



vinyl

You might have heard of PVC pipes or even vinyl fabric. But a PVC deck? Absolutely!

Vinyl decking, also called PVC decking, is another form of decking made with a different type of plastic. It has the advantage of being nearly maintenance free and impervious to rot, moisture, and pests. Although some vinyl is made of virgin plastic, not recycled, some varieties, like Quadra Vinyl, are made of 100 percent recycled vinyl. The planks can also usually be recycled after use. Look for manufacturer labels that identify if the planks are recycled or recyclable.

Vinyl planks, like other plastic decking, are strong and easy to clean. Vinyl planks have internal reinforcement that make them rugged and make other reinforcements, like steel or aluminum, unnecessary. As with plastic, there's no need to spend time doing annual sealing or maintenance of the planks. Simply hose them off if they get dirty and clean with a deck cleaner if the deck gets more stubborn stains. Like plastic, vinyl decks come in several colors, including white, gray, and wooden-like tan. They also usually come embossed with a wood grain texture that reduces the risk of slipping. And most vinyl decking comes with an extensive lifetime warranty. Popular brands of vinyl decking include Dream Deck and EverNew.

What you won't get with vinyl is the true look of wood. And because it's slightly less strong than wood, joists must be placed closer together than they would with wooden planks (in general, place joists 16 to 24 inches apart). Like other decking materials, vinyl decking is usually built on wood supports and is subject to the health and longevity of the wood.

Because the planks are made completely of plastic, they're also slightly more sensitive to the heat of the sun than other decking choices, though vinyl is also often treated to keep it cool. ■