

# TERRAMAI

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## DECKING INSTALLATION GUIDELINES

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# INTRODUCTION

Home, hotel, pool, boardwalk, playground – TerraMai’s reclaimed decking solutions bring warmth and character to any environment. All materials are naturally rot and insect resistant. Choose an exterior clear oil finish, a custom exterior finish or allow the reclaimed wood to weather to a soft, silvery grey.

## DECKING MATERIAL STORAGE

TerraMai decking materials are shipped horizontally on a pallet. The decking should be stored on the pallet in a clean, dry, environment prior to arriving at the installation site. The decking must be acclimated to site conditions prior to installation. Please follow all directions in the Siding & Decking Acclimation Instructions at [TerraMai.com/acclimation](https://TerraMai.com/acclimation). Never store the decking exposed to sunlight, water, or precipitation prior to installation. Upon receipt of material at the job site, immediately stack wood per the acclimation instructions to allow adequate air flow, and do not drape tarps directly on top of material as this will restrict air flow. A sheet of plywood on top of spacers (or “stickers”) over the stack will protect against exposure. Never store decking leaning against a wall as warping will occur.

## DECKING STRUCTURES

The structure where the decking will be installed must be clean, flat, dry, structurally sound, and installed per IBC and local building codes. Joist spacing must be no more than 16” OC, or 12” OC if decking is to be installed at a 45° angle to the joists (the minimum allowable angle, where perpendicular – or 90° – is standard). Decking must be installed on joists that are at least 18” above grade and at least 36” above grade if a hidden fastener system is to be used for installation. A minimum slope of ¼” in 10’ (1:480 slope) is necessary for proper drainage for standard decking. There must be adequate ventilation below the decking. For decking installed less than 60” above grade, a vapor barrier must be installed on the ground with sufficient slope away from the primary structure for adequate drainage. Decking should never be installed directly over concrete because trapped moisture will cause decking to cup, warp, twist, crack, buckle, rot, or otherwise fail.

## DECKING CUTTING & FABRICATION

When cutting decking to size, use a sharp, fine cut carbide blade, minimum 60-tooth, or better. For cutouts in the decking for posts, downspouts, etc., the use of a reciprocating saw with fine tooth blade is recommended. Always properly support the decking and wear all appropriate protective equipment, including safety glasses, ear plugs, and approved dust masks.

## FINISHING

All faces (top, sides, bottom, and cut ends) of all planks should have finish applied and allowed to cure prior to installation. Decking may be ordered prefinished from the factory, or unfinished where planks must be finished on site. Prefinished decking may take longer to acclimate. Any cut ends, notches or holes cut in the decking should also be treated with finish.

Two types of finishes are available from the factory. Clear Protective Sealer may be ordered for applications where the wood will be allowed to develop a silver/grey patina over time, usually over a period of a couple of years depending upon level of exposure to the sun and weather. Natural Tone Protective Stain & Sealer protects the wood from UV exposure and moisture for applications where maintaining the original color of the wood is desired.

# INSTALLATION METHODS

It is up to the installer to choose the most suitable method of installation for the decking for the application. Differences in local building code, climate, fasteners, architectural constraints and other factors may require deviation from these installation instructions. Materials must be tested for suitability for specific conditions and circumstances.

Spacing between rows of planks should be ¼” for proper drainage, adequate airflow, and to allow for expansion of the wood during wet conditions. Adjustments to spacing may be necessary if the decking is acclimated and installed at the extremes of annual fluctuation of temperature and humidity. (e.g., if the decking is acclimated and installed when the humidity is highest level for the year, 3/16” gap may be necessary to prevent excessive gapping during the driest months. If installed at the lowest humidity levels of the year, a 5/16” gap may be necessary to accommodate the increase in moisture content.)

Both ends of all planks must be supported by a joist. No gap is necessary from end to end because there is essentially no change in length of planks with changes in moisture content. Wood expands and contracts across the width of the plank when its moisture content changes.

Different species have different rates of expansion and sensitivity to moisture. Teak is exceptionally stable, so grooved sides may be specified for use with the hidden clip systems. Other species should be face screwed to joists. TerraMai clip system grooves are 5/32” high x ½” deep, centered on the sides. It is the responsibility of the installer to verify that the hidden clip system is adequate to securely hold decking in place through all conditions, changes of season, intended applications, and usage requirements.

For face screwing, the fasteners may either be left visible, or covered with a plug. For either method, 2 screws must be installed at every joist, approximately 1” from each plank side. Screws must be stainless steel bugle head, and even if self-tapping, the holes at the ends of each plank must be predrilled to prevent the wood from splitting. If the screws are not self-tapping, all holes must be predrilled.

If concealing the fasteners with plugs is desired, each hole must be countersunk with 3/8” (9.5mm) diameter and 3/8”-1/2” (9.5-13mm) deep. After the screws are installed, the plugs may be set with either a moisture-curing polyurethane adhesive, or an epoxy. After the adhesive is cured, plugs may be sanded flush with the plank and sealed with the appropriate finish.

## DISCLAIMER

TerraMai decking products are exceptional materials, manufactured to exacting standards. Because TerraMai decking is natural wood, variations in color, grain pattern, density, and mechanical properties are to be expected. By exposing wood to sunlight, precipitation, changes in humidity, and other elements, changes in color and dimension will occur. Shrinkage, swelling, checking, and other movement of the individual planks is to be expected and is normal for natural wood decking. Installation of TerraMai decking products is to be done by a qualified installer familiar with local and regional building codes, after obtaining any and all required building permits.