

# Deck Maintenance Tip Sheet

## Essential Deck Maintenance Tips

### 1. Clean Regularly

- Sweep leaves and debris off the deck to prevent moisture buildup and mold growth.
- Wash the deck at least twice a year using a gentle cleaning solution or a deck-specific cleaner.
- For composite decks, avoid harsh chemicals - a mild soap and water solution works best.

### 2. Inspect for Damage

- Look for loose boards, protruding nails, or screws and fix them promptly.
- Check for signs of rot, especially in wood decks. Pay attention to posts, joists, and areas near the ground.
- Inspect railings and stairs to ensure they're secure and safe.

### 3. Protect Your Deck

- Apply a water-repellent sealant to wooden decks annually to prevent moisture damage.
- Stain wood decks every 2-3 years to maintain color and add an extra layer of protection.
- Use outdoor rugs or mats to prevent scratches from furniture.

### 4. Prevent Mold and Mildew

- Ensure proper drainage around the deck to prevent water pooling.
- Trim nearby plants to allow sunlight and air circulation, reducing the risk of mildew.
- Remove mold with a soft brush and a mixture of vinegar and water or a deck-approved cleaner.

### 5. Watch for Pests

- Inspect for termites or carpenter ants, especially in wood decks.
- Keep firewood or wooden items away from the deck to deter pests.

### 6. Prepare for Seasonal Changes

- Before winter, clear the deck of furniture and decorations to avoid snow or ice damage.
- Shovel snow off the deck gently using a plastic shovel - avoid scraping the surface.
- Check for any needed repairs after extreme weather events, like heavy rain or storms.

## 7. Protect Composite Decking

- Avoid dragging heavy objects across the surface to prevent scratches.
- Use non-abrasive ice melts during winter to protect the surface.
- Rinse periodically to remove dirt and pollen buildup.

## 8. Extend Your Deck's Lifespan

- Use deck covers or pergolas to shield it from excessive sun exposure.
- Place furniture pads under chairs and tables to minimize wear and tear.
- Regularly tighten screws and bolts to keep your deck structurally sound.

## Recommended Tools for Deck Maintenance

- Soft-bristle brush or broom
- Mild deck cleaner or vinegar-water solution
- Power washer (set to a gentle setting for wood decks)
- Sandpaper or sander for smoothing rough areas
- Sealant or stain for wood decks
- Non-abrasive ice melt

## Maintenance Schedule

Task	Frequency
Sweep & remove debris	Weekly
Inspect for damage	Monthly
Clean the surface	Biannually
Seal or stain wood decks	Annually or as needed
Check drainage	Seasonally
Remove snow/ice	As needed in winter