

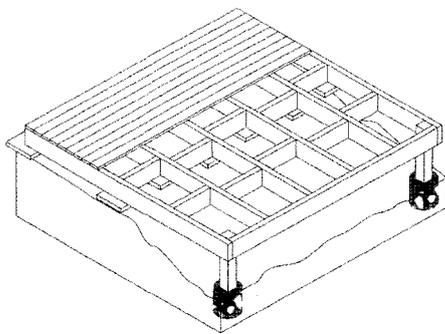
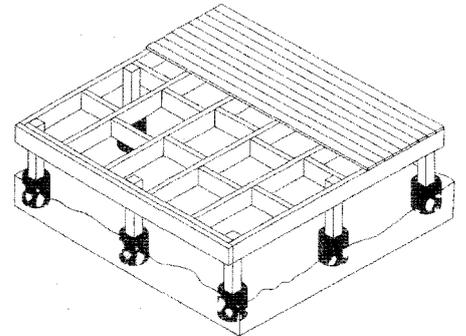
Chandlers Ford Timber

How to build a deck

Three basic rectangular decks

The Elevated Deck

The deck can be raised completely off the ground using posts (legs). *Covers* suggest the deck should be raised no more than 800mm above ground level. This platform comprises of a wooden platform, covered in timber decking, which will require a slightly stronger frame design and a safety handrail when raised 500mm or more above ground level.



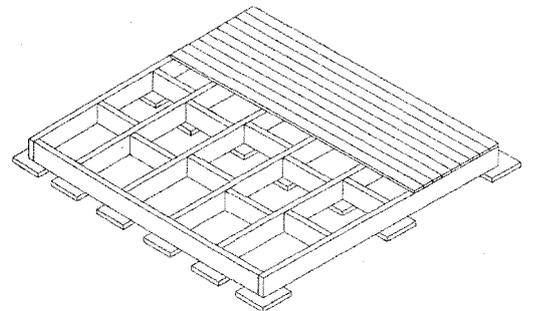
The Deck Built On A Slope

Where there is a sloping site, it can be modified, adding posts (legs), as shown opposite, to accommodate the slope of the garden.

The Ground Level Deck

This deck is simply a platform on ground level, laid onto concrete paving slabs, as shown opposite.

The slabs 18" x 18" (450mm x 450mm) should be positioned at a maximum of 5ft. centres (1530mm), each slab being laid to level, and both correctly and neatly aligned along each 47 x 150mm timber bearer.

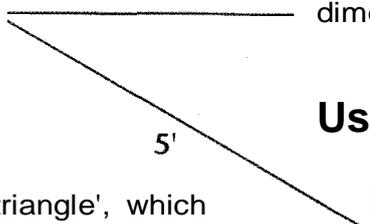


Getting started

Mark Off The Deck Area

90° Use 'level pegs' or batterboards (shown overpage) to mark out the area, 3' and set the position of the supporting posts (if needed).

The strings will give you a better idea of both the appearance and dimensions of the finished deck.



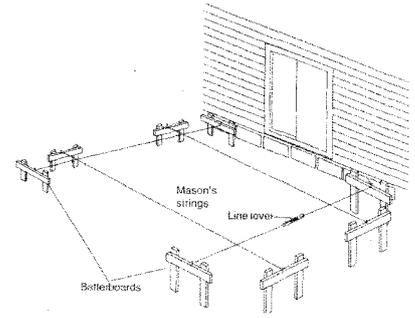
triangle', which of string into 3, (ie.3ft. 4ft. and 5ft.)

Using String To Form Right Angles

The easiest method of obtaining a Right Angle is to make a '3-4-5 will give you a 90 degree angle at the corner. Simply measure off a piece 4 and 5 'unit' lengths with a felt tipped pen. The 'units' can be in feet (ie.3ft. 4ft. and 5ft.) or metres, though using feet gives a far more manageable sized triangle!

Prepare The Site

A deck will usually shade the ground sufficiently to prevent most weed growth, but removing them before you begin makes life easier. After measuring and setting out the area, remove the soil to a suitable depth. Cover with membrane and then spread over with gravel.



How to build a ground level deck

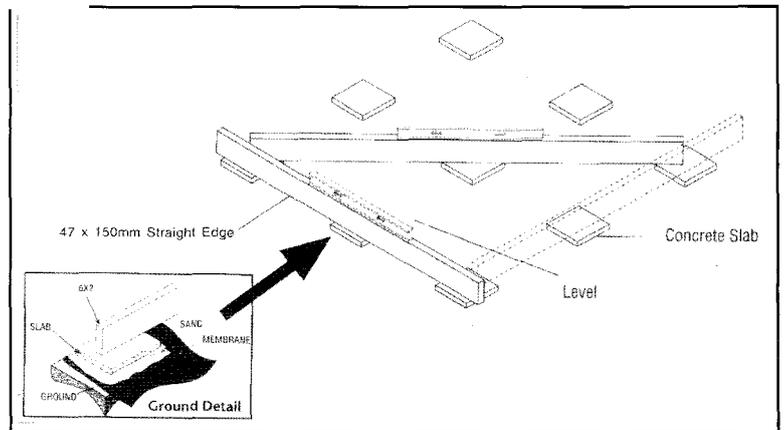
If your garden is flat or you wish to cover an existing level patio, why not consider a ground level deck. Ground level decks offer an uncomplicated alternative to traditional patios, and in most cases, do not require additional posts, rails or steps.

Levelling The Slabs

(Ground level deck or portion of deck at ground level)

Level the area where the deck will be built, if possible, allow a slight gradient away from the structure. Use a 47 x 150mm piece of timber of the appropriate length with a spirit level placed on top as a straight edge. See the detail opposite showing the preferred method of ground contact preparation.

Ground level decks require the minimum amount of fixing. Setting the bearers onto quality concrete slabs as shown and fixing with stout galvanised nails eliminate the need to use joist hangers.

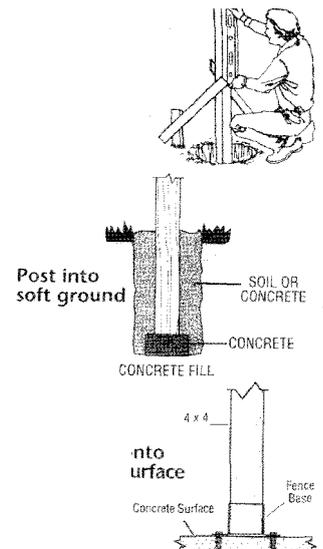


How to build an elevated deck

Installing Posts

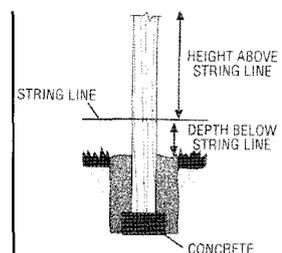
There are several methods of installing a post. Choose the right one for your surface. For fixing into earth, you can simply dig a hole and place a medium density solid concrete block, horizontally in the hole and sit the post onto it. Infill with concrete, and allow to set overnight. Alternatively, you may need to fix to a hard surface such as concrete. In this case you will require a fence post base fixing. Use the manufacturer's guidelines to secure these to your hard surface and insert posts.

The level of the decking can be set by using a string line across from the relevant level pegs. Allow a little extra post height, and don't cut off the post to the final height until you are sure they are correct.



Top Tip

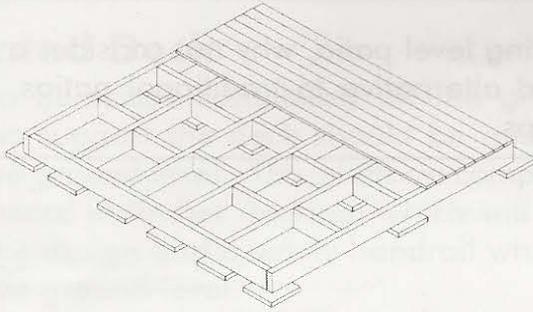
Use the string line as your starting point and calculate UP for the height of the post (taking into consideration the height of the handrails if you are using them). Calculate DOWN from the string line for the depth of post to the base of hole. Remember to allow for the thickness of decking itself. When calculating length of post, allow for height of handrail thickness of decking, width of joist, height above ground level, length of post or newel in ground.



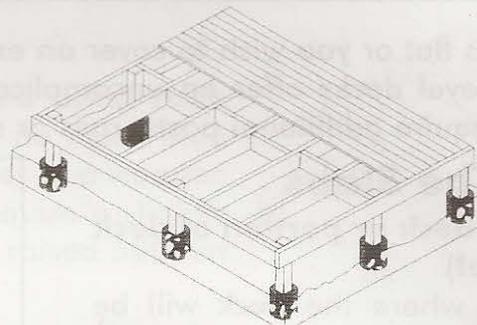
How to build a rectangular deck frame

A rectangular deck is the most simple form, giving a large and practical surface area, whilst still being the easiest to construct for DIY projects. The basic framing plans for ground level decks and elevated decks are shown below. Some dimensions are fixed, others are simply shown as "maximum". For larger decks, simply add two or more frames side by side. The plans below show free standing decks, designed to stand away from your home, however these can easily be attached to your property by means of a second piece of 47 x 150mm timber known as a ledger beam.

Ground Level Frame



Elevated Deck Frame

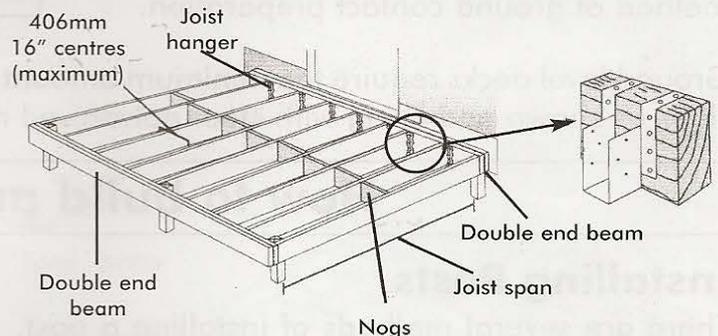


Attach joists to elevated decks

It is most important that the deck is firm and secure, especially where the deck is above ground. To achieve this, the joists should be placed at a maximum of 18" (406mm) between centres. Joists are attached to the inner of the two double end beams by joist hangers (as shown).

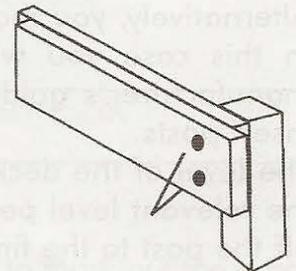
The nogs (or spacers) are square-cut sections of 47 x 150mm timber joists, which are nailed between the joists themselves to prevent buckling or twisting of the timber. Measure and cut the nogs (or spacers) to fit snugly. To make nailing easier secure the nogs in a staggered manner as shown.

Joist hangers are galvanised to resist rust and are available from Covers. Simply screw or nail the joist hangers to the end piece of 47 x 150mm in the appropriate place and insert the joists.



Forming A Double Beam

Use a second piece of 47 x 150mm and attach it to the load carrying ends. Drill and secure the timbers together with coach bolts to form a double beam. This will add strength to your deck where it carries a load and will act as a fascia to cover unsightly galvanised joist hangers that may have been visible.



How to lay decking

Laying the deck is a satisfying job, the most important part of the work, and is also the most visible feature. Achieving a professional finish is important so make every effort to lay the deck straight and the fixings in line. Leave a gap of around 3mm (around an eighth of an inch) between the boards. Some minor shrinkage may possibly occur on drying. Also, when appearance permits, attach boards 'bark side up' (ie. with the annual rings within the timber curving down to the joists) to help prevent 'cupping' of timber. Attach each board at each point with two 2 1/2 inch galvanised screws or nails.