

# Herts Timber Helping Hands



## BUILD A TIMBER DECK

A timber deck can be built on level or sloping ground and on one or more levels to create an attractive, solid base for garden dining and relaxation – and you can add a pergola and deck rails or deck panels to complete the picture.



### What you need

#### Tools

- Handsaw
- Circular saw or jigsaw
- Drill and drill bits
- Cordless drill/ driver
- Tape measure
- String line
- Spirit level
- Hammer
- Wood chisels
- Spade
- Screwdrivers
- Plumb Line
- Clamps

Decking Lengths:  
3.0m, 3.6m, 4.2m & 4.8m

#### Safety equipment

- Dust mask
- RCD adaptor
- Goggles
- Gloves



**When handling timber always wear gloves.**

**Wear goggles and ear protection whilst using circular saws, drills and sanders**

### First Stage

Buy the components at least a week before you start to allow it to adjust to the temperature. Store it near to where it will be constructed and raised off the ground with bearers and keep dry .

Work out the size of the deck to on paper to scale. The decking boards will govern the size of the deck, accurate measuring and planning will reduce work and cutting.

Decking boards have a width of 120mm, a gap of 5mm has to be left between each board. Below are some examples of sizes and the no. of boards to cover different widths.

- 1245mm width - 10 boards (with 9 gaps)
- 1495mm width - 12 boards (with 11 gaps)
- 1995mm width - 16 boards (with 15 gaps)
- 2245mm width - 18 boards (with 17 gaps)
- 3745mm width - 30 boards (with 29 gaps)

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## Building the deck frame

The easiest method is to create a rectangular deck frame.

**Fig 1.** gives an example of this based on an area of 3600 x 3740. the width is based on the use of 30 120mm deck boards at 3.6m long with 29 gaps of 5mm between them

$$(30 \times 120\text{mm} = 3600\text{mm}) + (29 \times 5\text{mm} = 145\text{mm}) = 3745\text{mm}$$

The base should be designed to provide a complete perimeter with intermediate bearers at a max of **500mm spacing**

The base should be constructed from **100mm x 50mm** treated timber with the decking laying on the 50mm surface.

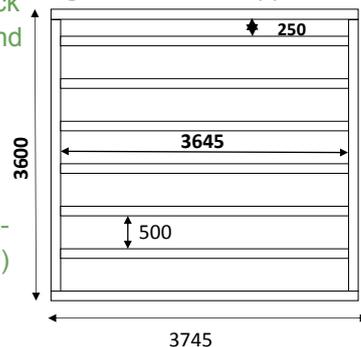
### Preparing the ground

Before starting ensure the ground is level and dry. This will prolong the life of your deck.

**Measure out the deck** - Follow the drawings you've created mark out the decking area using pegs and a string line. If the deck is being constructed on ground level, the bearers can be laid in the required positions.

**Level the ground** - Level off uneven ground, leave a small drop of 1:80 (ideally in the direction your decking boards will go) for water drainage. Make sure ground is firm. If your laying the

**Fig. 1** Basic deck support



2880

deck over lawn or weeds remove them and cover with landscaping fabric to avoid weeds growing through the deck.

**Add 10mm gravel** - If the ground is soggy or likely to become soggy spread 10mm gravel over landscape fabric to a depth of 25mm. The bearer frame will bed down on the gravel and mainly kept off wet ground.

### Constructing the frame

**Mark**, cut and lay out the **outer frame** using 100mm x 50mm bearers ensuring that the frame rests flat and is totally supported. If there are hollow areas under the frame adjust the ground level to fully support the frame to avoid a springy deck.

**Clamp** and join the frame at each corner using two 150mm timber screws. Use a spirit level to make sure the frame remains flat. Measure the frame diagonally each way to ensure the frame is square.

**Fit the bearers.** Mark cut and fit the bearers with two 150mm screws on each side at no more than 500mm spaces. Check that the bearers lay flat.

For extra support or larger areas additional bearers 500mm long can be placed in the opposite direction between bearers.

### Points to consider



Decking built in shade can be affected by damp & algae growth and will require yearly treatment

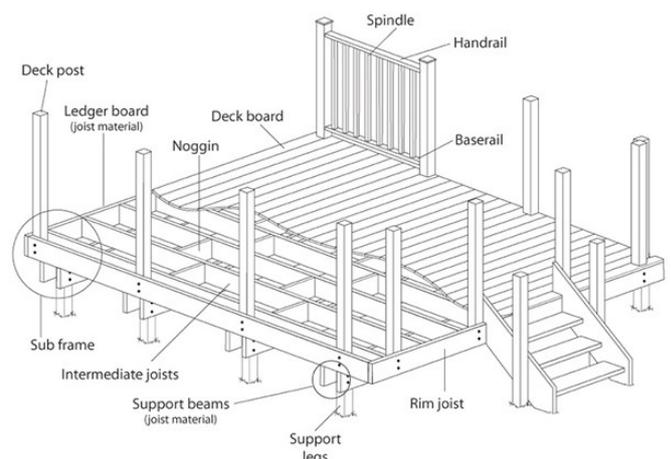
Wet areas should be avoided completely

Some raised decks may require planning permission, please be aware and check with the local council.

Raised decks should not be higher than 600mm from ground level without specialist advice.

If installing posts or levelling the ground make sure not to damage underground pipes or cabling, do not obstruct manhole covers or any other services.

This will give you a basic deck frame, if you aim to raise your deck or create a shaped deck, read pages 4-5 for more information.



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## Fixing the deck boards

Once the frame has been constructed the decking boards can be laid.

