



THE HOMEOWNER GUIDES / COMPOSITE DECKING MATERIALS

COMPOSITE DECKING OPTIONS.

LOW UPKEEP, COMPARED PLAINLY.



Low-maintenance decking comes in a few families that look similar from the street but behave differently underfoot, in the sun and over the years. This guide lays them side by side.

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01 / AT A GLANCE

THE OPTIONS SIDE BY SIDE.

A quick comparison of look, upkeep and relative material cost. Cost is general and relative. Your quote depends on the project.

MATERIAL	LOOK	UPKEEP	RELATIVE COST
UNCAPPED COMPOSITE	Wood-look, matte	Moderate	\$\$
CAPPED COMPOSITE	Wood grain, many colors	Low	\$\$\$
PVC (CELLULAR)	Crisp grain, light weight	Low	\$\$\$\$
MINERAL-BASED	Wood grain, very stable	Low	\$\$\$

02 / HOW TO COMPARE

WHAT TO WEIGH.

■ HEAT	Darker colors and some materials get warmer in full sun. Feel samples outside on a sunny day.
■ STAINS AND FADING	A protective cap resists spills and fading better than an exposed core.
■ MOVEMENT	Boards expand and contract with temperature. Gapping follows the manufacturer's rules.
■ WARRANTY	Board lines carry different manufacturer warranties. Read what is covered and for how long.



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03 / MATERIAL BY MATERIAL

KNOW WHAT YOU ARE CHOOSING.

What each option is, where it works best and what to keep in mind before you decide.

■ UNCAPPED COMPOSITE

Wood fibers and plastic blended into one solid board with no outer shell.

GOOD FOR	Budget-minded low-maintenance decks.
KEEP IN MIND	More prone to staining, mold and fading than capped boards.

■ PVC (CELLULAR)

An all-plastic board with no wood content.

GOOD FOR	Wet areas, pools and buyers who want the lightest, most moisture-resistant board.
KEEP IN MIND	Usually the highest cost. Ask about heat and expansion.

■ CAPPED COMPOSITE

A composite core wrapped in a hard polymer shell on three or four sides.

GOOD FOR	Most homeowners who want low upkeep and lots of color choices.
KEEP IN MIND	Cap quality varies by line. Compare samples side by side.

■ MINERAL-BASED

Boards made with a mineral and polymer core instead of wood fibers.

GOOD FOR	Decks where stability and low movement matter.
KEEP IN MIND	Fewer brands to choose from. Confirm local availability.

SEE IT BEFORE YOU CHOOSE IT.

Ask to see full-size samples outdoors in daylight. Screens and printed pages never show color and texture exactly.



04 / COLOR AND FINISH

PICK A COLOR FAMILY.

Swatches show approximate tone families only. Colors vary by brand, product line and light, so final choices come from physical samples.



LIGHT GRAY



WEATHERED GRAY



SAND



WARM BROWN



WALNUT



CHARCOAL

05 / YOUR NEXT STEP

LET'S BUILD IT.

Still deciding? Call us. We will talk through the options for your composite decking project, the look you want and the upkeep you are comfortable with.

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BASED IN

Janesville, Wisconsin

This guide is for planning. Product availability, specifications and warranties come from each manufacturer, and the requirements for your property need to be confirmed separately.

A phone call or callback request is not a booked appointment or an approved estimate. Photos are concept imagery, not Ironwood projects.