



Choosing the right timber for a new deck

+ BY CASSIE GUNTHORPE

Choosing a timber deck should involve a variety of considerations beyond what simply looks the best.

In fact, before you make any decisions, it's important to look at the varying product characteristics so as to choose the right deck for your home.

According to Total Home Frames Managing Director and Sales Manager Chris Zencich, the natural appeal of timber has been on the rise.

"Nothing brings the warmth and the rustic imperfection of nature back into our homes better than timber," he said.

"Trends have seen a movement from metallic elements inside of homes towards more natural and raw materials, textures, and colours.

"I think this trend is a direct reflection of a society that wants to take a step back, slow things down and counteract the amount of time we spend on computers, phones and other technology.

"After all, the more high-tech and high-paced life becomes, the more we want to surround ourselves with materials and textures that connect us with nature."

So what factors should determine how we go about choosing our timber?

DENSITY AND TOUGHNESS

Choosing a decking material that can withstand particular climatic conditions is a cost-effective way to ensure you can enjoy your decking for years to come, without need of replacement.

According to Mr Zencich, the amount of sun or shade your deck receives determines whether the colour will fade quickly.

"All decks will require some maintenance, but some timber decks are quicker and easier to maintain than others," he said.

"Decking materials vary in price and there is a material to suit every budget, from more expensive hardwoods to lower-cost treated pine."

Mr Zencich said hardwoods were a great option for decking in Australia, given their durability and, to some extent, naturally high resistance to weather.

"Another option includes using treated pine timbers that have been processed with a preservative to increase the timber's resistance," he said.

"In other words, the timber's durability is enhanced to a level which is suitable for the intended use. Popular hardwoods include jarrah, spotted gum and merbau, which is the most common timber decking in Australia."

THINK ENVIRONMENTAL

Yet another benefit to a timber-based decking is its environmental advantages over common, alternative building materials.

"Timber is a renewable, reusable, recyclable and completely biodegradable building resource," Mr Zencich said.

"The well-managed forests from which our timber is derived are natural air filters, absorbing carbon dioxide and releasing oxygen. In comparison to other building materials, the manufacture of most timber products requires smaller amounts of energy, and any residues generated through the processing of timber building products can be reused in a variety of positive ways."

VISUAL APPEAL

Of course, there's no denying the sleek, rustic look that an aesthetic timber decking can add to a home.

"Adding a solid wood timber deck to your outdoor entertainment area will not only add value to your home, but will look great," Mr Zencich

"The rich red-brown tones of decking timbers bring a warmth to outdoor living areas like no other building material can."

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