



Abaco™ Tropical Hardwood Decking Handling and Installation Tips

Premium Abaco tropical hardwood decking features a rich, contemporary European design with a traditional smooth finish on one side and an elegant moulded surface on the other.

Key features and benefits:

- Tropical hardwood properties comparable to Ipe
- Kiln-dried in random lengths
- Grooved for hidden fasteners or traditional S4S
- Matching railing system
- Termite-resistant/rot-resistant

Handling and storage

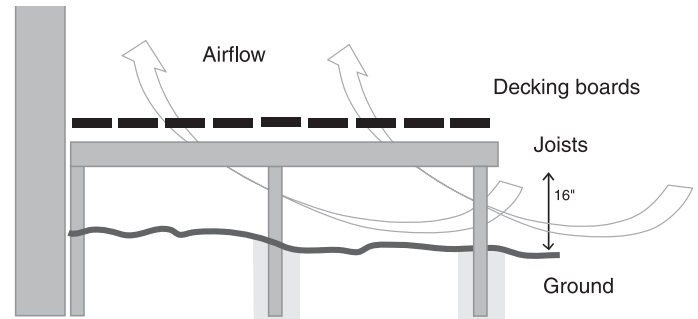
Abaco should be stored out of direct sunlight. Prior to installation, it should be **allowed to acclimate and stabilize** to the installation environment's humidity level. Once Abaco decking is delivered to a job site, keep the material off the ground by placing a few pieces of scrap lumber under the deck package. Cover the material with a tarp to protect it from the elements (sun and rain). If left uncovered, unfinished and unprotected, Abaco decking may warp and split.

Planning your deck

- **Ventilation:** During construction, it is imperative to build the Abaco deck surface at least 16" above the ground or building surface. Adequate air circulation under the deck surface is needed in order to prevent cupping and warping of deck boards. In wet areas over the water, additional clearance is recommended.
- **Side gapping:** To allow for proper ventilation and drainage, Abaco decking should be installed with a minimum 1/8" gap in hot and dry conditions and a maximum 1/4" gap in humid conditions. During the first year after installation, Abaco 5/4"x6" decking will typically expand and contract 1/16" to 1/8" as it acclimates and stabilizes to its environment. As with all exterior wood products, values may vary on the same deck based on sun exposure, ventilation and humidity levels.
- **End-to-end spacing:** Because Abaco decking will not significantly expand or contract lengthwise, the ends of the deck boards do not require any gapping and should be installed butted together.

Working with Abaco

- **Tools:** Because Abaco is very hard and dense, high-quality carbide-tipped saw/router blades and sharp drill bits should be used.
- **Sealing:** Seal all ends after cutting with an end sealer like Anchorseal® or a paraffin wax, in order to help prevent checking and splitting.
- **Pre-drilling/countersinking:** Because Abaco decking is very hard, pre-drilling and countersinking all exposed fasteners is recommended.



- **Screws:** Stainless steel screws or hidden fasteners designed for tropical hardwood are recommended. Galvanized screws or fasteners are not recommended as they can discolor the wood. Because Abaco's dense properties can make it difficult to install screws, a screw wax applied directly to the screws can ease installation.

Fastening methods:

- **Plugs:** There are many screw and plug systems available. One option is the Smart-Bit® Pro Plug™ System by Starborn® Industries, with plugs made from Abaco.
- **Clips:** A hidden fastener designed for tropical hardwood is recommended. Use hidden fasteners that gap each board with the proper spacing and allow for natural expansion and contraction. See AbacoDecking.com for tips on decking installation using a hidden fastener.
- **Screws:** When the preferred method of installation is face screwing, discreet trim head screws are recommended. Pre-drill and countersink each hole. Use two stainless steel screws to secure each board to each joist. Secure with color-coated screw heads for a more desirable look. One option for a screw fastener similar in color to Abaco decking is the 8x2-1/2" #34 brown Headcote® screw by Starborn Industries.

Finishing/maintaining: Because of the durability of this hardwood, it does not require a water sealant; however, we recommend adding a high-quality penetrating oil sealant as the final installation step. Left unfinished, Abaco's color will fade to a silver/gray tone.

Cleaning: Periodic washing with mild deck cleaning detergent and water is necessary to remove surface dirt, which accumulates on the surface and in the top grooved areas of the board. Use a soft bristle brush to clean dirt and debris from the top grooves of the board. This will also prevent the buildup of pollen and debris that can cause mold and mildew growth. Pressure washers should be used with a fan-tipped nozzle to avoid cutting into or lifting the wood surface.



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