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BACKYARD REBUILD

Skill Level

Novice     Expert

Deck Makeover

From worn down to maintenance-free

PROJECT BY TODD MOUNSEY TEXT BY GARY RUDY





BUILDING A BEAUTIFUL deck is one thing, but building a beautiful deck that will keep those good looks in the years to come is something else. • We've all been awed by those fresh cedar decks, newly built and looking like a million bucks. The trouble is, a few seasons later, those same decks, if left unprotected, have a washed-out, aged look that betrays their owner's (lack of) investment in maintenance. But what to do? How do you ensure that your new deck

PHOTOGRAPHY: DAVID STARRSETT



THE RAILING system (above) is covered in a low-maintenance, composite skin, but the structural integrity is provided by the inner, pressure-treated 4x4 post. The below-deck storage area is accessed via a hinged door built into the deck skirt

keeps its good looks for years to come? Regular staining is one option, of course; but, depending on the wear and tear the deck is subjected to, you can be in for an annual staining project.

The other option is to build a deck using the new breed of composite decking boards that are on the market. There are several kinds of composites available, each with its own set of properties. This project uses the Trex Transend line. It's a brand that has been around long enough to earn a reputation as a reliable product. The Trex composite, which is made up of a blend of recycled plastic and reclaimed wood fibres, is wrapped with a plastic skin. It looks like real wood that has been covered with a solid stain, and comes with a long list of available accessories, such as railing systems and low-voltage lighting. It was a good

choice for making over a tired deck into something fresh and almost maintenance-free.

This project was based on an almost 15-year-old, pressure-treated deck. Although the deck had been well maintained and stained every two or three years, it had begun to show its age. Several deck boards had begun to show signs of rot at their ends, and the deck's supporting joists and ledger board were due for inspection. Before rebuilding, the frame of the deck must be inspected carefully, and any weak or decaying sections reinforced or replaced. Simply covering the deck with new composite boards would not have been sufficient to extend the useful life of the deck safely.

The renovated deck looks brand new. It's now more structurally solid and shouldn't require anything more than an annual wash with soap and water.

FRAMING STEP-BY-STEP



5. Galvanized joist hangers are the most secure way to fasten joists to the ledger board



9. Extra bracing was added in the high-traffic area near the stairs



1. The original deck boards were removed to expose the pressure-treated frame. Although it was about 15 years old, the frame was in decent shape. **2.** New galvanized lag screws were used to secure the new ledger board to the foundation wall. **3.** The gap between the ledger and the foundation was caulked to prevent water from migrating off of the surface of the deck and behind the ledger. **4.** Sections of the original framing were replaced in areas that showed signs of rot



6 & 7. Deck Protector waterproof membrane covers the top edges of the joists



10. New stair stringers were cut from pressure-treated 2x10s.
11. One section of the L-shaped deck required a new ledger board

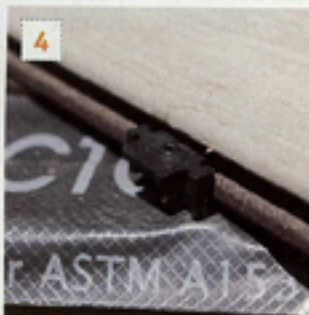


8. Two posts were added to reinforce the frame. Saddle brackets, set into concrete forms, support pressure-treated posts

DECKING DETAILS



1. The deck skirting was replaced with composite material. **2.** The decking was laid diagonally to add visual interest. **3.** The Trex deck boards have a recessed tongue running down each edge for the fastening system



4. The deck boards are fastened with special clips that allow the boards to expand and contract throughout the seasons. **5.** Each clip is driven into a joist below and pinches the board's tongue



6. A BoWrench deck tool sits on the top of a joist and coaxes a board into proper alignment. Board-to-board alignment is especially critical for the board's fastening system



7. The pressure-treated 4x4 post is covered with a composite sleeve that slips overtop. **8.** The Trex railing kit comes with a predrilled upper and lower rail that is cut to length to fit snugly between the posts. The metal railing balusters are fed through the upper and lower rails. **9.** The top and bottom rails are then fastened to each post with clips

RAILING DETAILS

10



10. The completed railing is solid, secure and maintenance-free

11



11. Low-voltage lights shine down from the posts to illuminate the top of the stairway

12



12. Small LED lights are set into the stair risers and will illuminate the treads to make evening entertaining safer

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