

Improve Your Deck's Look With A One Day Makeover

If you'd like to spend more time relaxing on your deck and less time working on it, you're in luck.

A long-lasting, good-looking,

one-day deck makeover is a real possibility. And yes, even average homeowners can do it themselves.

Just ask Scott and Jo Kirksey of

Texas. They entertain frequently on their 600-square foot cedar deck, but admit that it hadn't been cleaned in years.

"We've got three kids and two jobs, and we just let it slide," says Jo Kirksey. But with just one good day's work, years of wear and tear were rolled back and the Kirksey's deck came out looking better than new.

Getting Started

A one-day deck makeover will go more smoothly if you carefully consider your needs and gather all the necessary tools ahead of time.

The tools you'll need include:

- Tarp or drop cloth to cover plants
- Gloves, eye protection
- Stirrer if you're using a tinted waterproofer product
- Deck cleaner or power washer
- Stiff-bristled broom to use with some deck cleaners
- Thompson's Water Seal Advanced Wood Protector. This product is the secret to a one-day deck makeover since it can be applied just two hours after cleaning the wood.

That's a significant timesaver considering the normal 48-hour waiting period required for most deck coatings to dry before the waterproofer can be applied.

To know how much product to buy, measure the length and width of your deck and multiply those two numbers to get the square footage.

Add extra product if you have railings, steps, benches or other deck "add-ons" that also need treating.

- Paint pad to help smoothly apply waterproofer (eliminates bending and stooping)

- Brush, if you have railings and spindles or other tight spots

- Rags, soap and water for clean-up

Getting Down To (Deck) Business

Cleaning the deck makes it look better and removes dirt, mildew and old coatings that may keep the new waterproofer from penetrating thoroughly.

The Kirksey's deck had been treated with a semi-transparent stain which had partially worn away, so it was cleaned with Thompson's Water Seal Heavy Duty Deck Cleaner.

The cleaner was sprayed on and allowed to sit for 10 to 15 minutes.

The surface was scrubbed lightly with a synthetic, stiff-bristled brush and thoroughly rinsed.

Cleaning the deck took about two hours.

Next came a break. The surface needs to dry for at least two hours after washing before the waterproofer is applied.

Just one coat of Thompson's Water Seal Advanced waterproofer is needed, so the entire deck, including some railings, was fully treated in only three hours.

That made the total working time for this makeover five hours, with two hours spent on cleaning the deck and three hours on applying the waterproofer.

Allow the deck to dry for 12 hours before you replace the furniture.

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