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## Batteryman deck guide

Sign up for our newsletter Do it right, do it yourself! Photo: Deck vs. PatioThe beauty of a deck is that-unlike bare ground or lawn-it is level, stable, supports furniture, rain sheds, and provides usable living space. Building a tire, however, requires more skill and understanding of building principles than, say, building a patio. The simplest deck, called an on-grade deck, usually requires the installation of concrete bridges as beams and joists are attached. The perimeter joists, called rim joists, double and then covered with trim boards. Depending on the climate, the bridges may need to be placed on a foot that is several meters below the grade. Check with your building department to find out what the code is in your area. The right foothold prevents the tire from lifting should the ground freeze. Framing hardware, such as nail bases and joist hangers, is used to join all framing members. Decking (whatever you go on) is attached to the joists with screws or nails from the top, or with invisible fasteners from below. Such a deck will probably be less than a foot from the ground and therefore will not require railings or stairs, both of which complicate construction significantly. A door to the house will also complicate things. If it's one step above the decking, you're in luck. If you have to build a two or three step to reach the door, you will also probably want to include a landing to make the in and out of the house safer and easier. If the deck is adjacent to the house, it will require a main letter. Usually the siding is removed and the ledger board is bolted to the house framing. Flashing should then be installed so that rain and snowmelt do not enter the joint between the ledger and the house. If the deck is a freestanding island deck, there is no ledger on board. The higher a tire is from the ground, the more complex it is to design and build. Suddenly you need to decide from which approach, or approach, you want to access the tire. Skirting or landscaping must be used to hide the framing that supports the joists. Also, stair railings and balustrades must be built, adding cost and complexity. Building a tire can greatly enhance the enjoyment of your farm, but spend time planning each step before pulling out your circular saw and nail gun. The beauty of getting a tire under your belt, however, is that you learn skills that help when building many other projects, including garden sheds, porches, arousal and gazebos. Illustration courtesy of Lowes. This website is not available in your country The Spruce uses cookies to give you a good user experience. By using Spruce you accept our use of cookies. An attractive, functional outdoor living space can be one of the finest features of a home, improving its appearance, enhancing livability, and bringing pleasure to those who use the space. As more and more people retreat to their homes to seek relief from the fast pace of time, well-designed tires become becoming places to relax after work, entertain friends, and regroup with family. This article is about designing a tire, whether you're accessorizing an existing space or building one from scratch. Lots of photos accompany dozens of tire ideas, from timeless and classic designs to more daring, modern settings. Whether a new or improved outdoor area requires a deck depends on several factors: the site itself, the style and size of the house, individual lifestyle and personal preferences, and budget. And while the site may be the deciding factor in choosing the style of the deck and the budget can determine the number of amenities that can be included, other less tangible aspects should be addressed as well. To dept to make your lifestyle is a good place to start. Who will use the area and how many features are expected to fulfill? Will the space serve primarily as a transition zone between house and yard, or will it serve as an indoor-outdoor room? Will the setting be relaxed or formal, a quiet retreat, or the hub of activity? A family consisting of toddlers, teenagers, pets and parents probably requires a different design than a couple who like to relax on their own or entertain on a small scale. Personal taste is also an important issue to consider when planning an outdoor area – whether it's a preference for a particular stain on the floorboards or a certain type of railing to surround the deck. A successful tyre, however, is much more than an answer in a particular place or need. A well designed deck integrates various elements into a functional and aesthetically pleasing whole that harmonizes with the house it serves and the yard it borders. For example, materials do not have to match the house façade exactly, but they should complement it in style and mood. The idea is to create a uniform look that is balanced with a variety of colors, forms and textures to add interest and offset monotony. The following pages offer a wide selection of deck styles to serve as inspiration for developing and planning outdoor living spaces. A portfolio of ideas rather than a how-to manual, this article discusses basic tire types and presents a number of tire styles for both contemporary and traditional homes. For more interior design ideas outside the home, see: Decorating IdeasPatio Ideas Content When your deck ideas include steep up and down slopes, know they're a little harder to tame than gentler, and multiple levels are one of the best solutions. Design- and design-wise, gradually increasing levels up or down a slope is practical, visually exciting, and more in line with the natural setting. Since most houses are built on top of a slope rather than at their base, most decks tend to start on high and go down, sometimes as a simple split level, often as a cascade of multiple platforms. Of course, many homes lend themselves to a single high-level deck, perhaps cantilevered over a High tires can pose problems, however, especially if they are large. They can overshadow the rooms below, and when viewed from the bottom of the slope, they can dominate the house itself. Steep terrain usually dictates a hefty substructure that is designed to withstand a variety of ground conditions as well as to support the tyre. Hiding these underpinnings from the view with dithering, siding, or even shrubs can give decks and your home a more finished look. Ad Interior DesignPatio Ideas If your site is level or just slightly sloping, it might be a good idea to build an on-grade deck. Whether they are attached to the house or detached, on-grade decks are relatively easy to design and construct. They can be size and shaped in countless ways. Since they rest quite close to the ground, they rarely require railings or steps. On-grade tires are particularly suitable additions to single-storey houses or to those with low profile where a raised or multilevel deck can look out of place or overwhelm the existing structure. Some on-grade tires are designed to sit flush with the ground, but their direct contact with the soil requires materials that are impervious to decay, such as pressure-treated lumber or a non-wood product such as PVC (polyvinyl chloride) vinyl. Most designs are elevated slightly above the surface of the ground, however, to compensate for uneven or sloping ground and to allow proper drainage and air circulation. Ad Decorating IdeasPatio Ideas Standalone Decks are great ideas for standalone outdoor elements such as patios or landscaping, because their materials and designs can be easily tailored to mix or contrast with others. Wooden decks lend themselves beautifully to combinations with many types of masonry and stone found in patio construction, such as brick, stone, and crushed stone. When colors, shapes and textures harmonize, the deck and its immediate surroundings often become a uniform outdoor space, each flowing into the other. Contrasts, however, can be used to separate the different areas and help narrow down the business. This deck can fit comfortably into the overall landscape plan but intentionally contrast with the nearby lawn or a more remote patio. As extensions of the home, detached tires should have no connection with the house itself, be it an informal gravel or bark road, a more formal walkway, or a bridge or platform. In a large yard or remote location, a freestanding deck may not be in the direct line of sight of the house, but it should feel like it is just an arm's length. Ad Decorating IdeasPatio Ideas When performing your deck ideas, you may encounter the dilemmas associated with outdoor living. These can be solved with multi-level tires. They can step up or down a steep or rocky slope to transform an impossible place into a useful one. They can be shaped into a progression of space-saving platforms to make the most of a troublesome or cramped outdoors or arranged in a consequence of broader levels to give a large uninteresting yard a new focus. By adding built-in seating, planting machines, places for sun and shade, and perhaps even a water feature, multi-level decks can become more popular living rooms than indoor rooms. All tires look their best when they have a uniform appearance. Several decks in particular may seem uncomfortably busy if they lack continuity of material or design. Repeating a railing detail, platform shape, or bench style will help tie the different levels together. Ad Decorating IdeasPatio Ideas Multilevel tires are not always employed to solve location problems; often they serve as improvements to both house and garden. Often, multiple levels are designed as an integral part of a home architecture to extend the building and your deck ideas in the natural surroundings in a gradual and appealing way. Sometimes they set the stage for a certain style of landscaping or act as bridges or contacts within the landscape. A very large deck has a warmer appearance when broken in levels and is usually in better proportion to the scale of the house. Built-in planting machines and seating can be incorporated to signal a change in levels, and if placed correctly, they can also replace conventional rails. Several decks are also suitable for interesting patterns that can be repeated on other levels - changing the direction of the floorboards on steps, for example, shaping corners on the diagonal, or implementing horizontal railings rather than traditional vertical patterns. Ad Decorating IdeasPatio Ideas For a house that is built on a virtually level website, getting an outdoor living room can be a relatively simple issue; an on-grade deck that is level with the ground or a concrete or stone patio can be just the right deck idea. But few seats are completely flat, and the solution always requires a tire that has been raised from the ground on a system of services. The term up is quite broad because it covers almost all types of tires that are not built directly on the ground. An elevated deck can float a foot or so above class – perhaps just enough to get the deck floor up to the same level as the threshold of the back door. Or it can extend several feet from the ground to be on the same level as the inner room, then gradually step its way down a slope. A raised deck can be a freestanding structure out in the yard or a wraparound element attached directly to the house. Tyres built near the ground usually require a relatively simple support system. More expansive or complex tyres, like those above the ground, require a substructure designed for stability and bearing loads. Ad Decorating IdeasPatio Ideas Contemporary home often expresses a visual drama that is lacking in more traditional styles. Intentionally devoid of ornament and frills, many contemporary house and deck design ideas focus instead on line and shape to striking compositions. In this design - an architect's own home - strong vertical and horizontal surfaces are softened by a curved wall, which echoed in the curve of the mid-level tires and handrails. The floating lines of metal railings carry a nautical theme inspired by a pond that sits near the base of the deck. Advertisement The open frame of the metal rails and the clear plexiglass inserts in the upper deck wall allow for unobstructed views of the surrounding trees and vegetation whether they sit, eat or soak in the spa. The plexiglass also acts as a safety measure, keeping children and their toys securely enclosed. The nautical theme also influenced the house's colour scheme and deck design - a driftwood that was grey on walls, a darker shade to accent strip and railings and a water-like blue-gray on the deck. For more interior design ideas outside the home, see: Decorating IdeasPatio Ideas A site open to a panoramic view provides wonderful opportunities for ideas that require orientation and styling a house and its deck to take advantage of the magnificent views. The sheer architectural lines and large glass enveppments that characterise many modern homes allow virtually unobstructed views from the inner living room, and when there is room for a deck, the pleasure extends far into nature. Because tyres have flexibility in position, shape and size, they can easily be custom made to fit where they work best. When unhindered views are a priority, one solution is to design a series of levels spreading down and away from the house. This arrangement allows those sitting indoors and at the upper levels to look over and beyond the areas below, usually without visual disturbance of the interior or railings. When a website allows an on-class or slightly elevated deck, another solution might be to build a wide platform that uses low benches and eaters to provide safety while maximizing both near-in and remote views. Ad Decorating IdeasPatio Ideas As the suburban population grows and houses adapt to smaller lots and other limitations,the idea of building a deck comes into its own as a functional, appealing alternative to the traditional backyard. Unlike lawns and most patios, decks can run right up to the door at the same level as the interior rooms, becoming true extensions of the home. They can follow the game of the ground or take an individual course that creates their own landscape. Tires can also be shaped and finished in exactly the same materials, colors and textures as the houses they border, bringing cohesiveness to the entire indoor-outdoor area. The two-piece redwood deck pictured here was designed as a friendly takeover of an uninteresting but high maintenance backyard that sat far below the house and had little connection to the indoor living room. Stretching the width of the lot, the new deck includes amenities the former space could only dream of: overhead pool, conversation and dining areas, built-in planters that require little maintenance, and a trellis to provide afternoon shade and privacy from neighbors. Ad Interior DesignPatio Ideas Many houses built in the last 25 years included a deck in the original building plan. While the tire was usually functional, the tank was common in terms of appearance. The typical deck consisted of a standard rectangular platform lined with a crib-style railing that is usually projected by the rear façade and only occasionally included stairs to the ground. If that sounds all too familiar, sometimes a rebuild is just what a tire needs to lift it from mundane to extraordinary. The dramatic deck seen here fits this plain-Jane description before its redevelopment. It had no access to the backyard at all, and, worse, it belittled the striking contemporary architecture of the house. The tire dynamic redesign echoes the exact lines and sheer sharp styling of the building and connects the deck to the lawn. After the sloping spot, the three levels make the transition from the living areas to the farm a pleasant experience, with built-in benches and porters to accompany the route. Clear plexiglass inserts in the railing provide safety and allow unobstructed views of the surrounding landscape. For more interior design ideas outside the home, see: Interior DesignPatio Ideas A deck need not be limited to a fully wooden design to complement a wood-clad house. One idea to easily vary a tire look and mood is to change the material of the railing. A tubular railway, for example, can inject a high-tech note and lend a more modern feel to the overall design. The 50-era home shown here got a zesty facelift with a redwood replacement tire high-lighted by a railing of steel hoses and ended in an exuberant red. To give the rather narrow deck a little more elbow room, two triangular popouts were added along with built-in seating, eliminating the need for bulky furniture. New French doors replace aluminum windows and allow access from three large parts of the house - the living room, dining room and kitchen. A series of stairs and landings segregate various activities, such as eating or relaxing in the hot tub, and provide an easy way to the backyard. The painted redwood siding of the lower part of the deck blends in with the existing house while its diagonal pattern updates the building's appearance. For more interior design ideas outside the home, see: Decorating IdeasPatio Ideas If it depends on the nature of the place or simply because the outdoor space is at a premium, there may be limited space for a deck. A spatial challenge as it requires creative solutions to your deck ideas. One approach that can work well with hard-to-reach or limited outdoor areas is a modular deck system. A modular deck consists of sections prebuilt at a store (or in the garage) and then mounted on site. Often, only the floor component, but stairs, seating, and railings can also be prefabricated in sections that are convenient to transport and quick to assemble. This versatile approach can also save on construction work and expense. Another solution to the small-space dilemma is to tailor the tire to a precise fit, making use of all available inches. It can involve sandwiching a simple platform deck between a fence and the house or shaping a more complex design into a series of tightly coupled levels. Renewing a small, weak area may also be the answer. For example, converting narrow back steps and a concrete walkway into some wide landings with built-in benches and porters would still provide access to and from the house while encouraging outdoor living. Decorating IdeasPatio Ideas Vacation retreats in the mountains are often embedded in rustic settings that are ideal for a range of deck ideas. An abundance of trees, nearby wildlife, brisk stary nights and an informal approach to living are all part of the outdoor experience that can be enjoyed from a deck. This redwood home enjoyed a mountain atmosphere but, originally built without a deck, lacked a functional outdoor area for the owners to enjoy the sights and sounds of a seasonal stream and small waterfalls that lay a short distance from the house. The place, though picturesque, was rocky, steep and limited. The solution was a bi-level redwood deck that sits low to the ground and descended a gentle portion of the grade into a landing near the creek. The connecting stairs, angled to fit between existing stones and along a stone wall, seem to float as they gradually narrow and down to the ground. Built-in benches and an integrated railing were designed in a light, open style so they wouldn't block outside views from the interior rooms. For more interior design ideas outside the home, see: Decorating IdeasPatio Ideas For maximum enjoyment and sheer practicality, nothing can beat a deck that has multiple ideas for moving back and forth from the outdoors to the interior. Having multiple access points also gives a deck flexibility in how it works and underlines its role as an extension of the house and its living spaces. A deck that is accessible from a number of areas can reduce some of the wear caused by pedestrian traffic that would normally travel down the corridor, for example, and cut across the living room to get out. When two or three rooms are opened up on a deck, the overall space can be divided into informal zones that host different functions. Comfortable furniture can be grouped near the living room; the grill can be placed outside the kitchen and not far from the dining table and chairs. And when a deck design includes more than one level, each accessed from another point, the outdoor area can be home to individual

rooms focused on specific activities. Decorating IdeasPatio Ideas Looking to classical architecture is a good idea when working with tires. styles adapted from the classical orders of Greek and Roman design have appeared in American buildings since the 18th century. Early southern colonial mansions were adorned with colonnades that provided shade yet to light and winds. Georgian designs included large entrances with a pedimented ceiling supported by columns. Roman villas, such as Thomas Jefferson's Monticello, include outdoor walkways and pergolas. The Greek revival style became so popular in the mid-19th century that carpenters brought it to america's new home. Architects today continue to integrate classical principles into their designs – some boldly, others with just one reference. Tires can take particularly well to the classics as well, whether it's maintaining the right proportions for the size and scale of the house, providing balance or symmetry to the shape of the floor, or adding details to overhead protection. Decorating IdeasPatio Ideas Artisan style architecture arose in the early 20th century. It was a movement to bring simplicity, beauty and honesty to home building through traditional craftsmanship and materials. It had its strongest following in the American West and produced both large and small houses with different designs, including the familiar bungalow. This style tried to use wood expressively, exposing timber and shaping and fitting them together in bold but rhythmic lines. Many Craftsman designs also took a comprehensive approach to the house and its surroundings, which include gardens and outdoor living rooms that planned extensions of the home – a common theme now but not widely practiced in other styles of the era. In addition, a great interest in Japanese art and execution among craftsmen and architects aroused a Japanese taste to many of these designs. Using principles honored by American and Japanese artisans, the style is synthesized into a comfortable hybrid that characterizes a number of homes built in recent years. For more interior design ideas outside the home, see: Decorating IdeasPatio Ideas Building a deck often means given the original idea of the house. The regional house refers to its setting more intimately than most, fitting not only the location but adapting to local geography and climate using materials that are native to the region and often include styles that historically belong. American regional, or folk, architecture developed over the years as a sensible response to climate and place that also benefited from all the materials were readily available. The wooden clapboard houses in New England had small windows and large fireplaces to minimize the cold; Adobe designs of southwest employed extra thick walls to keep out the heat. The regional styles of the Northwest reflect a composite of shapes, materials and moods, influenced by its diverse history and culture. Although the styles of the houses shown here are slightly different, they respond to local conditions in Way. Plenty of decks suggest pleasant temperatures and sunny skies for most of the year while large wides of glass offset overcast periods by bringing light and views of interiors. All have local western red cedar siding and decks finished to allow the wood's natural beauty to shine through. For more interior design ideas outside the home, see: Decorating IdeasPatio Ideas Consider the style of your home before you put a deck on it. For example, in the early 20th century, a number of traditional architectural styles were revived around the country. Many of these patterns were rooted in certain periods of history, both American and European. One of the more popular period styles was the Tudor, usually a simplified version of the Elizabethan house and distinguished by its stucco or stenoxterior, half-timber exposed and small pencilled windows. The redwood deck additions shown here blend beautifully with the picturesque style of tudor homes. The gable structure above the French doors echoes the shape of the roof lines, its timber-frame construction also a reminder of Tudor's characteristic half-timbered. Neatly wrapped with redwood siding, the well-integrated deck design visually anchors the house to the ground and brings presence to a side house that was ignored before. Dark-colored surfaces tie in with the house trim and the shingled upper walls and give the deck a more traditional look. For more interior design ideas outside the home, see: Interior Design IdeasPatio Ideas Porches, unlike decks, are usually associated with older homes and bygone eras, but many current house design ideas integrate front and rear porches into the original plan as a way to expand living spaces without adding another inner room. With more and more families following informal lifestyles and discovering the pleasures of relaxing and entertaining at home, porches are connecting decks and patios as multifunctional indoor-outdoor areas. And although porches usually accompany traditional designs - shingled Victorians, Midwestern farmhouses, wandering ranches - they have also found a place among more contemporary styles. Since porches are constructed as an integral part of a house, which often share the same foundation and roof system, they adapt to the same location conditions. They can sit in class with the floor just above the ground, or they can be raised a distance from the ground and connected to the yard by stairs. Like most attached decks, the porch floor almost always lies at or very close to the same level as the interior room, facilitating the transition between indoors and outside. Unlike many decks, however, a porch usually remains on a single continuous level as it edges the house. Decorating IdeasPatio Ideas A privacy screen is often an important idea in a deck plane, especially when nearby houses sit too close for comfort or have direct views of the deck. Screens can be fence-like in appearance, for ultimate privacy, or more open in design to allow light and to filter through. When paired with an overlying coating, they can create the impression of an outdoor room. The open construction of a simple trellis offers a measure of privacy; However, when backed by shrubbery or covered with vines, it can be as effective as a fixed fence. Vertical screens are good additions where conditions are windy or the angle of the sun overheats the tire from the side. Around a pool or spa, they can prevent leaves and debris from blowing into the water and cut the wind's cold, making the deck area a nicer place to use and easier to maintain. Decorating IdeasPatio Ideas Nothing can dampen spirits more than a rained grill - unless it struggles against annoying insects that arrive rain or shine. A shielded enclosure is a good idea to take the edge off the less desirable aspects of the deck alive while enjoying enjoyable winds, sights and sounds. It is a perfect playground for housed children on a rainy day and a welcome place to camp out on hot summer nights. Screenas-in porches were common features on homes built earlier this century, especially in warmer regions of the country. When the deck and patio replaced the lawn as the primary outdoor living area, but the shielded porch often gave way to an extra interior room. An existing veranda can be easily screened in; if it sits at the side or back of the house or near the kitchen, it can serve as a truly private outdoor room for dining or entertaining. Enclosing part of a deck located near the house is another option and a way to enjoy the safety of screening just a few steps from nature. Decorating IdeasPatio Ideas Whether you think of a soak in a spa as therapeutic or simply fun, integrating a spa into a deck idea can be accomplished with relative ease. Unlike swimming pools, the spa takes up little space and can be incorporated into small space decks nestled in a dense corner or a narrow side yard. They are most enjoyed when located in a quiet place not too far from the house, shielded from the wind and neighbors. Although the typical spa is located almost flush with its surround, it can be designed to rise above the floor, hot tub style. Despite appearances, spas and hot tubs are rarely supported by decking itself; they usually rest directly on the ground or on part of the deck substructure. Since they are not structural, decks can be laid out in countless ways to create dramatic floor patterns, accentuate the soaking area, or simply echo the shape of the spa. Decorating IdeasPatio Ideas Refreshing, refreshing and fun for all ages, swimming pools add hours of enjoyment to outdoor living. Since pools are often the dominant part of the yard, the way in which they are surrounded can make a difference between a just adequate tire idea and one simply fantastic. Due to its versatility, wood decking makes a great choice for all or part of a pool surround. Wood integrates well with other materials found around a pool – tiles, bricks, natural stone – and decking can be designed to assume almost any shape the area requires. If the ground around the pool is uneven or sloped, wood decking is sometimes the best solution. Generally speaking, the surround should be at least as large as the area of the pool (preferably larger) to provide enough space for a table, chairs, and a variety of seating options. A shady place nearby to seek relief from the sun is desirable as well. A surround that covers a large width seems friendlier when broken into levels and treated as multiple outdoor rooms. Changing the direction and pattern of the boards can help scale down a large tire as well. However, an environment that must fit a cramped space seems larger if lined with built-in benches that take up little space but provide places to sit or stretch out in the sun. For more interior design ideas outside the home, see: Decorating IdeasPatio Ideas On a hot summer day when the kitchen feels like an oven, it's a good idea to cook out on deck. Even when the temperature is just right, an outdoor barbecue area is an ideal place for informal gatherings and meals with family and friends. Whether it's built into part of the deck or located nearby, a barbecue/cooking center works best when it's not too far from the house – transporting dishes and foods can be tiring – but not so close that smoke and smell can drift indoors. It is also advisable to place the grill a distance from the overhanging limbs. This will prevent heat damage to leaves and assist in fire safety. Simple kettle-style devices that use charcoal briquettes and built-in masonry designs work just fine, but gas-fueled grills have become popular options. Whatever equipment, however, expanding the cooking area with counters, shelves, storage, and perhaps even a sink can be a real bonus for frequent entertaining. Although a deck plane cannot accommodate a mini kitchen, setting aside an area for storing essentials, such as coal and utensils, can make outdoor cooking a breeze. Decorating IdeasPatio Ideas Without overhead shade, sunnyside tires can be unbearably warm during the summer months, and if they sit near the house, they can reflect the warmth of the interior. Unless the deck has large leafy trees nearby or an overhanging roof, it's a good idea to have some kind of coating or protection to spell relief. A shade structure should be designed to dampen the sun's rays without blocking light, air, or desirable views from the deck. It should also be compatible with the style of the house and the size and scope of the deck it protection. Most overhead screens are made of wood – boards, slats, or dithering – but they can also be shaped from other materials like bamboo or reeds. Canvas awnings and translucent plastic are also good choices when the elements - rain and sun - interfere with enjoying a deck. Overhead shelters can also serve as privacy screens, view from the room above or a building next door. When boards are close to space or covered with a vine, the deck below can feel as enclosed and inviting as an indoor room. For more interior design ideas outside the home, see: Decorating IdeasPatio Ideas Essentially an arsome with an open roof, a pergola is an excellent idea for providing presence to a part of a deck or garden that lacks visual interest or highlight a special feature like a spa or conversation area. The rafters and crosspieces that are so prominent in many pergola patterns can also add height and mass to an otherwise flat part of the deck. Often, pergolas are designed to serve strictly as decorative or architectural elements in a deck design. With a few minor changes to the open roof system, however, and perhaps the addition of a climbing vine or two, a pergola can become a dramatic overhead protection. A pergola can also employ a series of separate vertical structures tied visually with a band of horizontal boards at the top. This elongated design works well for uniting different areas of a deck, delimiting a walkway, or giving the impression of a roof passage from one part of the garden to another. When laced with greenery overhead, it can take on the feeling of an arbor. Decorating IdeasPatio Ideas In Victorian times, the most popular deck idea was the gazebo: an airy summer house or garden structure that far away from the main building, often on a hill where the view was particularly pleasant. As was fashion, they were carefully styled and embellished with intricate fretwork. Today's gazebo performs the same function, providing an outdoor retreat. Although most modern gazebos are more simply styled than their predecessors, they often have the same traditional octagonal shape, tower ceilings and decorative details. As a structure to complement both home and garden, a gazebo can serve as more than an attractive focal point or seating with views. It can serve as a playground or a charming place for Sunday brunch. Partially enclosed, it can serve as a poolside dressing room, a studio, or a storage space for gardening tools. But it suits your special needs, a gazebo can bring old-fashioned pleasure to the farm. Decorating IdeasPatio Ideas For tires that are elevated more than a few feet above the ground, railings are important safety features. They are also one of the more prominent elements of a deck plan and are suitable for custom treatments and ideas that can improve the entire design. Although the familiar crib-style railing has great appeal for its basic, simple lines and straightforward construction, it can take on custom effects with a few variations. Narrow tubular piping can replace stringers between poles, for example, or stamens (the vertical parts of the rail) can stay short of their usual height, leaving an opening under the top horizontal railing, or cap, to provide more open views when seated. If unindered are they the target, the railing design can incorporate plexiglass inserts, stainless steel cable, or wire mesh screening (welded fabric) – all safe, contemporary alternatives to traditional railings. If more privacy or less street noise is required, the railing can take the form of a fixed half wall or low grid fence, perhaps topped with planting machines. With a little planning and imagination, the choices are endless. For more interior design ideas outside the home, see: Decorating IdeasPatio Ideas Each deck needs a seat or two to sit, whether to read, relax after a long day, or chat with friends. And although a grouping of chairs can do the job nicely, built-in wooden benches provide an alternative idea that suits the look and feel of a deck. Built-in benches also consume less space, and when placed along the perimeter, they can free up parts of the deck for other activities. These practical accents can be used as focal points to showcase an unusual design or beautiful crafting. Or they may be styled to blend in quietly, allowing any other feature to be at the center. Since built-in benches cannot be pushed in or out of the sun, careful consideration should be taken to their place. A good solution can be to place the benches strategically in areas that get both sun and shade at different times of the day. A well-designed bench is comfortable and well enough for two people to sit. If it is not deep enough, it will feel like a perch rather than a place. A long, deeper than usual bench can serve as a platform for sunbathing and, with pillows, makes a great place to stretch out for a nap. Decorating IdeasPatio Ideas Unlike stairs and railings, essential ingredients for most decks, a fireplace is an accent deck idea that is designed for the sheer enjoyment of the outdoors. Like a campfire in the woods or on the beach that serves to warm hands and feet and stimulate friendly conversations among those gathered around, the fireplace provides warmth and conversation closer to home. A fireplace can be especially welcome when evenings get cool or days get brisk, prolonging life on deck like an outdoor room. Firepits are often located on a patch of ground near the deck and its activities. When integrated directly into the tire design, however, the firepits require some careful planning. Due to its weight and also as a safety measure, the base should sit directly on the ground. This works best with on-grade tires; with a raised deck, the base can be built up to the desired height using concrete blocks or masonry materials. A fireplace should also be lined with heat-resistant fire bricks, although a more decorative brick or natural stone can be used for edging or trimming. Finally, the sides of the fireplace should be high enough so that the surrounding deck panels are not damaged or burned by the fire. An alternative to a masonry fireplace is a freestanding, metal wood-burning burner. Often dish-shaped, it stands on legs and can be set on a protected surface. IdeasPatio Ideas As rewarding and versatile as a deck can be, sometimes its vast area of wood needs a splash of color to liven things up. Planters, built-in or standing free, are among the simplest - and cheapest - ideas for dressing up a deck and tying it in visually to the house and the rest of the landscape. Planting machines can be incorporated into a railing design at the top of a post, a column connecting sections, or as part of the railing itself. On a deck that sits near the ground, planting machines can be grouped to follow the edge and provide the area definition. They can be placed to mark a staircase, denote a change in levels, and divide the deck into zones. On-grade decks can use the planter theme in yet another way, with openings cut into the deck floor to accommodate plants and let them rummage directly into the ground. Planting machines give more than paint to a tire. With proper drainage and little attention, annual and perennial flowers can give scent and bloom over a long period. Vegetables and fruits that grow well in contained spaces, such as cherry tomatoes, peppers and strawberries, can deliver some fresh summer products. Even in winter, small berry-producing shrubs in a planter can add seasonal color and cheers. Decorating IdeasPatio Ideas Built-in planters can be the best idea for a small deck, especially when paired with built-in seating and held in scale with the small size of the area. They can be grouped into a space-saving group on one side of the tyre or on changes in levels to provide additional open space and improve traffic flow. A planter wall can be designed as a backrest for a bench; its cap can also serve as an improvised shelf for setting plates and glass. Of course, large tires can take advantage of planters as well, often without the restrictions imposed by a smaller area. Large planters can be especially useful as privacy screens when filled with tall or bushy plants or when combined with a vertical trellis. A planter of any shape or size should be constructed of wood that is resistant to decay and retains its appearance over time. Redwood, among a handful of other species, is a popular choice for many tire projects. However, it is important to choose the right quality of lumber for the job. Heartwood, which is cut from the center of the tree, is strong and naturally resistant to rot that can develop when wood comes into contact with water and soil. Any grade that includes heart in its name, such as construction heart or all-heart, is an ideal material for wearers. Decorating IdeasPatio Ideas For nightly activities on deck, it is a good idea to have proper lighting to assist with tasks such as cooking and dining, to make socializing more pleasurable, and to increase safety, especially on stairs and on level changes. Often, exterior house lamps will do the job, especially if the deck is located near the building; but for aesthetics and maximum enjoyment, lighting that is particularly for the tire one a worth having. On deck, patio, or anywhere outdoors, low voltage lighting is the recommended system. It is safe - even wet or naked wiring will not relate to a shock - economical to run, and relatively easy to install. Furthermore, there are a number of choices among low voltage fixtures that can fit any style deck. Surface/deck lights, for example, are low profile fixtures that can be attached horizontally or vertically to a wooden surface like a railing, step, planter box, or bench. Tier light, which spreads light evenly around a particular area, can be mounted strategically on the deck floor, on top and bottom of stairs, and close seating to illuminate the total space. Floodlights can be used in combination with other lighting to illuminate a feature of deck design, such as the pool or spa, or tie the deck area to the surrounding courtyard. In fact, like the versatile decks they illuminate, outdoor lighting offers endless possibilities. Decorating IdeasPatio Ideas Whether the focal point of the farm or simply a highlight of the existing landscape, detached decks are yet another way to get outdoor living space. They can be welcome additions when the house configuration excludes an attached deck or when the ideal location – a grove of trees, near a creek, or overlooking a garden – is some distance away. A freestanding deck is an ideal way to dress up a gloomy, previously ignored corner of the courtyard by transforming it into a secluded retreat for reading, a lively playground for children or a stage to display colorful pottery and plants. Although the term standalone may suggest a thin or temporary solution, standalone tires are usually permanent fixtures that follow the same structural requirements as other tire types. A design can be as simple as a low-level platform floating just above the ground or as complex as a multi-level system of platforms and connectors that climb up or down a slope or stretch across the yard. Plain or fancy, however, standalone decks can offer outdoor living at its best. Decorating IdeasPatio Ideas Although wood has traditionally been associated with tires, it is a material that requires maintenance to keep it healthy and looks its best. In wet environments, wood can become subject to decay; where it is warm, wood can crack and shatter from exposure to the sun's ultraviolet rays. A tire that is not properly sealed can host mold. Painted surfaces need extra maintenance. And the natural color of almost all wooden decks will fade in time. A practical alternative to the disadvantages of wood is a synthetic decking material like a PVC vinyl. Formulated to be weatherproof and virtually maintenance-free, PVC vinyl tires are durable, do not crack or pout, and never need to paint. This type of decking is available with traditional or contemporary appearance and offers a number of railing designs that can harmonize with a variety of house styles. Decorating IdeasPatio One of the most famous, attractive, and and structures to support plants on and around the deck, trellis needs some introduction. Usually constructed from thin wooden strips nailed together in an open weave or lattice design, trellises show a rather slender profile. They can be attached to a wall, stand alone on a sturdy base, or used over your head as both a support for climbing vines and a sunscreen. Trellises can also serve as privacy screens or simple, cheap fencing to camouflage a utilitarian side yard or divert attention from an ugly sight. Arbors, too, are usually made of wood and serve as plant supports. Unlike a trellis, however, an arousal is a freestanding garden structure with space underneath to walk, sit, or simply tend to shade-loving plants. An arsom covered with grapes or blackberries can be a welcome companion to a vegetable or flower garden and a lovely place to bring adults and children together to reap fruit. Decorating IdeasPatio Ideas Trees have a special place in the home landscape, delivering privacy, shade, and shelterwhile adding color, texture, and natural beauty. Displacing mature trees to make room for a living room outdoors can solve one problem but create another. Fortunately, the flexibility of wooden decks to adapt to a variety of locations provides the opportunity to include trees in their design. Unlike many patios, tires can close to surround a tree without disrupting the root system or cutting off its supply of air and water. However, the opening around the trunk should be large enough to allow for continued growth, especially if the tree is young or a fast grower. Benches and trees surround seem meant for each other, whether separate benches sit near the base or a single seat wraps itself all the way around. The surroundings can also take the form of a low wall elevated above the deck floor, wide enough for comfortably seated and often high enough to double as a railing filled with shade-loving flowers and small-scale shrubs – as long as they and the tree require the same soil and water conditions. Decorating IdeasPatio Ideas

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