

To Add A Deck or Not To Add a Deck: A Question of Value



Did you know you can add value to your home with a deck? Well, you can! In fact, adding a deck is one of the easiest, most cost effective ways of increasing your home's value and usable living space.

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Does the idea of being able to relax on a deck with a cold drink or being able to host a BBQ with your friends and family sound appealing? For many people, it does. Whether you currently have a deck or are looking to build, a deck can add usable living space and increased value to your home. In fact...

“...building a deck is one of the most efficient and cost-effective ways to add value to your home” (Anthony Esh). **“On average, when a homeowner adds a deck to their home, they are likely to recoup approximately 76% return on their investment”** (frontdoor.com).

Because the economy is down, more and more people are spending time at home. According to Anthony Esh, “The more people are staying home for entertainment, the more home entertainment amenities are worth.” For those considering building a deck, this means adding great value to your home. The percent of return may vary depending on where you live and the type of deck you decide to build. The average return will be around 75%, a great return for added functional living space!

It is important to note that wood and composite wood¹ decking *lose* their value over time—not what you’re aiming for when you’re trying to *add* value to your home. In order to see a return on your investment, you need a durable deck that will stand the test of time.

“Building a deck adds value because it adds living space, specifically outdoor living space” (Joe Ricker).

This fact ties directly to the first. The more usable living space you have, the more comfortable and appealing your home becomes. During the summer, most people enjoy being able to spend time outdoors with friends and family while maintaining all the comforts of home. Building a deck enables you to achieve that goal by extending your living space.

Your new living space can become anything you want: a relaxing, romantic area with a hot tub for those chilly evenings; an outdoor stone kitchen with built-in bar, grill, and flat screen TV to watch the football games on guy’s night; a decorative table and chairs on a stone patio, perfect for doing your nails, having a cup of tea, or drinking a glass of wine on girl’s night; or the perfect place for your toddler’s birthday party. No matter what your dream outdoor space is, a deck can be the first step in creating your outdoor paradise.

¹ Composite wood decking, also known as composite lumber, is a combination of plastic and wood fiber.

A deck should feel like an extension of your house, not an appendage.

There is nothing worse than viewing a house with a deck only to realize that the “deck” is a concrete slab that was “built” off the back of the house—no landscaping, no real connection to the house, no design, just a plain concrete slab. Such a “deck” does not add anything to your house. In fact, for many people, it detracts from the appeal of the house.

The best way to make your deck an extension of the house is to elevate it. Whether it’s two feet or six feet off the ground, an elevated deck “can be the perfect finishing touch to your outdoor space, providing more usable entertaining space and offering a beautiful transition from...your home into the surrounding yard” (Grandview Landscape Design Studio). Not only will your deck feel like part of your home, but your perspective will change. When you are able to look out over your yard from above, you’ll feel on top of the world.

“The best deck is one that looks good and is easy to maintain” (todayshomeowner.com).

Makes sense, right? You don’t want an ugly concrete slab “deck.” You want an inviting, comfortable, relaxing deck that is appealing to the eye. Of course, you want all of that without having to spend countless hours maintaining it. For this reason, a stone, brick, or travertine paver deck is your best option.

Why should I opt for a stone, brick, or travertine deck over a wood deck?

Think about it this way: A finished wood floor looks great INSIDE a house. It is low maintenance and easy to clean. But, would you put that same floor on your deck? Of course not! The finished wooden floor would warp and require an extensive amount of time and money to maintain (stain and seal) and repair. So why put wood of any kind on your deck?

Installing a stone, brick, or travertine paver deck is a sturdier option that is capable of withstanding temperature changes unlike a wood deck—no expansion or warping. After installation, all you need to do to “maintain” the deck is an occasional sweep or rinse. Sounds way better than spending money on stain and the time applying it to a wood deck!

So, what’s stopping you from choosing stone, brick, or travertine pavers for your deck over wood?

Stone, brick, or travertine pavers require a sturdy base for application.

There goes that idea. Unless you want your deck at ground level, you’re stuck with wood or composite lumber, right? WRONG! StoneDeks System, a new innovation in decking technology, makes it possible for you to install stone, brick, or travertine pavers on just about any surface!

So, what is StoneDeks System?

StoneDeks System is a revolutionary decking system that will enable you to transform your old wooden deck into an extraordinary, elevated stone deck. Instead of being stuck with lumber or composite lumber, StoneDeks System gives you the ability to choose from a variety of sturdier decking materials that would have otherwise been impossible. The best part? You can install your new deck yourself! Sounds crazy, right? It's not! StoneDeks System is designed for quick and easy installation. In fact, as several StoneDeks System customers have found out, your deck can be a fun, family project that everyone will enjoy for many years to come.

The StoneDeks System Design

When building their hives, honeybees rely on hexagons. StoneDeks System mirrored this naturally- designed hexagon technology when creating Silca Grate™. "But, why?" you ask. Simple: the hexagon design creates a super-strong subsurface² capable of sustaining heavy deck materials, such as brick, travertine, slate, granite, marble, and natural stone.

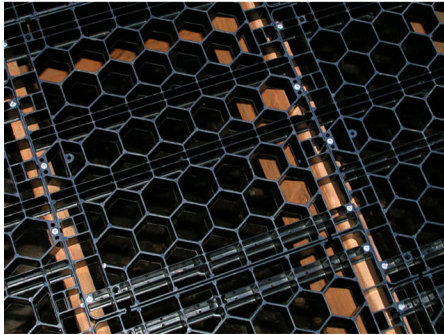


Figure 1
Installed Silca Grates

The American-made Silca Grate™ grids measure 16x18" (2 square feet) and are composed of durable 1 1/2" thick engineered polymer. Not only is Silca Grate™ suitable for elevated decks and patios, but it can be used for ground applications, porches, bridges, pool decks, rooftop decks, and more! How is it possible, you wonder? The 2" diameter honeycombs on the Silca Grate™ grids offer 360 degrees of solid support, allowing Silca Grate™ to not only meet residential and commercial building codes, but to exceed them.

That all sounds good, so what's the catch? There isn't one! Not only is Silca Grate™ UV stable and easily cut to form, it is also quick and easy to install. In fact, you can install it yourself! To secure Silca Grate™ to your deck frame, put six screws³ into the floor joists spaced 16" on center and you're good to go.

How StoneDeks System Works

Silca Grates are designed to span the distance between joists to create a sturdy subsurface. After the Silca Grates have been installed you can either place your pavers directly onto the grates or you can apply a layer of geotextile⁴ (landscaping blanket) on the grates before laying

² In addition to subsurface, you may hear or see StoneDeks System referred to as a decking substructure or subfloor.

³ For best results, StoneDeks System recommends using 6 screws per grate. The minimum number of screws you can use per grate is four.

⁴ Geotextile is a permeable fabric.

the pavers and polymeric sand⁵.

What's the difference between using the geotextile and not using it?

Pavers are designed, when placed side-by-side, to interlock without requiring adhesive of any kind. Because of this design, geotextile and polymeric sand are not required. However, not everyone wants to see a small gap between their deck pavers. That's where geotextile and polymeric sand come in to the picture.

Geotextile is designed to allow for drainage and prevent soil erosion, but, when used with Silca Grates, geotextile keeps the polymeric sand from falling through the grates. So, you install the Silca Grates, roll geotextile across the grates, place the pavers, brush on the polymeric sand, mist with water, and there you have it!

Installing StoneDeks System

Tools Required for Installation

- *3" deck coated screws (You want coated screws to prevent rust in the treated wood of the deck frame)*
- *Landscape fabric and paver jointing sand (not required)*
- *Common construction tools: level, measuring tape, and pencil*
- *A drill or power screwdriver*
- *Circular saw*

StoneDeks System Installation

Before you do anything, you have to determine the final elevation of your deck. When you measure, be sure to measure everything. Why? Because you don't want to build your deck only to realize that your patio door won't open because the height of the deck frame, Silca Grates, and your stone, brick, or travertine pavers is higher than you thought.

As part of your measuring, you need to decide not only what type of paver you are going to use, but what thickness it will be. Make sure, no matter what material you choose, that it is between 1 and 3 inches thick.

⁵ *Polymeric sand's "primary function is to improve the interlock and therefore the durability and stability of a paved surface" (groundtradesxchange.com).*

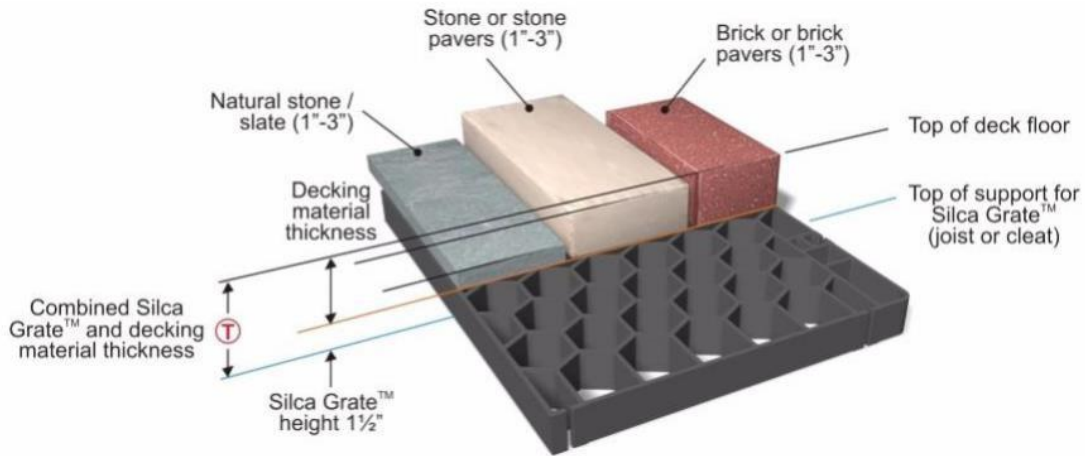


Figure 2

Measure from the bottom of the Silca Grate grid to the top of your decking material to get an accurate measurement.

Once all your measurements are complete and double-checked, you can build your deck frame. Silca Grates are made to fit directly onto a standard 16" decking base. The side edges for each grate should be directly centered on the joist. To support the weight, each joist needs to be at least a 2x8".

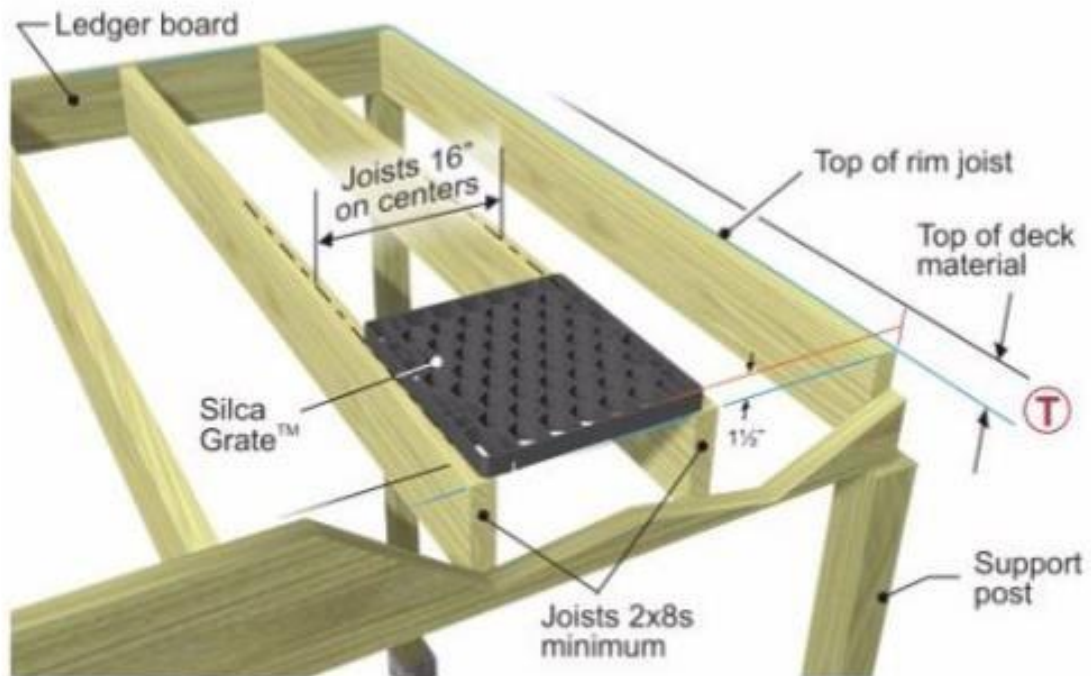


Figure 3

Silca Grate Installation Diagram

When your Silca Grates are correctly installed, it will look like the deck below.



Figure 4
Installed Silca Grates

For strength and durability, every other row should begin offset by half the length of a grate. So, you'll need to start each row by alternating half and full grates.

John E. from Oregon used Silca Grates to redo his elevated wooden deck. After a particular wet year, John's deck separated from his house and sunk about 6 inches. Are you thinking that doesn't sound too terrible?

Well, since his deck is 17 feet off the ground, 6 inches is a huge deal! As he was looking into fixing the deck, he found out that the local carpenter ants had decided to feast on his deck. John decided that he needed a sturdier deck, so he looked to StoneDeks System to make that possible. With StoneDeks System, John was able to completely redo his deck with slate.

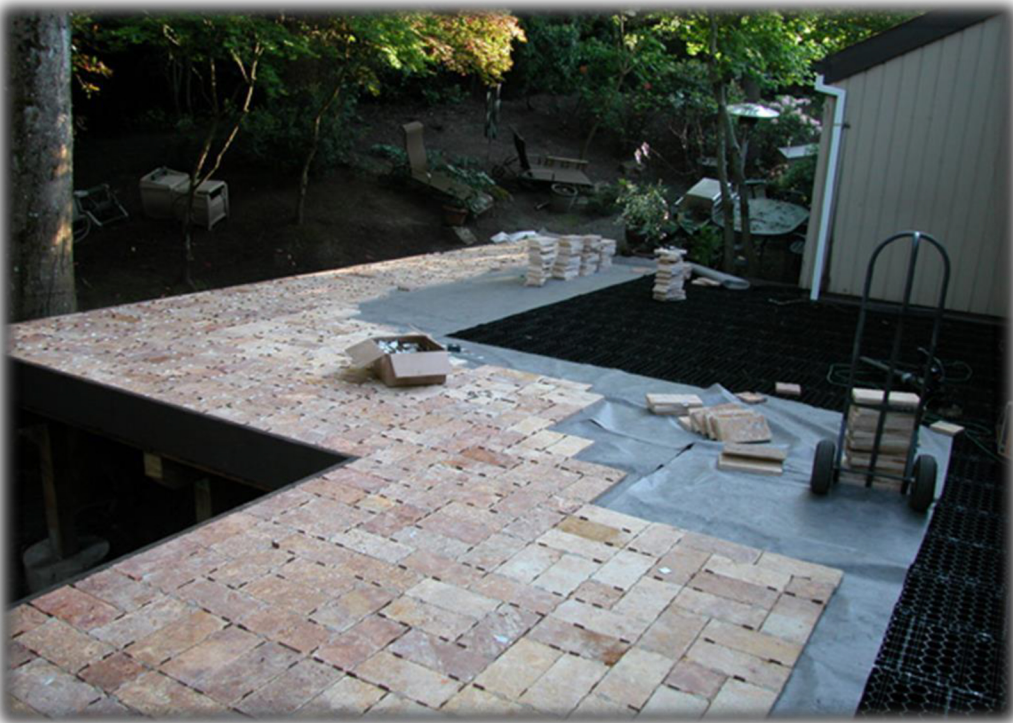


Figure 5
Installing Geotextile and Slate



Figure 6
After installing the slate, John brushed polymeric sand over his deck. The above is a picture of the deck before he misted the sand.

StoneDeks System Results

When it's all said and done, you will have an elegant, virtually maintenance-free deck that will make you the envy of all your neighbors.

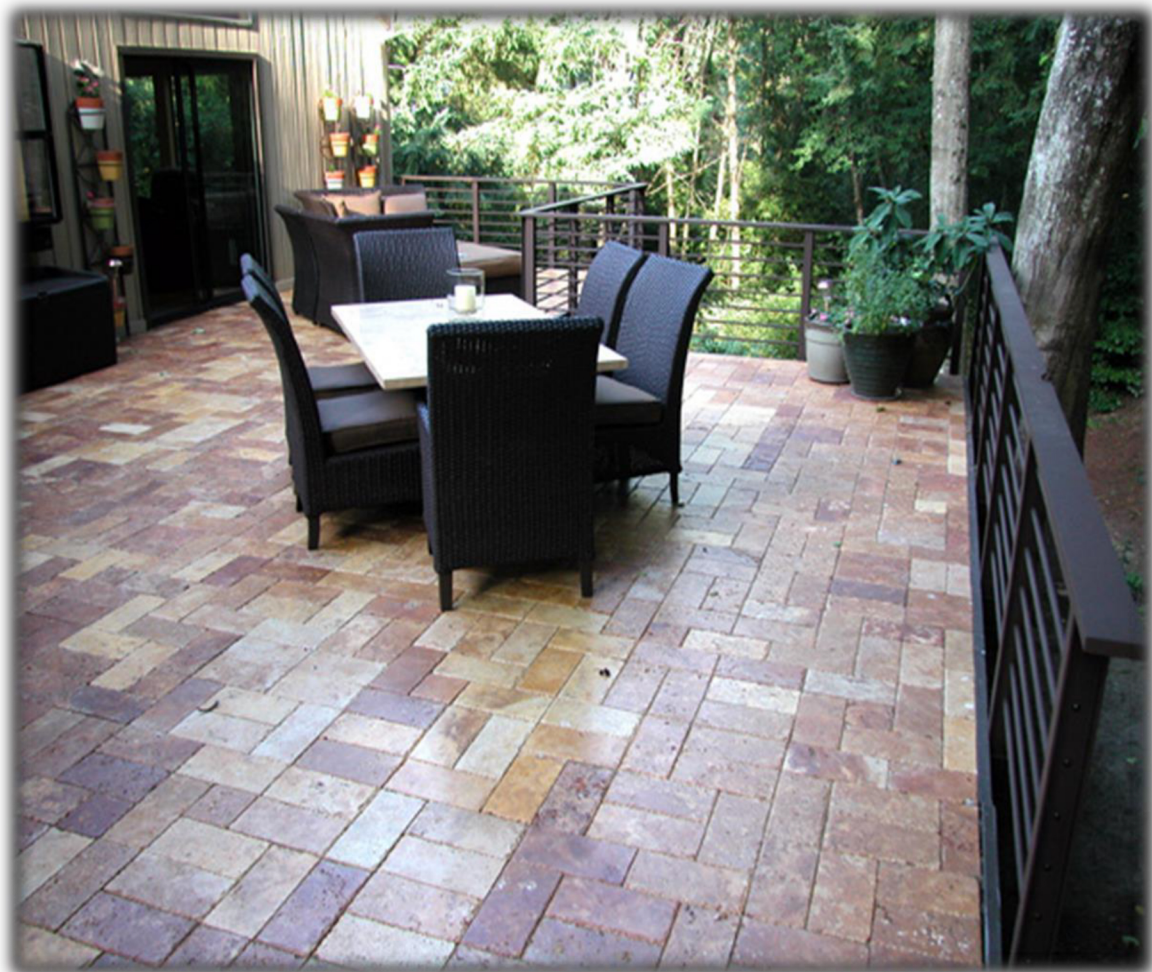


Figure 7

John's Finished Deck. Beautiful, isn't it?

The Benefits of StoneDeks System

By using StoneDeks System's patented Silca Grate as a base for your elevated deck, you can save yourself time, money, and a lot of frustration.

StoneDeks System...

...enables your deck to maintain its value over time, making your home more appealing to potential buyers.

...enables you to have a virtually maintenance-free, elegant entertaining area.

...helps keep weeds and grass from growing between your brick and stone pavers.

...has a 20 year residential warranty and a 10 year commercial warranty.

...is perfect for DIY homeowners because it is quick and easy to install.

...is an innovative, American-made product.

...makes an exceptionally strong deck subsurface for elevated decks or patios, porches, rooftop decks, pool decks, stairways and walkways, and docks. This strong subsurface not only means that you can install pavers of varying shapes, sizes, and colors, but that you will have an excellent walking surface for years to come!

...meets or exceeds commercial and residential building codes.

...gives you an almost unlimited selection of finished decking materials to choose from for your deck.

...is UV stable and temperature resistant—no expanding or warping!

...is eco-friendly. That's right, Silca Grates are recyclable. So, instead of throwing away the scraps after your deck is finished, go green—recycle!

All things considered, a deck is a pretty sound investment that will pay off in the future as well as the present. For more information on how StoneDeks System can help you, contact us at sales@StoneDeks.com or call us at 330.821.1585. We look forward to working with you!

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