

## Learn How To Clean Wood Decks

Wood is the most popular choice material for decks. Not only is wood gorgeous, it is also strong, durable, and easy to work with. Wood is vulnerable, however, to moisture damage and should be checked frequently. Deck boards that are split, splintered, cracked, or have raised nails may point to a potential problem with moisture saturation. Moreover, wood is an absorbent substance, not unlike skin; wood pores can develop clogged and deteriorated conditions. The best way to prevent troubles with your wooden deck is to have it sealed and maintained. Now, let's discuss some different types of woods that are commonly used for decks.

**Cedar:** The wood from this hefty, coniferous evergreen tree is a trendy favorite for decks. It not only looks beautiful and has a wonderful aroma, it is also enormously durable. The feel of cedar is soft, and the grain of cedar is elaborate and stunning. Cedar produces natural tannins that are said to be naturally defiant to insects. However, these tannins can spot, especially after it rains, and this carries on until the wood becomes fully acclimatized (three years or so). After a wood deck cleaning the cedar should be sealed. Sealer colors that work predominantly well with cedar are the likely redwood or cedar tinted. These deck sealers allow the natural grain of the cedar to show through, while still protecting the wood through a shielding pigment.

**Redwood:** Used commonly in timber construction, redwood is (as the name advocates) a reddish colored wood. Besides the color, redwood is very similar to cedar, and is a stylish choice for wooden deck construction.

**Pressure Treated Pine:** This long-needled tree also has wood that is very common in the building of decks. Pine varies from extremely soft wood, as with the white pine, to very rigid wood, as in the long leaf pine. The term "pressure treated" refers to wood that has been chemically treated to repel insects and rot. Cedar and redwood are never treated due to their nature, it isn't necessary. The downsides to using pressure treated wood are rapid staining, splitting problems, and inconsistent look due to the many chemicals that are in the wood. As with all woods, it is always a good idea to have your pressure treated deck cleaned and sealed so that these natural problems can be evaded. It's best to hire a company that specializes in pressure washing decks and wood deck restoration. Depending on personal liking, pine works well with any color deck sealer. As with cedar or redwood, there are natural colors that can heighten the natural grain and color of the wood. Advantages of using pine are its versatility, affordability (compared to cedar or redwood) and its dependability. Wooden decks can be subjected to very severe exposure, plus abrasion and extreme friction from foot traffic. The horizontal surfaces, such as the floor and top hand rails, receive abundant amounts of sunlight and moisture. Continuous swelling and shrinking of the wood severely breaks down any continuous film coating, resulting in cracking, flaking, and peeling. These deck coatings or sealers are not recommended for these surfaces. Deep penetrating oil based deck sealers are recommended coatings. They require frequent refinishing, but it is an easier task than the scraping and sanding needed to prepare paints, solid stains, and waterborne sealer for refinishing. Latex sealers or paints are to be avoided where water can collect on flat surfaces. Silicone enhanced sealer products should also be avoided. Coatings fall into one of two categories. Film forming coatings are primers, paints, heavy bodied and solid color sealers which form coat or film over the surface. Penetrating stains, the second category, dive deep into the wood past the surface resulting in very little surface film. This type of penetrating sealer is not prone to cracking, peeling, or flaking like the film forming type. Oil based penetrating deck sealers to an excellent job of locking out moisture and protecting against harmful UV rays. These types of sealers are normally semi-transparent but can still have a tone or tint added to them in a variety of colors. Therefore, your deck can have a particular color or tone to it, but yet the beauty of the wood grain will still show through. A rule of thumb is the darker the tone of deck sealer, the more sun protection it provides.

## About the Author

Learn more about deck cleaning and proper deck maintenance at <http://www.midwestprowash.com> or contact Shane Hester at <http://www.webfirstcreations.com> to get your own construction website.

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