

Skill Level: INTERMEDIATE Give these projects a try if you're a confident DIYer with a good working knowledge of a variety of tools. They can take a day or more to complete. If you can build a birdhouse or install a ceiling fan, your skill level is probably appropriate.

✓ MATERIALS

Surface Prep

- 80-grit sandpaper
- Pole Sander
- Drop Cloths
- Painter's Tape
- Stiff Bristle Brush
- Safety Glasses
- Rubber Gloves

Cleaning

- Wood Stripper
- Wood Brightener
- Pump-Type Sprayer or Paintbrush
- Bucket
- Cleaning Brush
- Garden Hose w/ a Nozzle
- Pressure Washer—optional

Staining

- Stain
- Paint Roller with Extension Pole
- Paint Tray
- 4" Paintbrush—for deck boards
- 1" or 2" Trim Brush
- Rubber Gloves
- Mineral Spirits—for clean up

A wood deck provides a beautiful place to relax with family and friends. To keep your wood deck looking beautiful, you'll have to treat it to prevent deterioration. Direct sunlight and harsh weather conditions can harm the wood's appearance, and even the structural integrity of the deck. But with these cleaning and treating steps, your deck will look great and last for years.

BEFORE YOU START

01 Test your deck.

- A good test to tell if your deck needs to be treated is to sprinkle a few droplets of water on the wood. If the water beads up, you're in good shape. If not, it's time to stain. Perform this test about once every six months.
- When you have to treat your deck, you'll need to plan ahead for weather. Clean and treat your wood deck when the weather forecast calls for three rain-free days in a row and temperatures between 50° and 90° F.



02 Determine the type of stain that you will use.

- Stains are available in a variety of finishes, so choose the one that's right for your deck.
- Clear or natural stains
 - This finish is nearly transparent, which allows the wood's grain and texture to show.
- Toner-type stains
 - These stains can add rich, wood-toned beauty without masking any natural character.
- Semi-transparent and semi-solid stains
 - These finishes cover up the wood grain.
- Solid stains
 - Use this type of stain if you want to add rich, opaque color so no wood shows through.
 - The more solid the color, the better the UV protection.
- Sheer stains
 - This finish is ideal when long-lasting, non-peeling durability is important.

IMPORTANT

Always follow the manufacturer's instructions when completing any project. And always use proper safety precautions. If you're not comfortable cleaning and treating your deck, contact a professional for help.

BEFORE YOU START (cont.)

03 Determine how much stain you will need.

- Follow the manufacturer's instructions for calculating the amount of stain you'll need.
- Coverage varies depending on the type of surface you're staining and what type of stain you are using.
- If you need help, ask a Lowe's associate for assistance.

SURFACE PREPARATION

The deck must be clean, dry and porous for the stain to penetrate the wood. **Don't forget safety. Be sure to cover your arms, legs, and feet. And have safety glasses and rubber gloves.**

01 Remove all the deck furniture and plants.

02 Trim any shrubs or bushes near the deck.

03 Repair any damaged or loose boards.

04 Sand all rough patches.

- A pole sander is a good tool for tackling large areas that need sanding.

05 Finally, sweep off the deck.



CLEANING

01 Follow the stain manufacturer's recommendations for proper cleaning procedures.

- Some stain manufacturers require the use of a wood stripper and wood brightener. If you use a wood stripper, you have to follow up with a wood brightener to help remove any discoloration.

02 Clean redwood, cedar, or mahogany with a wood cleaner specifically formulated for these surfaces.

- These types of wood require a special solution to help remove tannins.

03 When working on vertical surfaces, work from the bottom-up to avoid uneven appearances.

04 Liberally apply the wood stripper with a pump-type sprayer.

05 Let the wood stripper stand for a minimum of 15 minutes, but don't allow the wood stripper to dry.

- If it does begin to dry, lightly mist the surface with a garden hose.
- Immediately rinse off any solution that gets on the siding.



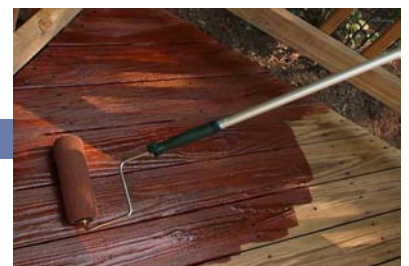
CLEANING (cont.)

- 06 After the wood stripper has had time to work, rinse the surface with a garden hose, or pressure washer on a low setting.
- 07 Mix the brightener with water according to the manufacturer's instructions.
- 08 Apply the solution with a pump sprayer and let stand for 15 to 20 minutes.
 - If the brightener begins to dry, mist the surface with a garden hose.
 - If solution comes in contact with the siding, immediately rinse it off.
- 09 Use a cleaning brush on any trouble spots.
 - Any spots affected by mold and mildew will need extra attention.
- 10 Rinse off the deck with a garden hose and nozzle or pressure washer on a medium setting. Repeat the process if necessary.
- 11 After the deck has been thoroughly cleaned, let it dry for at least 48 hours.



STAINING

- 01 Mask off any parts of the home that may come in contact with the stain.
 - Typically, this is three feet above or below the deck.
- 02 Avoid staining in the heat of the day or in direct sunlight when the stain could dry too quickly.
- 03 Completely stir the stain.
 - If you're using multiple gallons, combine them into a five gallon bucket to assure color consistency.
- 04 Pour a small amount of stain into your paint tray.
- 05 Apply a thin coat to a two- or three-board section with a paint roller.
 - Work from one end to the other, assuring that the stain penetrates the wood.
 - Apply the coats in thin layers. Generally two thin coats are better than one thick one.
- 06 Repeat this process on all wood surfaces.



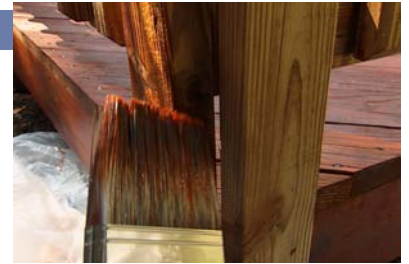
STAINING (cont.)

07 Use a paintbrush to apply the stain in tight areas, like the steps or railing.

- The support beams under the deck probably will not need a coat of stain. But you may wish to apply a coat for aesthetic reasons.

08 Allow the deck to dry for at least 24 hours.

09 After the deck has thoroughly dried, put your patio furniture back in place.



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