

Deck Safety & Maintenance Inspection Checklist

A once-a-year look over an existing deck: what to check, what it looks like when something is wrong, and when to stop using the deck and call a pro.

Address	_____	Date	_____
Deck age (years)	_____	Material	_____
Height above grade	_____	Inspected by	_____

This is a visual homeowner check, not a structural evaluation. It cannot tell you what load a deck can carry. If anything below worries you, keep people off the deck and have a licensed contractor or inspector look at it.

Under the deck: ledger, posts and framing

- | | |
|--|---|
| ☐ Ledger tight to the house, flashing in place | ☐ Footings not heaved, sunk or undermined |
| ☐ No rot: a screwdriver does not sink into wood | ☐ Joists not sagging, split or soft |
| ☐ Ledger fasteners present, not rusted through | ☐ Joist hangers fully nailed, not pulling away |
| ☐ Posts plumb, not cracked or split at the base | ☐ No standing water or wood touching soil |
| ☐ Post bases and connectors not heavily rusted | ☐ Beam sits fully on its posts |

On top: boards, stairs and railings

- | | |
|--|--|
| ☐ Boards not split, cupped or soft | ☐ Balusters all present and tight |
| ☐ No popped nails or screws (trip hazard) | ☐ Gaps between balusters not widened |
| ☐ Stairs firm; treads not cracked | ☐ Finish worn through? (plan to re-stain) |
| ☐ Stair handrail graspable and secure | ☐ Gate latches and hinges work |
| ☐ Railing posts do not move when pushed | ☐ Lights and outlets working, covers on |

Findings log

Where	What I saw	Photo #	Fix / who	Done

Call a pro now for: a loose or rotted ledger, a wobbling post or railing, cracked or crushed framing, footings that have moved, or any deck that bounces or sways more than it used to.