

PRODUCTS

FOR RESIDENTIAL CONSTRUCTION PROFESSIONALS

FEATURE ARTICLE / AUG 22, 2019

9 CLEVER SYSTEMS FOR INSTALLING DECKS WITH A HIDDEN-FASTENER LOOK

By Nigel F. Maynard

A well-designed deck is still one of the most popular outdoor amenities among homeowners, and one of the hottest ways to install one is with a seamless, hidden-fastener look.

Traditionally, installers attached deck boards with face-nail screws: This was (and in some case, still is) the standard method of construction. The method is perfectly fine for a quality, but unless the installer is careful, the aesthetics can be uneven. The fasteners need to be spaced just right, and they must be driven at a consistent depth every time.

For a growing crop of demanding clients and homebuyers, an inconsistent look will not do.

“This is because, beyond the basic utilitarian concerns, most of my clients want their decks to make an architectural statement,” deck builder Tom O writes on the [Fortress Deck blog](#). “If you are interested in a smooth and seamless deck, one of the best ways of achieving it is with hidden fasteners,” he adds.

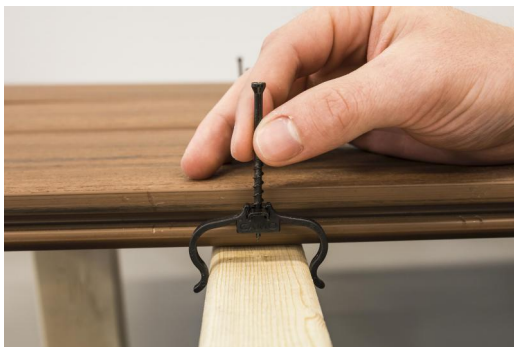
Hidden deck fasteners come in various forms, but the goal is still the same: to make sure the screws or nails are invisible (or at least difficult to see) with the naked eye. In some cases, installers may face-nail with an 8-penny finish nail and use a nail set to sink the fastener. This method gets the job done.

A better option using a face attachment involves pre-drilling, sinking the screw, and filling the hole with a bung. This is often used for wood decking, but many composite decking manufacturers also offer pretty effective systems.

“Hidden fasteners are typically metal clips that attach to the base of the decking board or are inserted into the groove of a specially-designed grooved board and are then screwed into the decking joist,” Tom O says. “When grooved boards are used, this kind of construction creates an interlocking deck below the surface, while the surface itself remains smooth and seamless.”

No matter if you're using pressure treated wood, tropical hardwoods, or composite lumber, many manufacturers and decking companies offer hidden-fastener systems that do an excellent job of creating a modern, seamless deck that is free of visible nails.

Here are nine that we like to give you the picture-perfect decks your clients and buyers want.



9. [Camo Fasteners](#)

The Camo EdgeClip is engineered to reduce the time of installing any type of grooved decking, including wood, capstock or PVC. Designed for traditional 90-degree decking patterns, the clip attaches around the joist and slides into the groove. No pre-drilling of the screw is required. The next board is slid into place and the installer is ready to attach the clip and board.