

How to Fit Posts, Rails and Spindles to a Deck

There are various ways in which you can lay out your deck boards – but make sure you decide this before you start putting together the support joists, as some patterns will affect the spacing and number of joists. For example, if you want a chevron-style layout, you'll need a double joist.

You can really smarten the look and enhance the safety of your deck by adding railings. You should fit the railing sections between posts that you fix into position on the framework. You'll need corner posts at 1200mm intervals on straight sections, fixed directly to the joists of a flat deck.

Step 1: Fix the corner posts first, using coach bolts to fasten them to the inside of each corner.

Step 2: Mark the position of the posts on the side joists, then bolt the side posts to the inside of the joists.

Step 3: Measure the length of the spindles to fit between the top and bottom handrails and cut to size to allow the top handrails to be 900mm above the finished deck surface, and bottom rails 75mm above the deck. Fix the spindles at 100mm centres to the top and bottom rails using 50mm screws, fixed from the underside of each rail. To fix the section of railing to a post, first unbolt and remove the posts.

Step 4: Drill two 12mm diameter holes, 38mm deep in the ends of the top and bottom rails. Drill corresponding holes on the posts, allowing for the bottom rail to be 75mm above the surface of the deck after the deck boards have been fixed.

Step 5: Join the railing assembly to the posts with glued dowels. For best results, use a concealed dowel fixing. Manoeuvre the finished post and rail section into its position and secure to the joists with bolts. As an alternative, you can create railings without the use of a bottom rail. Posts and top rails are assembled and fixed as before. The spindles are then fixed with screws to the rail and the deck after the deck boards have been fitted. Make sure that the height of the top rail from the finished deck is exactly that of the spindles you have bought, if you don't want to cut them. You can also make railings using deck boards and infills.

Step 6: Finish the posts by adding a screw-on ball top.

Step 7: When all the post-and-rail assemblies have been fitted, complete your deck by fixing the deck boards. Off-cuts of joists should be used to provide additional support for posts and subsequent decking boards around the posts.

