Creating a Deck

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The information in this article applies to:

PRO ARCH SUITE

QUESTION

How do I design an outdoor deck?

ANSWER

Home Designer software offers you a variety of tools that you can use to design a unique outdoor living area to suit your home and your lifestyle.

To create a deck room

1. Select **Build> Railing and Deck > Straight Deck Railing** from the menu, then click and drag to draw a deck railing.

2. Continue drawing deck railings, with each new railing starting from the end of the last, to form a defined deck room.

3. Using the **Select Objects** tool, click on each deck railing, one at a time, and position them accurately using edit handles or dimensions.

   > For more information on moving walls and railings precisely using dimensions, please see the Related Articles section below.

4. Select **3D> Create Camera View> Perspective Full Overview** to see the results so far.

   In Home Designer Pro, navigate to **3D> Create Perspective View> Perspective Full Overview** instead.

> **Note:** When an area is enclosed by deck railings or a combination of deck railings and walls, it will automatically be designated as a Deck room. A Deck room, by default, will not have a ceiling or roof and will have deck framing components instead of regular flooring.

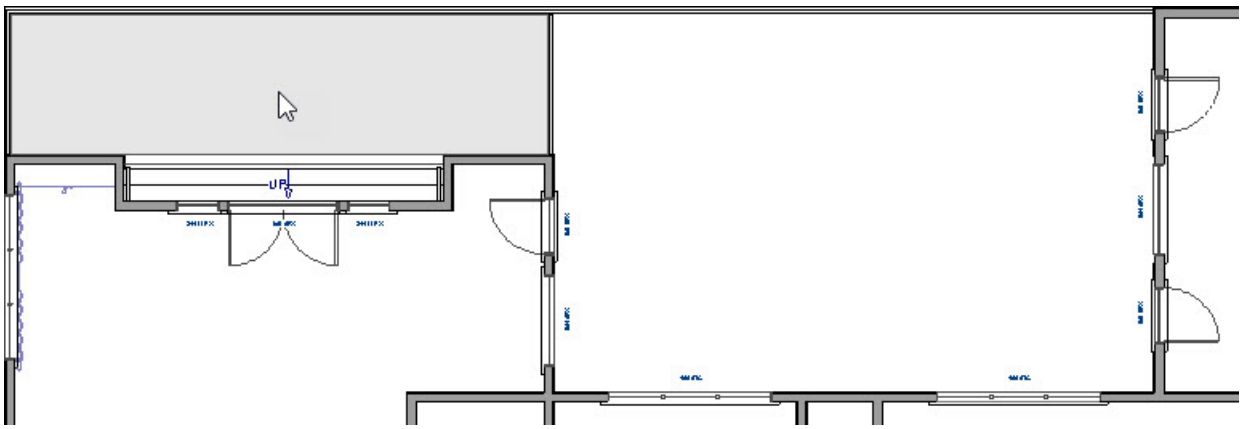
Many decks have multiple floor heights or stepped areas, adding interest and drama to these outdoor rooms. You can create this in Home Designer by dividing your deck into different room areas and assigning them different floor heights.

To create a stepped/tiered deck

1. Select **File> Close View** to return to floor plan view.

2. Select **Build> Railing and Deck> Straight Deck Railing** from the menu, then click and drag a deck railing to divide the deck into at least two separate areas.

3. Using the **Select Objects** tool, select one of the newly defined areas of the deck that you would like to raise or lower, then click the **Open Object** edit button.

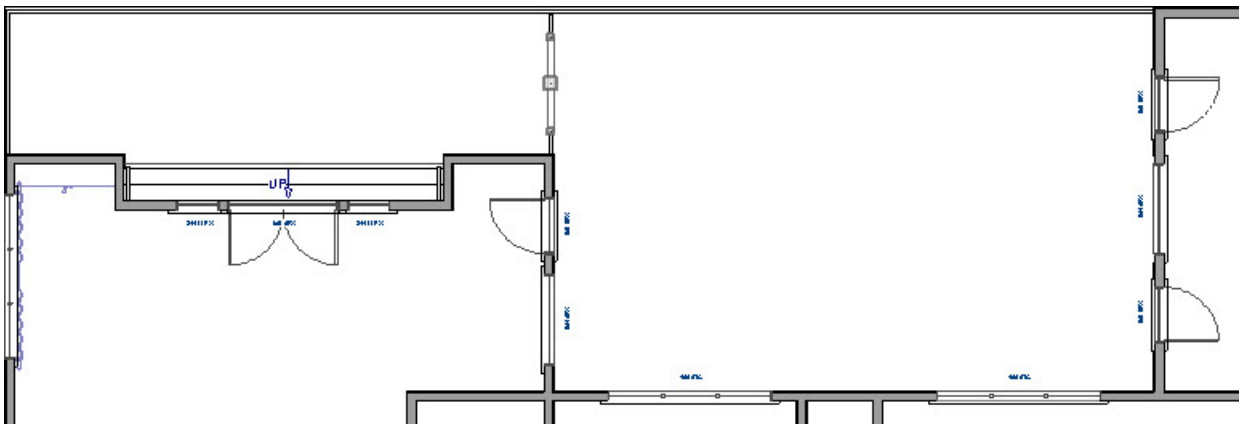


4. On the STRUCTURE panel of the **Room Specification** dialog that displays, specify a new **Floor** height value, then click **OK**.

   In this example, a Floor height of -7" is specified.

5. Select **Build> Door> Doorway** from the menu, then click along the railing drawn in step 2 to place an opening at that location.

6. Using the **Select Objects** tool, click on the newly placed doorway to select it.



   - Click the **Center Object** edit button, then click in either deck area, near the doorway, to center the doorway along the railing.

   - With the doorway still selected, use the end edit handles to resize it as needed or **Open** it to specification and adjust the properties in the dialog that displays.

> Instead of placing a doorway, you can specify the entire dividing railing as Invisible on the General panel of the Deck Railing Specification dialog if you don't want a physical railing to separate the stepped/tiered deck areas.

7. Select **3D> Create Camera View> Perspective Full Overview** to see your progress.

   In Home Designer Pro, navigate to **3D> Create Perspective View> Perspective Full Overview** instead.

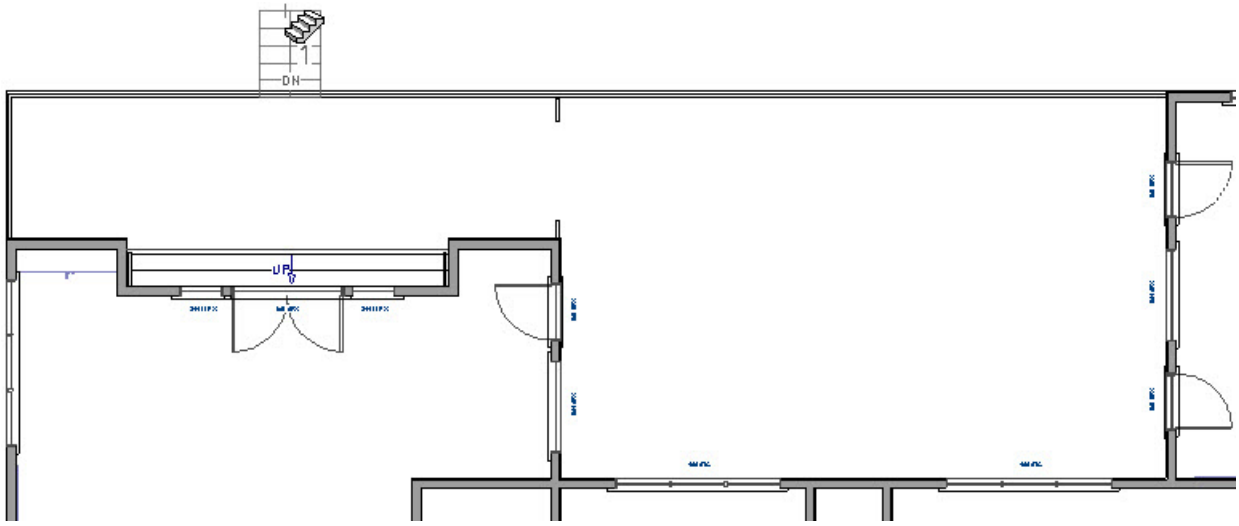
Many decks feature stairs that lead down to the ground.

To draw stairs down to the terrain

1. Select **File> Close View** to return to floor plan view.

2. Select **Build> Stairs> Straight Stairs** from the menu, hold down the **ALT/Option** key on your keyboard, then click and drag to draw a staircase starting from the deck.

> Holding down the ALT/Option key while drawing stairs creates the stairway with each additional tread going downward, where as typically when creating stairs, they move upward.



3. To see if your stairs are long enough, select **3D> Create Camera View> Full Camera** from the menu, then click and drag a camera arrow in the terrain area, directed at the side of the stairs.

   In Home Designer Pro, navigate to **3D> Create Perspective View> Full Camera** instead.

4. Once the stairs are in place, you can edit the width, if needed.

When the structural elements of the deck are in place, you can select a railing style for the railings, place furniture, and arrange accent pieces and plants.

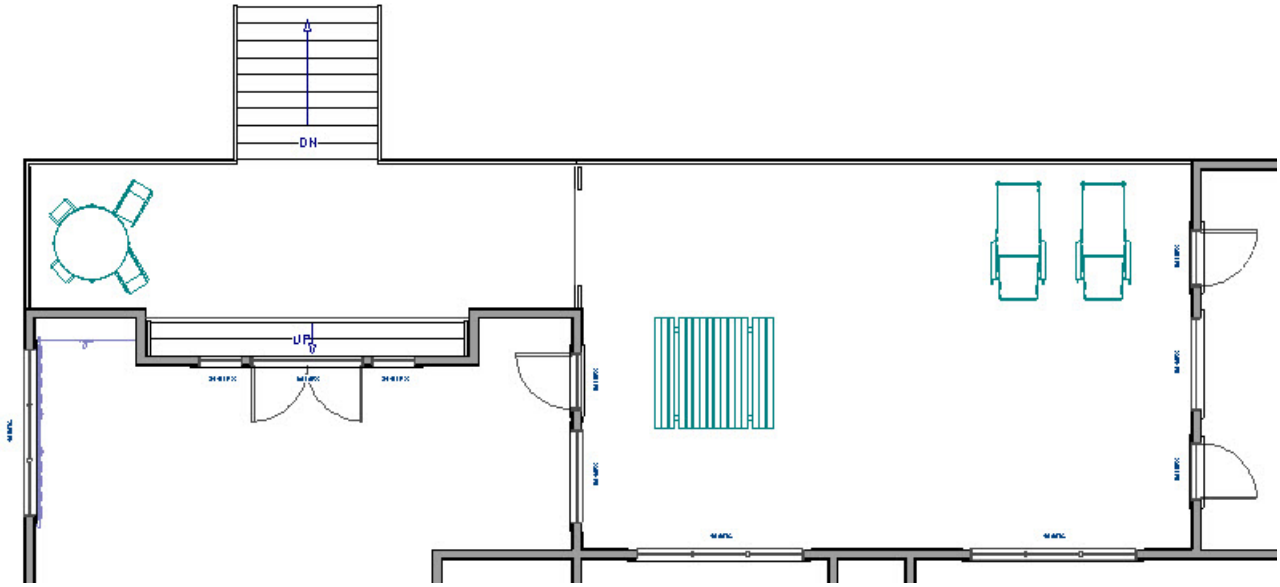
To accessorize the deck

1. Select **File> Close View** to return to floor plan view, then click the **Select Objects** tool.

2. A variety of furnishings and accessories for your deck space can be found in the Library Browser. Select **View> Library Browser** from the menu to open the Library Browser side window if it's not already open.
    - Deck furniture can be found by navigating to Home Designer Core Catalogs> Exteriors> Outdoor Living.
    - Shrubs, trees, annuals and perennials, as well as potted plants, can be found by navigating to Home Designer Core Catalogs> Plants.
    - A selection of designer railing Balusters, Newels, and Posts can be found by navigating to Home Designer Core Catalogs>Architectural> Millwork.

3. Select an object that you would like to place in your plan, move your pointer into the floor plan view, then click to place the object at that location.

4. Once placed in a plan, objects can be moved, resized, and their materials can be customized.

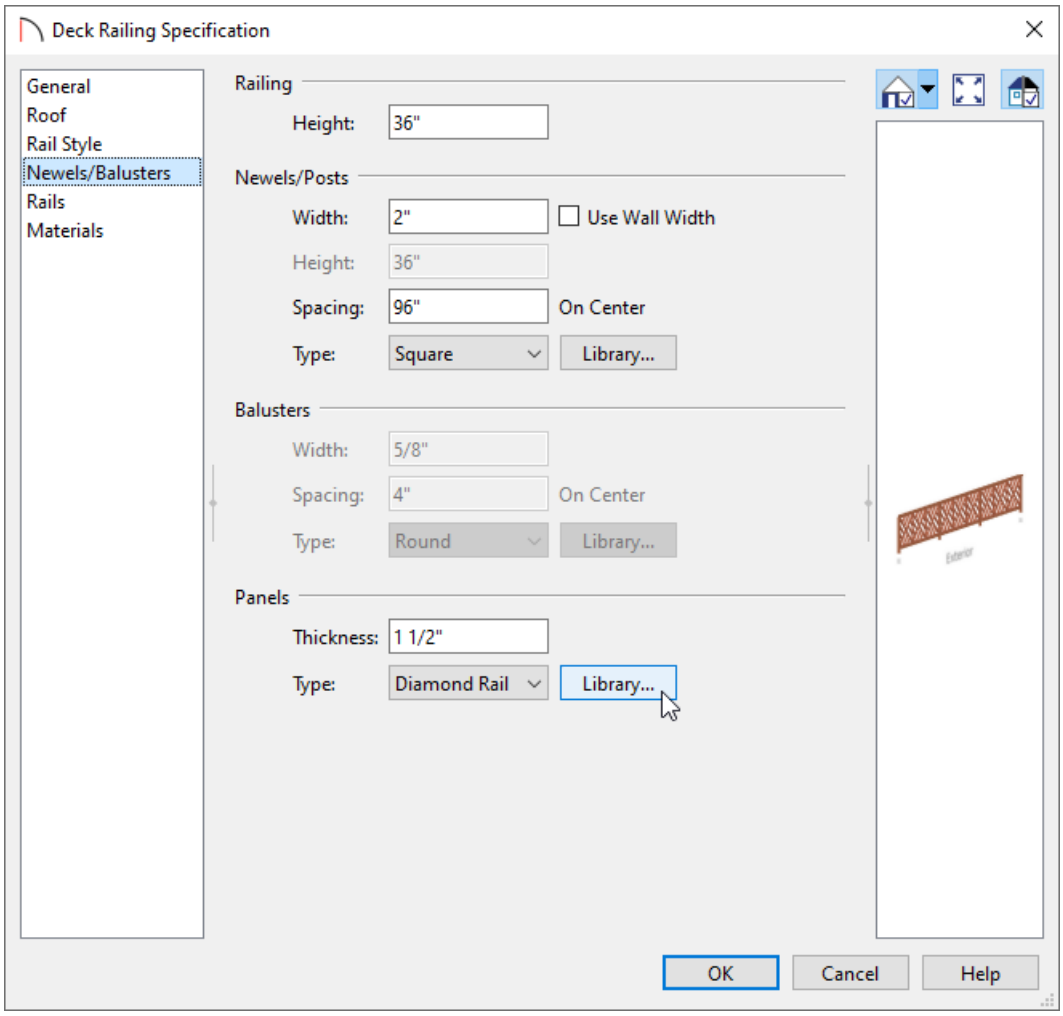


Railing panels are found in the Fences & Railings and Millwork library folders and are placed as individual objects within railings.

To add designer railing panels to railings

1. Using the **Select Objects** tool, click on a railing to select it, then click the **Open Object** edit button.

2. In the **Deck Railing Specification** dialog:



- On the Rail Style panel, under **Railing Type**, click the radio button beside **Panels.**
- On the Newels/Balusters panel, set the Railing's **Height**.
- Also on the Newels/Balusters panel, under the Panels section, click on the **Library** button to display the **Select Library Object** dialog and navigate to an appropriate panel type for your railing.
- Click **OK** to close each of dialogs and apply your changes.

3. Create a **Full Camera** view to see the results.

Related Articles

- Adding Detail to Customize a Porch (/support/article/KB-00760/adding-detail-to-customize-a-porch.html)
- Creating a Covered Patio (/support/article/KB-01010/creating-a-covered-patio.html)
- Creating a Custom Pergola (/support/article/KB-00889/creating-a-custom-pergola.html)
- Creating an Outdoor Kitchen (/support/article/KB-00984/creating-an-outdoor-kitchen.html)
- Moving Walls Using Dimensions (https://www.chiefarchitect.com/support/article/KB-01116/moving-walls-using-dimensions.html)

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