



IPE Installation and Finishing Instructions

Safety First!!

- Follow all local building codes.
- Use proper safety equipment, including but not limited to safety glasses and dust masks.
- Wear safety glasses when working with hardwoods.
- Hardwoods are heavy! Use proper lifting techniques.

Get the Right Tools

- Use carbide tipped saw blades when sawing, and cut slowly. IPE is very dense and patience when cutting will reduce splintering and increase the life of your blade. It is also recommended that cuts are made with the best face up to minimize splintering.
- Dense hardwoods require pre-drilling. Use only high-quality drill bits, like a cobalt alloy bit.
- Use a bending tool (BoWrench, Stanley Board Bender Deck Tool, or equivalent) to straighten crooked boards during installation.
- Be prepared with an end-sealer. IPE cuts must be end sealed immediately after cutting.



Preparation Pays Off

- Store decking out of direct sunlight, 2" to 4" off the ground, and covered.
- Use dunnage lumber to separate layers of wood, providing ventilation that will aid in acclimation to the environment. Depending on the temperature and humidity, wood may expand or contract, so it is important to properly acclimatize the wood for 7-14 days prior to installing. Failure to do so may result in cracking, warping, or buckling wood.

Installation Tips

- IPE requires ventilation and should never be applied directly to concrete or other solid surfaces. Allow for airflow under and between deck boards for optimum performance. Follow recommended gapping and spacing requirements and build decks 18" off the ground with open ventilation on three sides.
- Gapping provides ventilation and drainage. Gap 6" wide boards a minimum of 3/16" from the edge of one board to the edge of the next and at butt joints. If you have poor ventilation, consider a wider gap.



- Standard joist spans for IPE installation are:
 - 1×6 16" on center
 - 5/4×6 24" on center

Fastening Recommendations

- If face screwing, select a stainless-steel trim head screw for the best screw holding power, resistance to corrosion, and aesthetic appeal. Drive the screw into the pilot hole slowly, and countersink. and maximum holding power, driven with a slow speed drill into a pilot hole and countersink to prevent splitting. Use two fasteners at each joist. Drive screws at least ¾" from ends and edges.
- In addition to screwing, use a bead of high-quality exterior adhesive where the deck boards meet the joists.
- Hidden fasteners (IPE Clip Extreme 4) and plug systems (Starborn Pro Plug) are also available from IWP, for an even more beautiful, fastener-free deck surface. Follow manufacturer instructions for all fastening systems.

Sanding & Sealing

- Spot sand where necessary. Avoid orbital sanders to minimize damage to grain.
- End seal all cut ends with a wax-based sealer immediately after cutting.

The Big Finish

- Before applying any finish, brush and clean the surface to remove dirt and debris.
- The GREAT thing about IPE is a finish is not required. Left on its own it will weather naturally to a silvery-gray color. If you are looking for a lower maintenance deck, this might be your option.
- To maintain IPE's beautiful, natural color, consider a transparent penetrating oil-based finish with UV inhibitors.
- The density of IPE makes it most effective to apply multiple thin coats of finish that is specifically formulated for hardwoods. Over application can create a sticky surface that is very slow to dry. IWP offers SunFrog Hardwood Deck Sealer. We recommend that you spot test any product you are considering
- Re-finish annually or as needed. Clean the deck thoroughly before re-finishing.
- Follow all manufacturers' instructions for applying sealers and finishes.