

2026 DECK MATERIAL GUIDE

Your Complete Resource for Premium Decking Materials

VM Power Decks

Inside This Guide:

- Complete composite decking brand comparisons
- Premium wood species guide
- Side-by-side material comparison charts
- Maintenance schedules and tips
- 2026 pricing estimates
- Expert recommendations for PA & NJ climate

Contact Us for Your Free Consultation:

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Understanding Deck Materials

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Choosing the right decking material is one of the most important decisions you'll make for your outdoor space. The material you select will determine your deck's appearance, durability, maintenance requirements, and overall value for decades to come.

In the Pennsylvania and New Jersey climate, your deck faces unique challenges: hot summers, cold winters with snow and ice, and humid conditions that promote mold growth. This guide will help you understand which materials perform best in our region.

Composite Decking

Modern, low-maintenance solution made from wood fibers and recycled plastics.

Benefits:

- No staining or sealing needed
- Won't rot, warp, or splinter
- 25-50 year lifespan
- Eco-friendly (recycled content)
- Consistent color throughout

Wood Decking

Traditional, natural beauty with timeless appeal and authentic character.

Benefits:

- Natural, authentic appearance
- Can be refinished/stained
- Lower upfront cost (some types)
- Biodegradable/sustainable
- Proven track record

Key Factors to Consider:

Budget (upfront vs. lifetime cost) • Maintenance willingness • Aesthetic preferences • Sun exposure • Intended use (entertaining, pools, etc.) • Environmental priorities

Composite Decking Brands

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Premium composite options trusted by VM Power Decks for Pennsylvania & New Jersey installations

Trex

Industry Leader Since 1996

4.8/5

- ' 95% recycled materials
- ' 25-year comprehensive warranty
- ' Fade, stain, scratch resistant
- ' Multiple color & style options
- ' High-Performance shell technology

Price Range:
\$45-\$75/sq ft installed

Best For:
Best overall value and eco-conscious homeowners

TimberTech (AZEK)

Premium Performance

4.9/5

- ' PVC & composite options
- ' Superior scratch resistance
- ' Lifetime limited warranty (PVC)
- ' Premium wood-like aesthetics
- ' Alloy Armour Technology

Price Range:
\$50-\$85/sq ft installed

Best For:
Luxury installations and high-traffic areas

Fiberon

ColorFast Technology

4.7/5

- ' PermaTech surface protection
- ' 50-year stain & fade warranty
- ' Eco-friendly manufacturing
- ' Budget-friendly premium option
- ' Easy hidden fastener system

Price Range:
\$40-\$65/sq ft installed

Best For:
Value seekers wanting premium features

Composite Decking Brands (Continued)

Wet Area Specialists | (888) 743-7332 | www.wetpowerdecks.com

MoistureShield

Wet Area Specialists

4.6/5

- ' Can install in/around water
- ' CoolDeck Technology (cooler surface)
- ' Solid-core construction
- ' Ground contact approved
- ' 50-year structural warranty

Price Range:
\$45-\$70/sq ft installed

Best For:
Pool decks and waterfront properties

Deckorators

Mineral-Based Strength

4.5/5

- ' Mineral-based composite core
- ' Enhanced slip resistance
- ' Superior color retention
- ' Compatible with all fasteners
- ' Backed by UFP Industries

Price Range:
\$40-\$60/sq ft installed

Best For:
Homes with children and pets

DuraLife

Innovation in Decking

4.4/5

- ' Polypropylene cap technology
- ' Moisture-resistant core
- ' Advanced hidden fastening
- ' Low-gloss, natural finish
- ' 25-year limited warranty

Price Range:
\$38-\$55/sq ft installed

Best For:
Budget-conscious quality seekers

Pro Tip:

Request samples from your top 2-3 choices and view them in your backyard at different times of day. Colors can look dramatically different in various lighting conditions.

Wood Decking Options

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Natural wood options from domestic to exotic hardwoods

Ipe (Brazilian Hardwood)

The "Ironwood" of Decking

4.9/5

- ' 40+ year lifespan
- ' Class A fire rating
- ' Naturally rot & insect resistant
- ' Dense, no splinters
- ' Stunning natural beauty

Price Range:
\$75-\$120/sq ft installed

Best For:
Luxury homes and long-term investment

Western Red Cedar

Classic Natural Beauty

4.6/5

- ' Naturally insect resistant
- ' Lightweight yet strong
- ' Beautiful grain patterns
- ' Dimensionally stable
- ' Sustainable forestry sourced

Price Range:
\$35-\$55/sq ft installed

Best For:
Traditional aesthetics and natural look

Pressure-Treated Pine

Affordable & Reliable

4.3/5

- ' Most affordable option
- ' Readily available
- ' Good for structures
- ' Can be stained any color
- ' 15-year treated warranty

Price Range:
\$25-\$35/sq ft installed

Best For:
Budget projects and utility decks

Cumaru (Brazilian Teak)

Exotic Elegance

4.7/5

- ' 30+ year lifespan
- ' Rich golden-brown color
- ' Extremely dense & durable
- ' Fire resistant
- ' More affordable than Ipe

Price Range:
\$60-\$90/sq ft installed

Best For:
Exotic look at moderate premium

Kebony

Sustainably Modified

4.5/5

- ' Bio-based modification process
- ' Softwood made hardwood-like
- ' FSC-certified sustainable
- ' 30-year durability warranty
- ' Low environmental impact

Price Range:
\$55-\$80/sq ft installed

Best For:
Eco-conscious homeowners wanting wood

Tigerwood

Striking Visual Appeal

4.4/5

- ' Unique striped grain
- ' 25+ year lifespan
- ' Naturally weather resistant
- ' Moderate maintenance
- ' Eye-catching aesthetics

Price Range:
\$50-\$75/sq ft installed

Best For:
Statement decks and unique designs

Material Comparison Chart

Side-by-side comparison to help you make the right choice

Material	Lifespan	Maintenance	Upfront	Long-term	Durability	Eco Score
Pressure-Treated Wood	10-15 years	High	\$	\$\$		
Cedar	15-20 years	Medium	\$\$	\$\$		
Composite (Entry)	25-30 years	Low	\$\$	\$		
Composite (Premium)	30-50 years	Very Low	\$\$\$	\$		
Exotic Hardwood	40-75 years	Medium	\$\$\$\$	\$\$		
PVC Decking	30-50 years	Very Low	\$\$\$	\$		

Cost Legend: \$ = Low (\$25-40/sqft) | \$\$ = Medium (\$40-65/sqft) | \$\$\$ = High (\$65-90/sqft) | \$\$\$\$ = Premium (\$90+/sqft)

Our Recommendation for PA & NJ Homeowners:

For most homeowners in our region, we recommend premium composite decking (Trex Transcend, TimberTech PRO, or Fiberon Symmetry). These materials offer the best combination of durability in our freeze-thaw climate, minimal maintenance, and excellent long-term value.

Cost Breakdown & ROI

V.M. Power Decks | PH (864) 443-7332 | www.vmpowerdecks.com

10-Year Total Cost of Ownership (400 sq ft deck)

Pressure-Treated	\$17,000
Composite (Mid-Range)	\$23,000
Premium Composite	\$28,500
Ipe Hardwood	\$41,000

*Includes initial installation + annual maintenance costs. Actual costs may vary.

Return on Investment

According to Remodeling Magazine's 2025 Cost vs. Value Report, deck additions provide one of the highest ROIs of any home improvement project:

- Wood Deck Addition: 65-75% ROI
- Composite Deck Addition: 60-70% ROI
- Deck replacement increases home value more than kitchen updates in many markets

Features That Maximize Value:

- Built-in lighting increases usability and perceived value
- Quality railings (cable, glass, or composite) elevate aesthetics
- Covered/pergola structures add year-round utility
- Outdoor kitchens can provide 100%+ ROI in some markets

Maintenance Guide

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Composite Decking

1. Sweep debris regularly to prevent mold growth
2. Clean with soap and water 2x per year
3. Remove snow with plastic shovel (avoid metal)
4. Use calcium chloride for ice (avoid rock salt)
5. Inspect fasteners and railings annually
6. Address any mold/mildew promptly with specialized cleaner

Wood Decking

1. Power wash gently (1500-2000 PSI) annually
2. Apply sealant or stain every 2-3 years
3. Sand rough spots to prevent splinters
4. Check for rot, especially near posts and ledger
5. Keep vegetation trimmed away from deck
6. Replace damaged boards promptly
7. Clean between boards to ensure drainage

Important: Never use a pressure washer above 2000 PSI on any decking material. High pressure can damage both wood fibers and composite surfaces, causing permanent scarring.

Seasonal Care Calendar

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Keep your deck beautiful year-round with this maintenance schedule

Spring

Deep clean, inspect for winter damage, check for loose boards, apply sealant if wood

Summer

Regular sweeping, quick cleanups after parties, monitor for mold in humid areas

Fall

Clear leaves frequently, clean gutters nearby, prepare for winter protection

Winter

Remove snow carefully, use safe ice melters, avoid metal shovels

Professional Maintenance Services

VM Power Decks offers professional deck cleaning and maintenance packages. Ask about our Annual Care Program for worry-free deck ownership!

Frequently Asked Questions

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Q: How long does composite decking last?

A: Premium composite decking typically lasts 25-50 years with minimal maintenance. Brands like TimberTech AZEK offer lifetime limited warranties.

Q: Is composite decking worth the extra cost?

A: Yes! While initial costs are higher, you save significantly on maintenance (no staining, sealing, or replacing boards) over the deck's lifetime. Most homeowners break even within 8-10 years.

Q: Can I install a deck myself?

A: While possible for experienced DIYers, professional installation ensures proper structural integrity, warranty compliance, and code adherence. Improper installation can void warranties and create safety hazards.

Q: What deck material is best for pool areas?

A: MoistureShield and TimberTech AZEK are excellent choices for pool decks due to their moisture resistance and cooler surface temperatures. Avoid untreated wood near pools.

Q: How do I choose the right deck color?

A: Consider your home's exterior colors, landscaping, and sun exposure. Lighter colors stay cooler but show dirt more easily. Most brands offer sample kits to help you decide.

Q: What permits are needed for deck construction?

A: Most municipalities require building permits for decks. VM Power Decks handles all permitting as part of our service. Permits ensure your deck meets safety codes.

Why Choose VM Power Decks?

13+ Years Experience

Serving Pennsylvania and New Jersey since 2005 with thousands of successful installations.

Licensed & Insured

Full liability coverage and worker's compensation for your peace of mind.

Expert Installation

Factory-certified installers for all major brands. Proper installation = lasting results.

Competitive Pricing

Direct manufacturer relationships mean better prices for you without sacrificing quality.

Permits Handled

We manage all permitting and inspections so you don't have to.

+P 5-Star Rated

Consistently rated 5 stars on Google, HomeAdvisor, and BBB with hundreds of reviews.

5-Year Workmanship Warranty

Our 5-year workmanship warranty goes beyond manufacturer coverage.

Eco Commitment

We prioritize sustainable materials and responsible construction practices.

"VM Power Decks transformed our backyard. From material selection to final walkthrough, they were professional, knowledgeable, and delivered a stunning deck that our neighbors envy!"

— Sarah & Michael T., Allentown PA

Ready to Build Your Dream Deck?

Get Your Free, No-Obligation Consultation Today

Contact Us:

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🌐 www.vmpowerdecks.com

📍 123 Palmer Park Mall S 680, Easton, PA 18045

Proudly Serving Pennsylvania & New Jersey

Every consultation includes:

• Free on-site evaluation • Material samples • Detailed written estimate • 3D design preview

Thank you for considering VM Power Decks for your outdoor living project!

