

ELEVEN KEYS TO STAINING YOUR DECK JUST AS GOOD AS A PRO!

# Eleven Keys To Staining Your Deck Just As Good As A Pro!

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Unlock The Secrets The Pros Use To Create A Beautiful, Long-Lasting Finish By Doing It Right The First Time

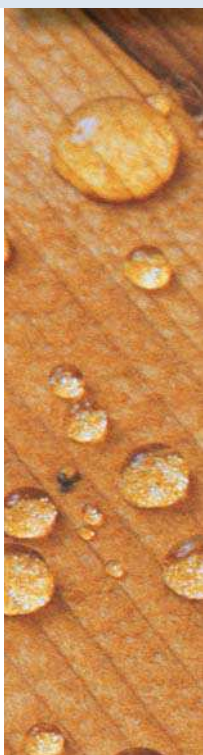
*Having spent my entire adult life working with paints and stains, it didn't take long for me to figure out that homeowners who stain their own decks, for the most part, end up at the conclusion of their project, dissatisfied. Dissatisfied, after staining their deck, that their deck didn't turn out looking as good as they thought (or hoped) that it would. Dissatisfied that after all of their hard work, all their pain-staking labor, the stain doesn't hold up and, almost over night, their beautiful project again begins to weather from nature's elements. Dissatisfied that, no matter what they have tried, the result is always the same...a lousy looking deck that seems to always look like it needs a little attention.*

*The solution however, is not all that difficult...if you want your deck to look like a pro did it...to hold up to weather like a pro did it...then you have to stain it just like a pro would...and that means paying attention to 11 (no, not 10), but 11 simple keys to success. 11 keys that, when followed, literally guarantee you of a great looking, long-lasting result but, when overlooked, can result in a disastrous conclusion.*

## 🔑 **One: Take Your Time...**

I can't stress this point enough...with every step of the staining process...from the beginning to the end...take your time. When the project is completed and your tools are all cleaned up and put away, nothing will have had a greater impact on the quality of the job that you have done than this single point. It can mean allowing that new pressure treated lumber that you just built your new deck with to weather for a few months to dry out before staining...

...it can mean allowing the stain stripper that you are using to be left on the surface long enough to break down that old finish before you rinse it off. It can mean taking your time to not slop stain over anything and everything that gets in your way or it can mean waiting to start your project until the weather forecast is favorable but, in all cases, during all the steps of the staining process, take your time to do it right!



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### **Two: Preparation, Preparation, Preparation...**

This part you have probably heard before but I really can't over emphasize its importance...preparation is key to the final result. All wood needs to be cleaned well before

and will remove most weathered stains in a single application.

Lastly, if there are small spots of stain that wouldn't come off during the cleaning process, once the deck has dried, they should sand off fairly easily using a palm-type sander. Left on the deck, those spots of stain will show through the new finish and detract from the deck's final appearance.



Some stain manufacturers offer a free instructional DVD to help walk you through this entire process...they're a terrific tool to use to be sure that you do it right the first time. Check out a sample of one at [www.defyinfo.com](http://www.defyinfo.com).

staining, whether it's a brand new deck, that you just had built, or an older deck that's been out in the weather and needs to be restained.

Brand new lumber needs to be cleaned to remove "mill scale", which is simply a crushing of the grain in the wood that takes place during the milling process and, left un-cleaned, can prevent stains from properly penetrating into the wood's surface.

On an older deck, dirt, graying from the sun, mildew and old stains all need to be removed prior to staining. Sodium Percarbonate cleaners, also known as oxygenated bleaches, are a great choice for this step. They are highly effective at cleaning the wood yet they won't harm plant life and vegetation. Best of all, they won't hurt you either...their soapy consistency won't burn your skin.

If there is a build up of old stains on the deck then the job gets a little tougher but not impossible...instead of a sodium percarbonate cleaner you'll need to use a stain stripper. Strippers are a little more caustic so follow the directions carefully, but they work great



### **Three: Brighteners Are Beautiful...**

In the staining process, no step is skipped more than this one yet it is, by far, the easiest step to do and it will have a dramatic effect on the final results.

Brighteners are easy to apply, they help open up the surface of the wood to improve penetration, they neutralize any stain strippers



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that were used, and they restore the appearance of old weathered wood to the way it looked when it was brand new. Now that's a lot of things for one product to accomplish but brighteners will do all of that so don't skip using them.

And remember I said that they are easy to use...simply spray them on, wait a few minutes, and rinse them off...no scrubbing, no "elbow grease" needed...no reason to not use them!

### 🔑 **Four: Rinse Like Mad...**

Use lots and lots of water after using any cleaning chemicals. In spite of the fact that some of these chemicals can seem safe and harmless, they all need to be rinsed off extremely well after they are used.

Left in the wood, these chemicals can re-surface over time and begin attacking, and breaking down the new stain so, once you are done cleaning, rinse the deck like mad to get all of the chemicals out of the wood.

### 🔑 **Five: Stay Away From The Cheap Stuff...**

Alright...the deck is cleaned, dry, and ready to be stained...now is not the time to scimp... when you go to buy the stain that you plan to use, stay away from the cheap stuff! You always get what you pay for...better ingredients cost more money. If you expect premium results then you'll need to buy a premium product. There is a difference in quality when it comes to resins, pigments, mildewcides and many of the other materials that make up a gallon of wood stain so...stay away from the cheap stuff if you expect it to last.

### 🔑 **Six: Take A Look At Waterborne Stains...**

Water based stains have gotten to be really good products, so, if you have been reluctant to look at them in the past, don't be reluctant any longer. Air quality regulations have forced manufacturers to really focus on these products and I believe that they are now better, more durable and longer lasting than conventional oil-based alternatives. Besides, they offer some real advantages to the user...they clean up with soap and water, there are no nasty solvents to breathe, they have significantly better resistance to weather, the wood

doesn't need to be completely dry to use them, they dry more quickly than solvents, rain is not as big of an issue with them and they are much easier on good old' mother earth.



In addition, some of the waterborne stains are synthetic as well, such as the Defy brand... [www.defyinfo.com](http://www.defyinfo.com). This is a nice feature in that synthetic products will be far less susceptible to the growth of mold, mildew and algae so, if you're in area with a fair amount of moisture and humidity, there could be some real advantages in you considering a waterborne synthetic stain.

After all, you wouldn't use oil based products on your house...why would you use them on your deck...

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## Seven: Read The Can, Follow The Directions...

Every manufacturer's product can be a little different so always read the label for directions. It only takes a few minutes but it will insure that you have all of the right information before you get started. How many coats of stain to apply...how long to wait between coats...how long to wait after cleaning...how long to allow wood to weather. There are any number of variations of answers to these questions and more...read the label first and you'll be likely to get it right the first time.



## Eight: More IS NOT Better...

Decks are best stained with a semi-transparent product...these types of products allow the natural grain of the wood to show through, allow the wood to naturally breathe vapor through it, and, when weathered, they are easily cleaned off and reapplied. But don't be fooled...with semi-transparent stains, more is not better. Pay attention to the manufacturers directions and don't over apply these products...you'll end up with a beautiful, shiny finish that will probably peel off over time. When too much stain is applied a film can form, much like paint, that will longer allow vapor to pass through it. When this happens the end result will be peeling and that's a real mess so...only apply as much stain as the wood can easily absorb.

methods...but in the end, keep a paint brush at hand as...the paint brush is still king! Nothing will work the stain deep into the pores of a board like the agitation and friction caused by a paint brush. So, if you are spraying or rolling the material on, always back-brush it in while the stain is still wet and you'll achieve much better penetration in to the wood.

## Ten: Remember, Take Your Time...

I told you at the start of this article to take your time...keep taking your time all the way through till the end. And when your project is finally done...take a little extra time before you start using it. Let your deck dry out good before putting it back in use...let the stain cure out a bit before subjecting it to the rigors of patio furniture and foot traffic. You've done everything right to this point...don't give up at the end.

## Nine: The Paint Brush Is Still King...

There are a lot of different ways to put the stain down with...sprayer and roller being two popular



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### **Eleven: How About A Little Maintenance...**

Oh yes...and one final thing...don't forget a little maintenance...a little TLC...a small amount of effort can keep your deck looking great longer. Just as you would wash the dirt off of your car, wash down the surface of your deck every now and then to keep leaves and dirt from doing damage to the finish. If things start to break down and the stain starts to show signs of graying or losing its color, it can easily be cleaned up with a little wood brightener and, with the application of a light maintenance coat of stain, your deck can look new again.

*So that's it...that's all there is to it. Eleven keys to deck staining success. Go ahead and try them...try the eleven keys for yourself...see what the results are when you set out on your next project to do it like a pro. You may just surprise yourself!*



### ~ Helpful Tips ~

*You can really speed the process up by using a scrub brush on the horizontal boards. These brushes can be found in the cleaning section of most home improvement stores. Get the type that can be attached to a 4 foot extension pole and now staining the surface of the deck will go nearly as fast as moping your floor!*

*When staining the deck rails, take care to not splatter stain on the deck surface below as it will most likely leave unsightly darker spots when you are done. The easiest way to avoid this problem is to cover the deck below the rails as you work. I use the cardboard from the box the stain came in and cut out notches in the cardboard so it will fit snugly around the rail posts.*



## Deck Stain for Hardwoods

### Features:

- Specially formulated for use on decks
- Long-lasting synthetic resins
- Environmentally friendly **“Certified Green”**
- Excellent for treating composite lumber
- Water-based, soap and water clean-up

**Great for:** Superior performance on smooth Cedar, Mahogany, Redwood, new ACQ lumber, and other difficult to penetrate woods



## Epoxy Fortified Wood Stain

### Features:

- Specially formulated for use on pressure treated wood
- Long-lasting durability of Epoxy
- Environmentally friendly **“Certified Green”**
- Superior protection against water penetration
- Water-based, soap and water clean-up

**Great for:** Use on vertical wood surfaces



## Epoxy Fortified UV-Resistant Clear Wood Finish

### Features:

- Provides a totally clear finish with no amber cast
- Long-lasting durability of Epoxy
- Protects wood from water and uv rays
- Penetrating finish that resists peeling

**Great for:** All exterior wood



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## Wood Stripper

**D**EFY Exterior Wood Stain Stripper is a ready to use liquid designed to remove old weathered finishes from all types of exterior wood surfaces.

**Removes:** Film-forming varnishes, polyurethanes, solid color & semi-transparent stains, most oil-based and latex-based finishes.



## Wood Brightener

**D**EFY Exterior Wood Brightener is a liquid concentrate used as a neutralizer and brightener for all wood species that have been cleaned with DEFY Wood Cleaner or Stripper. One gallon of concentrate makes five gallons of finished product.

**Removes:** Dirt, grime, tannin, rust, and fungi stains



## Wood Cleaner

**D**EFY Exterior Wood Cleaner is an environmentally friendly powdered concentrate used to safely clean wood and improve the wood's ability to absorb stain by opening up its pores. One 2.25 lb. container makes five gallons of finished product.

**Removes:** Graying, mill glaze, dirt, and the remains of most failed wood sealers without harming outdoor vegetation or shrubbery.



## Interior Acrylic Wood Finish

**D**EFY Interior Acrylic Clear Wood Finish is a water-based durable, non yellowing, protective log and wood finish formulated for interior use. It protects interior wood from common household chemicals, grease, water, scuffing, and abrasion. It is available in gloss and satin finish.

**Great for:** Log home interior walls, furniture, trim, paneling, doors, cabinets and any other interior vertical wood surfaces.

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