

# A deck in good condition can increase your home's worth

Renovating your kitchen or bathroom— projects often cited for best return on investment— can certainly increase the value of your home. Yet, many don't know a well-maintained deck can do the same.

The Home Depot Canada shares these tips for maintaining your existing deck or building a new one:

## The Annual Tune-up

After a hard Canadian winter, every deck can do with a good wash, clean and seal to keep it looking its best. To ensure your deck's longevity, clean the deck with a heavy duty deck cleaner. It removes old water-proof sealers and semi-transparent stains that show signs of winter damage, restoring wood so it's ready to be sealed or stained.

## Simple Repairs

To prevent wear and tear on a natural wood deck, tackle repairs as soon as the damage is done. If you're inspecting your deck regularly, these repairs can be simple. Look for popped nails and loose railings or boards and replace. If left too long, a weak spot in the floor can lead to further and more costly damage.

## Update Time

For an old deck or one that hasn't been maintained well, a larger update might be in order. Easy signs include moisture damage or rot in deck framing. If this kind of damage is visible,



the deck needs replacement. One deteriorating joist or post usually indicates more will soon follow.

## Start from Scratch

Building a deck to extend living space is a great option and in keeping with the growing trend in out-

door living. Once you determine your budget, make an appointment with an associate at The Home Depot to discuss your deck plan and how you can get started. There's a large selection of design options and materials to fit small, medium and large bud-

gets so get ready for summer!

For more information, visit [www.homedepot.ca/decks](http://www.homedepot.ca/decks) or your local The Home Depot store.

—[www.newscanada.com](http://www.newscanada.com)

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# Mix and Match

Using patterns can add further interest and character to your space. Learn the basics behind creating a successful combination.

While incorporating patterns into your decor scheme can be tricky, you need not be intimidated. Understanding the concept behind mixing and matching patterns will help you create a balanced and pleasing look.

Here are a few tips to guide you.

- Select a "road map" fabric first. This is the pattern on which the rest of the scheme will be built. This pattern would be the largest and/or the most colourful one in the room, although it may not be the most-used pattern in the room.
- Consider the other patterns in the room, such as art or area rugs. Treat these as fabrics when choosing more patterns, unless you are willing to change them. Either of these could be the road map pattern for the room, and fabrics would be selected to work with these.
- Select the dominant colours from the

- road map fabric to be repeated in other fabrics in the room. If you can't see the colour from 36 inches away, then it isn't dominant enough to repeat in the room. Remember not to repeat every colour equally; the main colour should be visible in 60 per cent of the room; the secondary colour should make up 30 per cent; and the accent colour 10 per cent.
- Vary the type of patterns you are using. Florals are curvy and free-flowing; stripes are linear; checks and plaids are orderly; geometrics show various shapes. If you want to mix two patterns from the same group, such as two florals, then be sure they are different sized patterns, i.e., a large floral with a complementary small floral.
- Vary the size of the patterns so you have a large pattern, a medium pattern and a small pattern. If you are going to mix two patterns of the same size, they should be different types. For example,

- two large floral patterns would compete with each other, but a large floral with a large stripe could be very striking.
- Use larger patterns on larger items – sofas or draperies – and smaller patterns on smaller items – toss pillows or chair seats. This will help avoid a sense of the patterns being too busy. After all, a small pattern on a large surface repeats many, many times, whereas a large pattern repeats far less.
- Determine your pattern tolerance level. If you love patterns, then go ahead and put them on the sofa or draperies. If you are pattern-shy, then limit your use of patterns to changeable items, such as toss pillows or an accent chair. ■

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