

Deck Screw Installation Guide

Tip: Set your PDF viewer to "**Actual size**" before printing to maintain scale.

TOOL REQUIREMENTS

- Impact driver (recommended) or cordless drill with fresh battery
- Correct drive bits: Star (T20/T25) or Square (#2/#3) - use impact-rated bits
- Magnetic bit holder for one-handed operation
- Drill bits for pre-drilling (hardwoods and composite)
- Countersink bit (for flat head screws in hardwood)
- Chalk line or string line for straight board alignment

FASTENING PATTERN

- Standard: 2 screws per board per joist, positioned 3/4"-1" from each edge
- Wide boards (>6"): Use 3 screws per joist to prevent cupping
- Board ends: Must land on joist center - use 2 screws per board end
- Stagger end joints: Don't align board ends in adjacent rows
- Edge/end distance: 3/4" minimum from edges, 2" minimum from ends

DRIVING TECHNIQUE

- Keep drill perpendicular (90°) to board surface
- Apply steady, firm pressure while driving to prevent cam-out
- Two-stage driving: Fast to start thread, slow to finish flush
- Stop when screw head is flush or slightly below surface (1/16")
- DON'T overdrive: Mushrooming, splitting, or stripping = failure
- Composite: Set clutch to stop exactly at flush per manufacturer specs

PRE-DRILLING REQUIREMENTS

- Hardwoods: ALWAYS pre-drill at 75% of screw diameter
- Composite: Pre-drill per manufacturer specifications (usually required)
- Treated lumber near ends: Pre-drill within 2" of board end
- Treated lumber near edges: Pre-drill if within 1" of edge
- Softwoods (middle of board): Pre-drilling usually not needed
- Pilot hole depth: Slightly shorter than screw length for best grip

COMMON PROBLEMS & SOLUTIONS

- Splitting: Pre-drill near ends/edges, maintain proper distances, avoid cold weather
- Stripped screws: Use correct bit size, don't over-tighten, pre-drill hardwoods
- Squeaking: Ensure 1-1/2" min. joist penetration, mark joists accurately
- Mushrooming (composite): Use composite-specific screws, set clutch properly
- Corrosion: Match screw coating to lumber chemistry (ACQ-compatible required)

