



**DECKING &
CLADDING BOARDS**
MAINTENANCE AND CARE GUIDE



Fortress Decking and Cladding products are truly designed for easy living. That's why, unlike natural wood, Fortress' decking and cladding is ultra-low maintenance, easy to care for and requires no costly staining, sealing or varnishing, all while preserving the environment. All exterior building materials require some form of cleaning; all your Fortress Decking & Cladding boards need to have a long, beautiful life to keep its 'just-installed-good-looks' is an occasional sweep with soapy water and a gentle power wash.

Our Fortress Product experts are here to help you through every stage of owning and caring for your Fortress Decking or Cladding boards. For assistance please contact us at FortressBP.com or email info@fortressdeck.com.



BEFORE YOU START

The first step in caring for your Fortress decking & cladding boards is to ensure that it is properly installed. You are strongly urged to familiarize yourself with the Fortress' technical guides as a solid foundation and careful attention to installation are the first and most important steps to creating a long lasting installation. Installation guides are easily downloadable at FortressBP.com.

- If possible, try and install your Fortress decking & cladding boards last in the construction process. If this is not possible, your Fortress decking & cladding boards should be properly covered at all times with a sheet, tarp or construction grade plastic to avoid damaging the surface.
- Ensure that masonry/cement construction is set properly before ever installing the Fortress decking & cladding boards. Better yet, install your Fortress decking & cladding boards after all masonry/cement construction has been completed. It is important to protect Fortress decking & cladding boards during masonry construction. White or hazy residue from mineral deposits (efflorescence) can leach out of stone and masonry materials after water evaporates, leaving the deposits behind. This can only be prevented with complete and secure coverage of the Fortress decking & cladding boards surface area during the construction phase or installation of the boards after the masonry construction phase.
- Minerals from soils in certain arid and mountainous environments can also cause a hazing affect when deposited on the surface of Fortress decking & cladding boards surface. These deposits may be due to rain water mixing with runoff from roofs, soil/dirt, pathways, etc. When water evaporates off a deck it can leave behind a haze that can be washed away easily if tended to reasonably quickly. If this haze is left for a long period of time it can build up and create layers, making it more difficult to clean.
- A high pressure hose with a fan tip may be necessary in the cleaning and care of Fortress decking & cladding boards. Use at pressures under 1500psi and at a distance of at least 1½" away from the surface when spraying.

- When using soaps, follow the manufacturer's instructions and test in an inconspicuous area or on an off-cut to make sure the cleaner does not harm the board surface.
- The use of cleaning products that contain bleach or acid are not recommended.
- Certain ingredients in products such as insect repellent and sunblock contain chemicals that could cause a reaction and harm your Fortress decking & cladding boards surface when used as decking. Please take care to ensure you keep these products away from your Fortress decking & cladding boards.
- Swimming pool chemicals can be harmful to your deck's surface. If swimming pool PH levels are not kept normal the swimming pool water can become highly saturated and create a corrosive environment which will damage the Fortress decking & cladding boards surface. Best practice is to maintain a normal PH pool that does not have high saturation. If chemicals that are not for normal PH level balance in a swimming pool are used on the Fortress decking & cladding boards they can stain or mark the boards.

CLEANING FORTRESS DECKING & CLADDING BOARDS IN A DECKING APPLICATION: USING A HARD-BRISTLED BROOM OR HIGH PRESSURE HOSE

WHAT YOU WILL NEED:

- Soap/cleaner
- Water
- Bucket
- Sponge
- Hard-bristled broom
- A high pressure hose with fan tip

STEP 1:

Apply soapy water to your Infinity boards with a sponge or foaming sprayer.

STEP 2:

Lightly scrub Fortress decking & cladding boards with a hard bristled brush or broom. Be sure to remove all dirt and residue from the gaps between the boards. Sweeping with the grain is best.

STEP 3:

Rinse Fortress decking & cladding boards of all soap with clean water.

STEP 4:

If dirt and residue remain on Fortress decking and cladding boards, a high pressure hose may be more effective. Repeat steps 1 & 2, then rinse with a high pressure hose. See Pro Tips for more.

PRO-TIPS:

- Use a high pressure hose with a wide fan tip at pressure no greater than 1500psi and at least 1 1/2 feet away from the surface of Fortress decking & cladding boards.
- For best results, high pressure wash Fortress decking & cladding boards while lightly scrubbing with a hard-bristled brush and soapy water.

For best results, high pressure hose your deck while simultaneously brushing it with a hard-bristled broom and soapy water. We recommend pressure washing your deck once a month to keep it looking clean and cared for.

Please exercise extreme caution as pressure washing can damage your Infinity deck if done incorrectly. If you notice any changes to the surface of your deck, stop immediately and contact Fortress Building Products, visit <http://www.fortressbp.com>.

CARING FOR YOUR FORTRESS DECKING & CLADDING BOARDS

- The best way to keep your Fortress decking and cladding boards free from stubborn stains is to clean them off as soon as they occur. Oil, grease and food should be removed as soon as possible.
- Don't let organic matter build up on the top, sides, back or in between gaping of boards. Doing so may inhibit ventilation, natural movement or retain unwanted moisture. Leaves and sticks that get stuck in gaps inhibit ventilation, natural movement and retain moisture.

- Use a mat underneath your barbecue/grill area to help protect your Fortress decking & cladding boards when used in a decking application from grease marks and stains.
- Direct downward gutters and flashing away from Fortress decking & cladding boards away.
- Position all vents, especially dryer vents away from Fortress decking & cladding boards.
- Soil beneath your decking application should be porous to eliminate standing water.
- Never use metal spades or tools with sharp edges on the surface of your Fortress decking & cladding boards .
- It's best practice on any flooring surface to pick up objects when moving them rather than dragging them along.
- Apply floor protectors underneath the feet and legs of your furniture to avoid marks and scratches being transferred to your Fortress decking & cladding boards being used in a decking application. These are inexpensive and can be bought at most hardware stores.
- When using a ladder on your Fortress decking & cladding boards, be sure to place a piece of plywood firmly secured to the deck's surface to disperse the load of the ladder's feet. When using a ladder against or on top of Fortress decking & cladding boards use a block of wood to disperse the weight along with a non-marking cover to prevent scratches. Be sure to follow ladder manufacturer's safety tips.

CLEANING RECOMMENDATIONS

PROBLEM	FORTRESS SOLUTION
General cleaning	Dry sweep weekly, wash with warm soapy water and a sponge.
Mold & mildew removal	Apply warm, soapy water with a sponge, then brush with a hard-bristled broom or spray with a high pressure hose.
Oil & grease stains	Oil, grease and food spills must be removed as quickly as possible. Apply warm soapy water with a sponge, then brush with a hard-bristled broom or spray with a high pressure hose.
Rust stains	Apply warm, soapy water with a sponge, then brush with a hard-bristled broom or spray with a high pressure hose.
Construction marks	Rub a little alcohol on the affected area.
Minor scuff marks	Apply warm, soapy water with a sponge, then brush with a hard-bristled broom or spray with a high pressure hose.
Weathering	Infinity products will weather to a natural matte finish over time. Dry sweep and wash with warm soapy water to remove dirt and grime.
Bird droppings	Apply warm, soapy water with a sponge, then brush with a hard-bristled broom or spray with a high pressure hose.

CLEANING RECOMMENDATIONS

PROBLEM	FORTRESS SOLUTION
Ice removal	<p>Allow ice to melt then wipe away.</p> <p>Calcium chloride or rock salt work well in melting ice. A buildup of calcium chloride or rock salt may occur leaving a white residue. This can be easily removed with warm soapy water and a soft non-metal brush or hard bristled broom.</p> <p>Never use metal objects, such as a metal shovel to remove ice or snow from boards.</p>
Heat sources and fire	<p>Bamboo Plastic Composite products may retain heat when situated close to heat and fire sources. Proper caution should be taken when Fortress decking & cladding boards is installed near heat sources and fire to ensure no damage occurs to the deck.</p>
Rubber/vinyl/latex mats	<p>Rubber mats such as welcome or grill mats with rubber or latex backing can leave marks on your Fortress decking & cladding boards. These marks can be removed with soapy water; however it is best to use vinyl-backed mats or colorfast woven rugs to avoid any marks.</p>
Construction chalk	<p>Colored chalk often used in construction, can leave permanent marks on most surfaces. Where possible, avoid the use of such chalk on Fortress decking & cladding boards or use alternatives such as white chalk or baby powder.</p>
Tape marks	<p>Apply warm, soapy water with a sponge, then brush with a hard-bristled broom or spray with a high pressure hose.</p>

Note: The above conditions are considered to be normal maintenance and are therefore not covered by Fortress' Residential and Commercial limited warranties.

FORTRESS DECKING & CLADDING BOARDS AROUND POOLS AND FOUNTAINS

It is important to maintain a clean, healthy pool in order to ensure the life and look of your Fortress decking and cladding boards. Pool and fountain water may have an effect on your Fortress decking & cladding boards, especially if it is unbalanced. Pool and fountain water balancing is simply the relationship between different chemical measurements in your water. You will probably not change the water in your pool or fountain for many years. Continuous filtration and disinfection removes contaminants which keep the water enjoyable but this does not balance your water.

A swimming pool or fountain that is balanced has proper levels of pH, Total Alkalinity and Calcium Hardness. Maintaining a healthy, clean pool or fountain and making sure it has balanced levels will ensure the water will have little to no effect on your Fortress decking & cladding boards.

As good practice in swimming pool or fountain maintenance and hygiene, it is suggested that you regularly test your swimming pool or fountain water to ensure that the pH, mineral content and saturation index of your pool or fountain water is maintained correctly and within recommended levels. If your swimming pool or fountain water is not correctly maintained and the water's pH is not controlled as per recommended standards and ranges, it is likely that a high acidity or alkalinity environment can adversely affect your Fortress decking & cladding boards and their appearance. These environments are very corrosive and aggressive to most materials and colors, UV absorbers, plastic materials and will also lead to damage, discoloration or scaling of your pool cleaning equipment.

Use a good test kit to measure the chemical levels of pH, Total Alkalinity and Calcium Hardness on a weekly basis. Below is a list of best practice ranges:

pH = 7.4 - 7.6

Total Alkalinity = 80 - 125 ppm (Marble Plaster)

Total Alkalinity = 125 - 150 ppm (Fibreglass)

Stabilizer = 40 - 80 ppm

Free Chlorine = 1 - 3ppm

Combined Chlorine = 1 - 3ppm

Calcium Hardness = 175ppm - 225ppm

Copper = 0ppm

Iron = 0ppm

*Please note the above ranges are guides and may vary according to your region and climate

IMPORTANT! CLEANING PRODUCTS TO AVOID

We do not recommend using strong alkaline or acid containing detergents to clean the surface of your Fortress decking & cladding boards. These cleaning agents contain, amongst other things, bleaching agents like sodium hypochlorite and they may adversely affect your Fortress decking & cladding boards surface and the appearance thereof. It is best to avoid them.

You should now have plenty of information on how to simply and easily care for your Fortress decking & cladding boards. However if you have any further questions that we have not covered here, please do not hesitate to contact Fortress Building Products for assistance. For additional information, visit us at FortressBP.com or email info@fortressdeck.com.





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