safety equipment, such as gloves, safety glasses, hearing protection (if using power tools) and dust masks. It is always recommended to wear a mask and safety glasses when working around saw dust and have good ventilation. Depending on the individual, saw dust can cause skin and respiratory irritations. Hardwood decking is no different and in fact may have a tendency to have finer dust particles than some commonly used species. Some people may have skin irritations when handling hardwood decking.
- Tooling:** Always use sharp tooling. Hardwood decking can have a blunting or dulling effect on cutting equipment. When cutting Hardwood decking use sharp carbide tipped saw blades, router bits, drill bits, etc. Pre-drill pilot holes for screws and nails to prevent unwanted splitting around screw or nail holes. When using screws, use a countersink bit with the pre-dilled pilot hole.
- Installation:** Lumber, a product of nature, will assimilate the environmental conditions it will be subjected to. Allow your material to acclimate to its environment for a few days prior to installing. Restraining top surface boards can be achieved by nailing, screwing, plugging, and or with a variety of hidden fastening systems. Proper restraining will restrict the movement of your decking. It is also necessary to choose the appropriate spacing between your deck boards. Spacing can be a personal preference, but keep in mind spacing has a practical purpose as well. Depending on your climate, top surface boards will expand and contract based on relative humidity, sunlight and width of board chosen. The gap also allows for air circulation as well. Make sure the design of deck, board walk, dock, etc. does not require material to be in direct contact with the ground and that adequate board spacing for your climate allows for good air circulation. This is necessary to minimize cupping by allowing air flow between ground and bottom of structure and allows air to flow between the deck boards.
- Depending on your area, board width and fastener manufacturer's recommendation, the gap spacing between boards ranges from 1/32" -3/8" for non-covered structures. In many covered applications, boards have been butted up next to one another.

Joist Spacing: Joist spacing is determined by the load ratings required by building codes. This span chart can be used for with minimal deflection of hardwood decking. Make sure you consult your local building inspection agency as codes vary from place to place.

This chart is a very good quick reference based on the strength of the top surface decking.

Board Dimension	Load Size		
	40 PSF	60 PSF	100 PSF
1 x 6	38"	34"	28"
5/4 x 6	42"	36"	32"
2 x 6	62"	56"	48"

End Sealing: Most lumber loses and/or gains moisture more rapidly through the ends than through the face or sides do to cell structure and genetic makeup. When boards are cut, the ends are exposed allowing for free flow of water in or out. To prevent moisture loss or gain through the ends, the ends should be coated. All lumber shipped by OHC is coated with a clear wax emulsion on board ends. In the event boards need further cutting cut on the job site, boards ends should be sealed as soon as possible. We offer Anchor Seal end sealer that can be shipped with your order.

Coatings: Finishing your hardwood decking deck or project depends on your personal preference. You may, if desired, occasionally apply a penetrating oil to maintain the rich natural color; or you may let it weather naturally to a warm silver-grey patina. There are a variety of products available for heavy, dense hardwoods. ([link here to UV Inhibitors](#))