



Installing TimberTech AZEK Decking
with Cortex Hidden Fasteners
and TimberTech AZEK Fascia with TOPLoc Screws



What Makes TT AZEK so Simple to Install?



EASE OF CUTTING

Cuts easier than capped composite and other alternative decking using the proper saw blade and cutting equipment.



LIGHTWEIGHT

TimberTech AZEK Decking weighs up to 30% less than competitive capped composite decking, making lifting and handling your deck boards easier.



EASIER FASTENING / SIMILAR TO WOOD INSTALLATION PRACTICE

TimberTech AZEK Decking is easily attached with screws and doesn't require predrilling like capped composite and other alternative and wood decking.

To access this information on the website click here. <https://www.timbertech.com/resources/installation-help/>

DISCLAIMER

TimberTech AZEK® Decking & Fascia should be installed using the same good building principals used to install wood or composite decking and in accordance with the local building codes and the installation guidelines included below. AZEK® Building Products Inc. accepts no liability or responsibility for the improper installation of this product. TimberTech AZEK Decking & Fascia may not be suitable for every application and it is the sole responsibility of the installer to be sure that TimberTech AZEK Decking & Fascia is fit for the intended use. Since all installations are unique, it is also the installer's responsibility to determine specific requirements for each Deck application. AZEK Building Products recommends that all applications be reviewed by a licensed architect, engineer or local building official before installation.

To get more information visit [TimberTech.com](https://www.timbertech.com).

Prior to your purchase, AZEK Building Products also recommends that you see the full installation guidelines for more details regarding installation as well as information on care and maintenance, storage and handling, reference to warranty coverage, and other important product information. Installation Guidelines can be found at:

<https://www.timbertech.com/resources/installation-help/>

Design Assumptions

These instructions enable you to complete a **standard decking design** which includes a straight pattern with deck boards extending to the edges.

The fascia boards will be installed flush with the deck boards to cover the ends.

Your railing will be installed on top of the deck boards after the boards are installed.



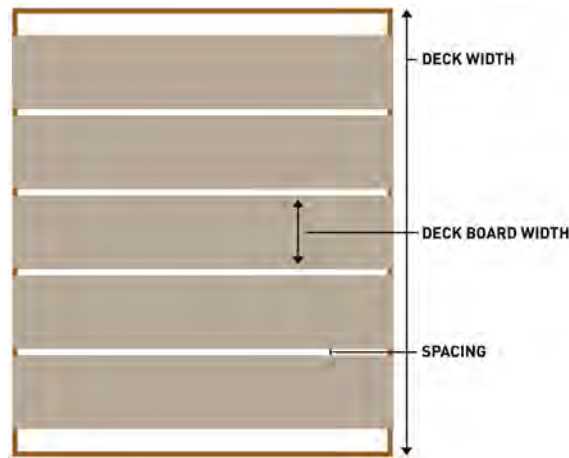
Framing for your railing posts should be considered and completed before attaching decking.

Confirm Your Spacing & Deck Size

Your actual width will need to incorporate both the **deck board width AND the spacing**. Follow along to calculate the adjusted width and spacing of your full-width deck boards.

DETERMINE YOUR DECK SIZE

- Estimate the width of your deck.
- Confirm the width of your deck board (in this project guide, we use 5.5" boards).
- Choose your preferred spacing based on manufacturer requirements (in this project guide, we use 1/8" spacing).

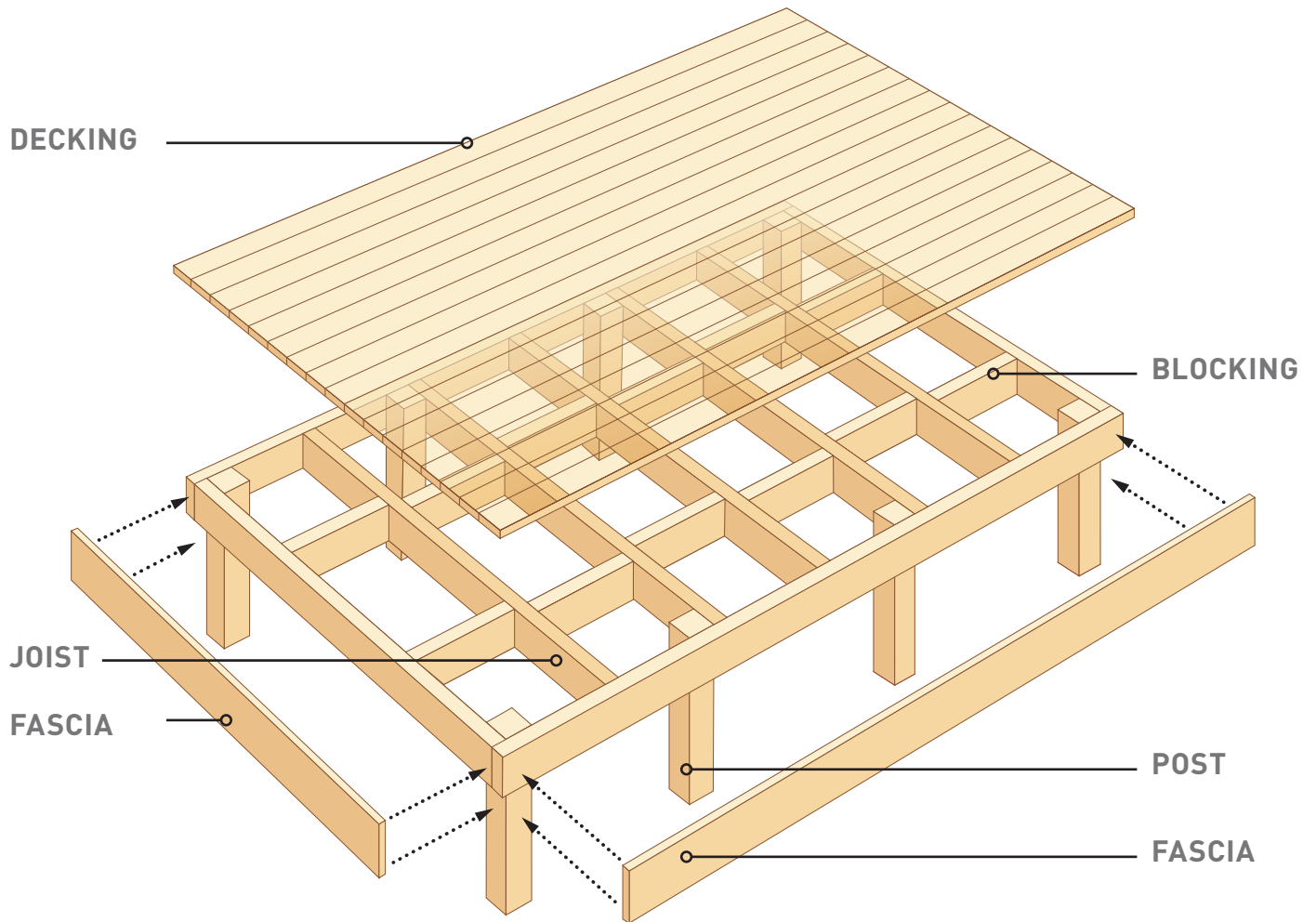


CALCULATE YOUR DECK WIDTH

Estimated **Deck Width** _____ ft.
 Number of **Deck Boards** _____ ft. / 0.46875*
 Actual **Deck Width** _____ **Deck Boards** x 5.625

* Round up or down as necessary to arrive at an accurate estimate.

Deck Components



Understanding TimberTech AZEK Deck Material

1. It's best to keep the decking products stored in a cool, dry place, with packaging on if possible.
2. TT AZEK Decking, like other alternative decking products, will encounter expansion and contraction during significant temperature changes which can occur between direct sunlight and shade / cloud cover.
3. Expansion / contraction / gapping, is most significant where extreme temperature change may exist.
4. For better results keep decking as cool as possible during attachment. Full direct sun exposure will increase board temperature and length. If attaching during high heat, larger gapping can be expected.
5. Best practice is to cut and fasten the deck boards as soon after cutting as possible. Do not cut and leave boards unattached for long periods of time, or over night, as the board length will change with temperature changes.
6. To further limit expansion, contraction, and gapping, follow the fastening instructions noted on the subsequent pages.
7. Avoid cutting and dragging ends of boards over each other as unwanted marks on deck surface could occur.

Considerations and Tools



ESTIMATED TIME:

3 ½ Hours*



RECOMMENDED MAN-POWER:

1 - 2 People



PRE-REQUISITE 1: Deck plan (size, layout)

PRE-REQUISITE 2: Pre-existing framing attached to the house

PRE-REQUISITE 3: Proper joist spacing and blocking



STEPS:

1. Cutting AZEK Deck Boards
2. Determine Where to Start Laying Boards
3. Install TimberTech AZEK Decking
4. Install TimberTech AZEK Fascia



TOOLS NEEDED:

- Safety glasses
- Power Miter Saw
- Jig Saw
- Cordless Driver
- Measuring Tape
- Carpenter Square
- Spacer/spacing tool
- Level
- Hard plastic smooth faced hammer
- Cortex Hidden Fastening system with collated or loose plugs



FASTENERS:

- HIGH quality fastener, specifically TimberTech Cortex or TOPLoc for AZEK decking.
 - Alternatively, stainless steel screws with a minimum Screw Size: #7 can be used**
 - Face screws @ min. length of 2 ¼"

Many other tools are available that can be used for installation. All tools should be used per applicable manufacturers' instructions.

* Minimum, based on an average 16x20 deck.

Time may vary based on the installer's skillset and quality of substructure

**For salt water coastal applications, we suggest using the above minimum fastener requirements in 316 stainless steel.



NOTE! Do not move forward until you've confirmed your frame is structurally sound.

STEP ONE

Cutting AZEK Deck Boards

POWER MITER OR COMPOUND POWER MITER SAW

For best results a miter saw with a fine-toothed, carbide-tipped finish trim blade (12" 100-tooth minimum or 10" 80-tooth minimum) works well for cutting.



HAND-HELD ELECTRIC CIRCULAR SAW

For cutting AZEK deck boards and fascia. Use an electric circular saw with a 60-tooth, fine-finish blade.



ELECTRIC JIG SAW

For cutting around rail posts and other obstructions. Use a jig saw with a fine-tooth blade.



NOTE! Do not use any cordless saws



Best Practices for Cutting AZEK Deck Boards

- Use proper saw and blade.
- As with any wood or alternative decking product always be sure to cut the factory ends of your board for a clean and square finish.
- Cut deck boards with the grain facing upward.
- Make sure face of the deck board is protected from the bottom of the saw during cutting with a circular saw or a jig saw.
- If using a hand-held circular saw be sure to use a saw guide for clean square cuts.
- A saw guide can reduce binding which could result in chipping of deck surface.
- Cut boards one at a time.
- Do not cut boards to length after fastening or chipping can occur.
- While using any saw, cut slowly or chipping can occur.
- As always, measure twice and cut once.



NOTE! Always wear the proper safety glasses (PPE)

Best Practices for Fastening AZEK Deck Boards

Due to the high quality and long lifespan of TimberTech AZEK deck products, we recommend a high-quality fastener for installation such as the following:

- Cortex hidden fasteners with collated plugs and included setting tool.
- TOPLoc for AZEK color-matched face fasteners that blend in with TimberTech decking.

When fastening TimberTech AZEK decking with Cortex, **NO PRE-DRILLING IS REQUIRED.**



CORDLESS DRILL



PLASTIC HAMMER



CORTEX HIDDEN FASTENERS WITH PLUGS & SETTINGS TOOL



NOTE! TimberTech does not recommend any fastener that is not explicitly stated in the TimberTech AZEK Decking Installation Guide. Use of any alternative fastener does not void the TimberTech warranty; however, if a decking failure is caused by using one of these alternative fastening methods, any corresponding claims will be denied.

Best Practices for Fastening AZEK Deck Boards

ALWAYS USE 2 SCREWS AT ENDS, INTO JOISTS

Be sure to fasten ends of boards, splices, or abutments to building or structure securely into framing using 2 screws.



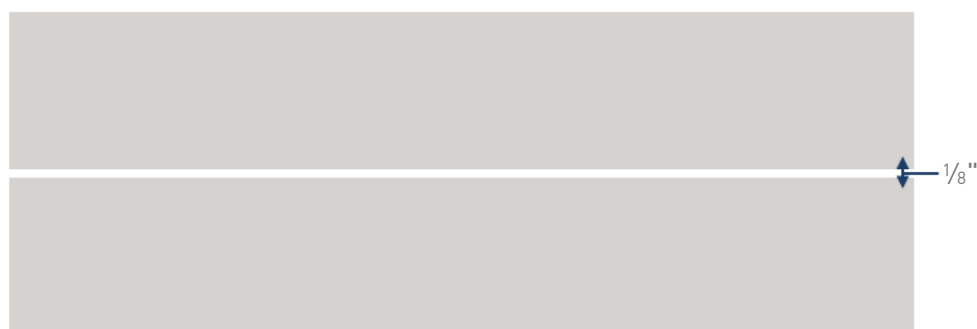
FASTENER POSITION

Fasten $\frac{3}{4}$ " from side edge and within $\frac{1}{2}$ " from end of the board (remember: no pre-drilling required).



SPACING BETWEEN BOARDS

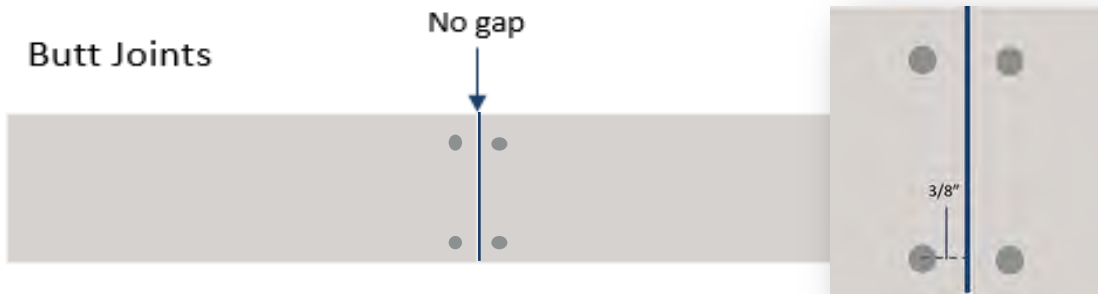
Spacing between boards should be $\frac{1}{8}$ "- $\frac{1}{4}$ ". The use of a spacer could add efficiency and help maintain proper spacing. Check your local codes for local spacing requirements.



Best Practices for Fastening AZEK Deck Boards

BUTT JOINTS

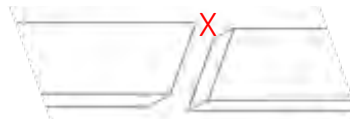
For butt joints, be sure to trim cut factory ends to ensure squareness. Be sure to keep butt joints tight. Do not leave a gap at butt joints, splices or miters.



Install 2 screws within 1/2" from ends on each board

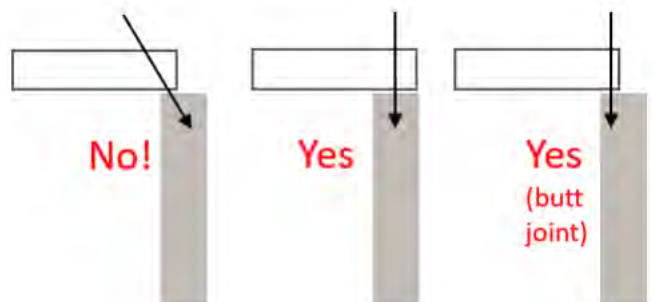


Do not scarf cut butt joints



PROPER FASTENING

Drive screws perpendicular to the deck board straight into the joist. Do not install screws at an angle.



STEP TWO

Determine Where to Start Laying Boards

The design and size of your deck will determine the number of boards required to install TimberTech AZEK decking with Cortex.



SCENARIO 1

Deck plan includes all full-width boards (no partial / cut / ripped down boards). You may want to start at the house and work outward for ease. See above calculation for help.



SCENARIO 2

Deck plan will require cutting / ripping down a board or boards. You may want to start away from the home and work inward so the off-sized board is closer to the house / hidden.



RIPPING OF BOARDS MAY BE REQUIRED

Cutting a board along its horizontal edge, or "ripping", may be required to achieve full coverage of the framing.

STEP THREE

Install AZEK Deck Boards

FOR THE FIRST BOARD

Start by fastening the first plank using 2 screws per joist and following the previous screw placement guidelines. Determine whether you need to start your decking at the house working out or from the outer end of deck working back toward the house.



Check squareness to house and deck frame. Measure from edge of deck board to outer edge of rim joist at each end and center of the deck board and verify the measurement is the same before fastening. Or, strike a chalk line on top of joists at desired position of the first board (measured back from outside rim joist on each end) and fasten first board along the line. It is a good idea to check these measurements periodically throughout the installation and make minor adjustments if needed.

STEP THREE

Install AZEK Deck Boards

BEST PRACTICES WHEN USING CORTEX HIDDEN FASTENING SYSTEM

- The **Cortex setting tool must be used** to set the Cortex screw to the proper depth.
- The **Cortex fastener must be driven perpendicular** to the deck surface for proper plug fit and an ideal finished look.
- The **cored hole must be free of debris or moisture**. Use a smooth plastic hammer head to set the Cortex plug.
- The interaction between the deck board, screw, and plug is essential.
- Do **not** use for fascia boards.



STEP THREE

Install AZEK Deck Boards

HOW TO INSTALL TimberTech AZEK CORTEX PLUGS

Color-Matched Collated Plugs With Pre-Aligned Grain Pattern

1) PLACE PLUG

Place the first plug by hand into the recessed screw hole and release it from the plastic connector. Ensure the grain is aligned so the plug blends into the deck board.



2) TAP PLUG

Gently tap the plug into place using a hard plastic, smooth-face hammer. Do not tap or hammer vigorously, as this can damage the surface of the deck board.



3) CONFIRM

The plug should be completely flush with the surface of the deck board. Confirm that the grain pattern on the plug is consistent with that of the deck board.



STEP THREE

Install AZEK Deck Boards

Be sure to install 2 Cortex screws per joist on each deck board. Remember, drive screws **straight down** do not angle screws toward joist.

Remember: Fasten within ½" from the end. Drive screw using Cortex setting tool until the setting tool releases. This will be the proper depth for the screw and plug. Do not overdrive.

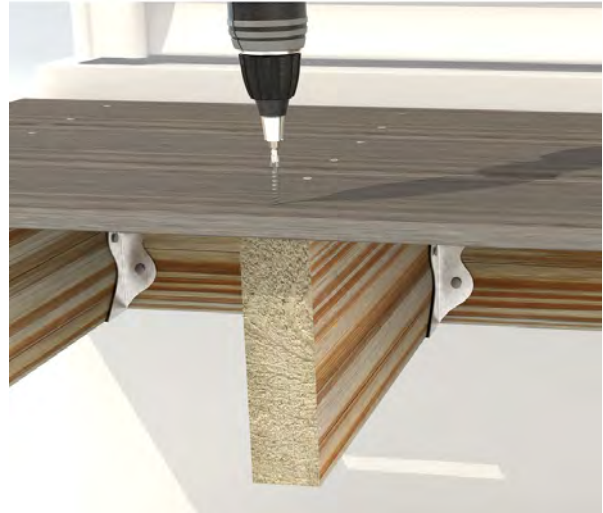
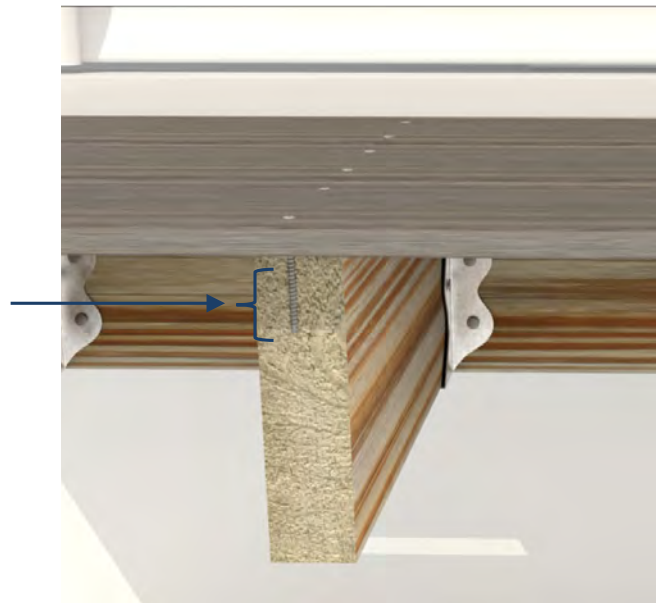


Illustration purposes only; boards must be affixed to joist every 16" max.

Be sure that screws are driven to a minimum depth of 1 ¼" into solid wood framing below the bottom of the AZEK Deck Board. This will enhance holding power and uplift resistance.

**1 ¼"
Min.
Into
Joist**

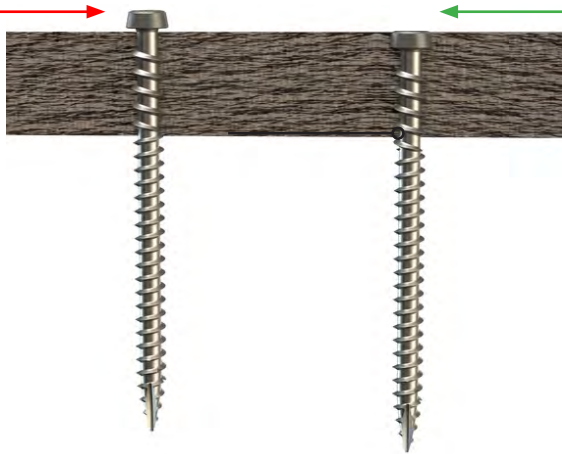


STEP THREE

Install AZEK Deck Boards

When using TOPLoc screws, make sure to drive the screws until they're flush to slightly below surface of the deck board. Use the proper bit and drive screw at slower speed until it is flush to slightly below the deck surface.

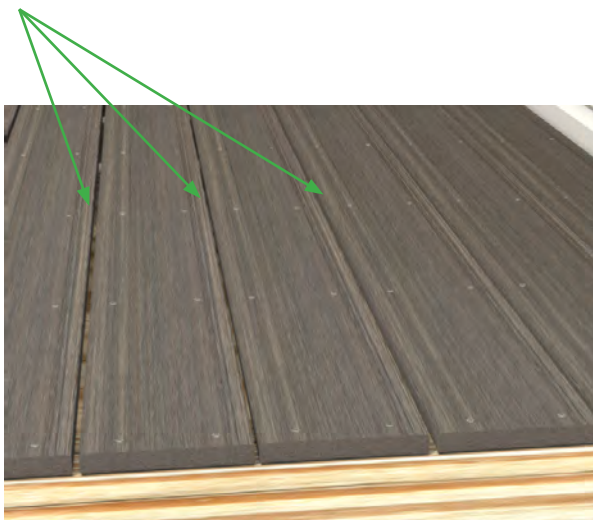
Incorrect
Screw head sits above deck board



Correct
Drive screw flush to slightly below deck board

ENSURE PROPER SPACING

Recommendation for 1/8" - 1/4" gapping/ space for proper drainage.



SPACERS

Using spacers help insure a uniform amount of space between each board. Spacers available on [TimberTech.com](https://www.timbertech.com)



STEP FOUR

Install TimberTech AZEK Fascia

Due to the durability of AZEK fascia products, a high-quality fastener is recommended that meets the following specifications:

- **For best results use AZEK TOPLoc for fascia color matched screws;** alternatively, stainless steel screws with a minimum screw size: #7 can be used
- Face screws to be a minimum length of 1 5/8"

For salt water coastal applications, we suggest using the above minimum fastener requirements in 316 stainless steel.

When fastening AZEK fascia with screws, **NO PRE-DRILLING IS REQUIRED.**



T-TAP DRIVER BIT



TOPLOC COLOR MATCHED SCREWS FOR AZEK FASCIA



CORDLESS DRILL



NOTE! Do not use nails to fasten TT AZEK deck boards.

Avoid using flathead screws. Trim head screws typically provide a better result. As always, you should try the fastener in a sample board before using on your deck. AZEK does not recommend any fastener that is not explicitly stated in the AZEK Decking and Installation Guide.

STEP FOUR

Install TimberTech AZEK Fascia



**RECOMMENDED
MAN-POWER:**
1 - 2 People*



TOOLS NEEDED:

- Power miter saw
- Circular saw or table saw
- Quality exterior grade construction adhesive
- TOPLoc Fascia screws
- Drill
- T-tap driver bit
- Level



* Minimum, based on an average 16x20 deck.
Time may vary based on the installer's skillset and quality of substructure

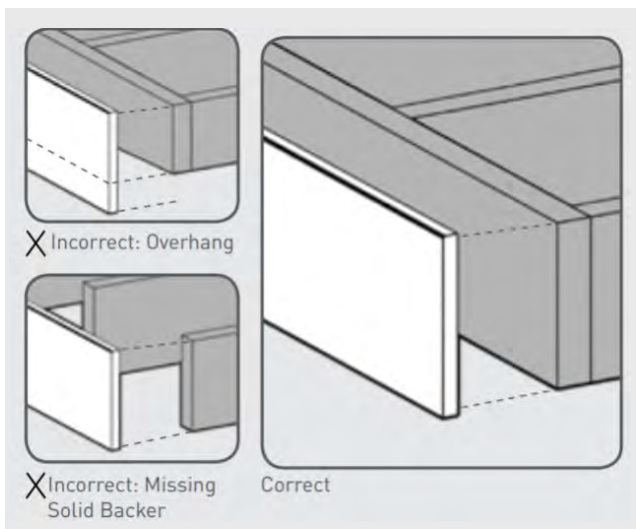
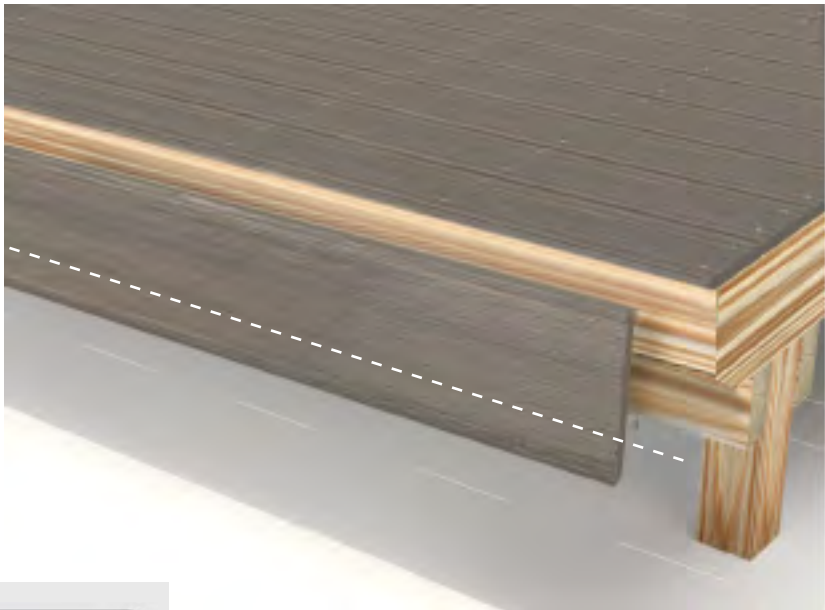
STEP FOUR

Install TimberTech AZEK Fascia

Measure the length of the outside rim joist to determine length of AZEK fascia board needed.

It may be necessary to rip cut the TimberTech AZEK fascia board to fit the outside rim board of the deck. A slight (up to 1/2") overhang is permitted with the goal being to hide the wood rim joist.

Rip cut
needed



If fascia or rim board does require ripping down – make sure that the cut edge is positioned down / not up, exposing the core material – place factory edge / cap stock edge up and flush with walking surface.

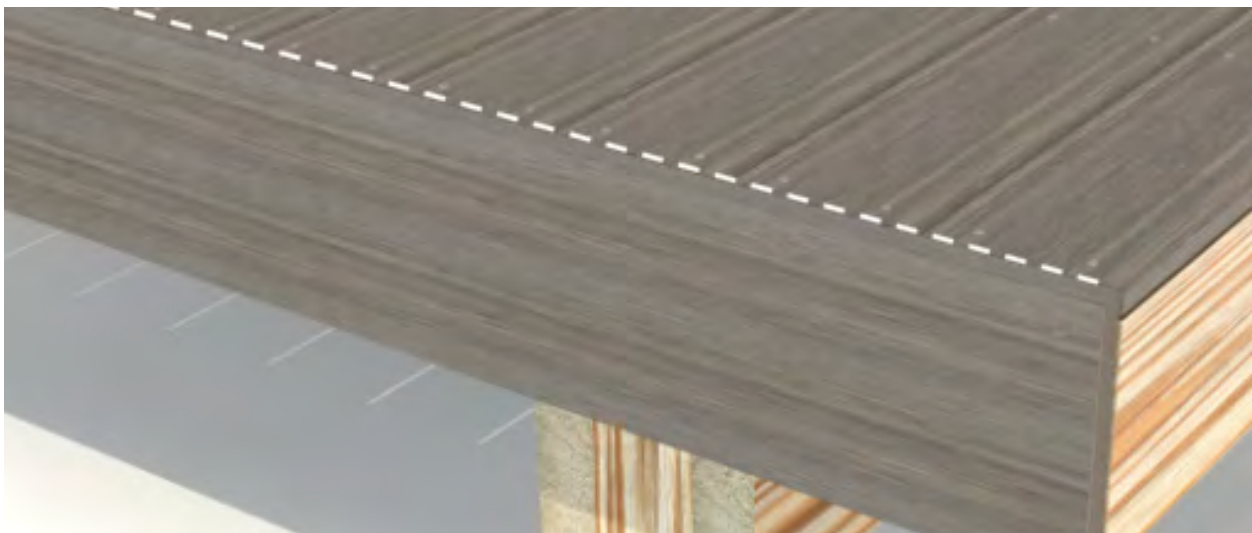
STEP FOUR

Install TimberTech AZEK Fascia

- 1) Apply a good quality exterior grade construction adhesive to the back (smooth) surface of the board. Do not get adhesive on the grained surface of the rim joist or decking.



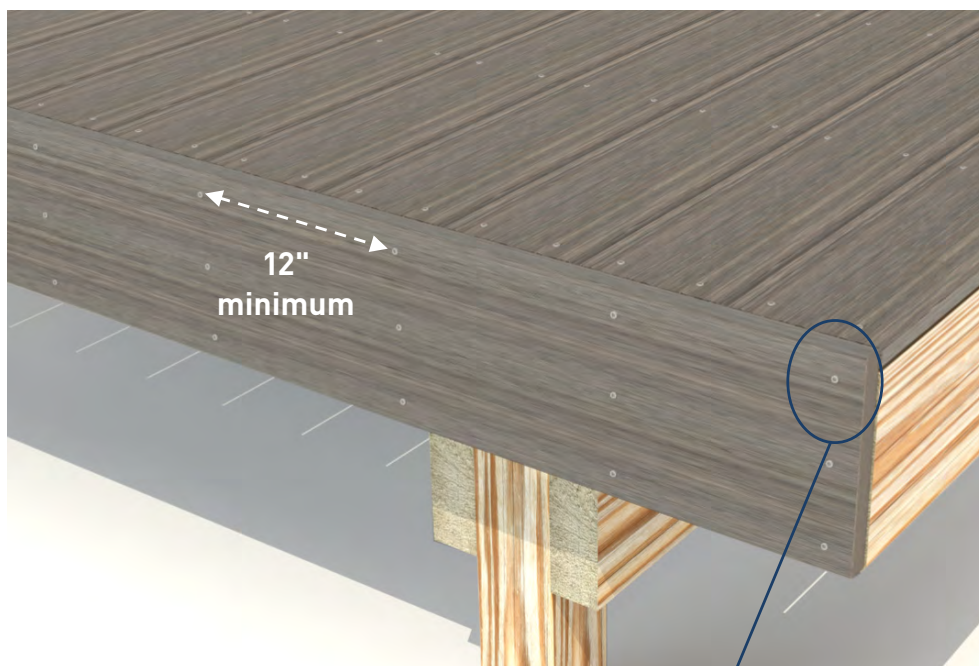
- 2) Position the board so it is flush with the top of the deck boards



STEP FOUR

Install TimberTech AZEK Fascia

- 3) Install top and bottom screws at $\frac{1}{2}$ " from top and bottom edge of the solid wood rim joist. Drive screws into the board every 12".



Fasten within $\frac{1}{2}$ " from the edge



Install three (3) screws from top to bottom with top and bottom screws positioned no more than $\frac{1}{2}$ " from the edge as shown below. The third screw should be approximately centered in the board. Repeat this configuration every 12". Top screw must be driven into rim joist, and not the end of the planks on the deck surface.