

Conceptual design tricks before starting your project

Last Updated: Tuesday, May 2nd, 2017, Created: Thursday, February 5th, 2004

For a project like building a deck, you will want to go as far as you can with realistic graphics before laying the foundation or building the structure because many people around you will certainly want changes as soon as they begin to visualize the deck itself.

There are a lot of simple 3D graphics programs that can help you to help people around you to understand where this is going. Put material list price tags on the back of the different designs and you might get the dreamers to come back to reality. You will probably want to avoid the 23 foot wide bottom step that my assistant designers forced me to build on my last deck.

SKETCHING

If you are not good at drawing sketches but you want to know what that new or extended deck might look like, just take a photo of the existing deck space from as far and as high up as you can get -- a neighbour's house, a tree, a shed roof or even just a ladder. Then make many photocopies of that photo blown up to a regular copy paper size. Now with a few straight lines you can draw your deck in complete perspective together with all the details of your house.

In the photo you can see that just a line parallel to the existing deck and back to the window makes a deck. Add some stairs and a couple of more rail lines and you are beginning to have a working drawing. Take a couple of dimensions, like the length, width and height and add them to the drawing. This is in fact enough for the guys at the renovation centre to make you full scale deck plans and materials lists. If it turns out to be too expensive, just sketch it a bit smaller and try again.

MANIPULATING PHOTOGRAPHY

For those of you who know how to play a bit with computer graphics, you can get an idea of what that new bay window will look like before you even hire a contractor.

Take a photo of your room and then cut out the window.

You can then go outside just in front of the window and take a photo of the view.

Then paste them together. You will have to reduce the size of the outdoor one to make up for the different camera positions.

Don't know how to do computer graphics. Go back to the first technique, simply take two photos, blow them up, with an exacto knife cut out the bay window and cut around any objects that are in front of the window. Place the outdoor photo behind the indoor photo and voila. You can reduce the size of the outdoor photo at the photocopy store until it comes into proper perspective compared to looking through the window at the real thing.

Keywords:

Decks, Design, Contractors, Bay Window, Tip, Windows, Techniques, Video - Included