

HINTS FOR HOMEBUYERS

Hit The Deck: Simple Tips To Spruce Up Your Outdoor Living Space

(NAPSA)—Today's savvy homeowners are extending their living space outdoors with decks and backyards that reflect their personal tastes and interests. To make the most of your outdoor living space, consider the following tips for transforming a blah backyard into an outdoor oasis:

- **Make materials matter.** If you want to spend more time enjoying—rather than maintaining—your deck, choose materials that need only a simple soap-and-water cleaning to keep a “like new” appearance for decades. Wood-alternative decking, such as Trex® Transcend™, resists fading, staining, scratching and mold growth—even after years of heavy foot traffic and exposure to the elements.

“For long-lasting beauty, choose high-performance wood-alternative decking that offers the natural look of wood while requiring minimal maintenance—so you never need to worry about sanding, staining or painting,” says Adam Zambanini, director of marketing at Trex, the nation's largest manufacturer of wood-alternative decking, railing and fencing products. “Also be sure to look for a product with superior wear-resistance and a 25-year warranty, which guarantees enduring good looks.”

- **Go green.** If you purchase CFL lightbulbs and water-conserving showerheads, think about expanding your eco-consciousness to the great outdoors by choosing wood-alternative decking made from recycled materials. An average 500-square-foot deck of this type would contain approximately 140,000 recycled plastic bags that might otherwise end up in landfills. With growing consumer interest in environmentally friendly products, a “green” outdoor living space also can increase the resale value of a home.

- **Design with distinction.** Whether country cottage or



mostly modern, select a style and color scheme for your deck that best complement your home's exterior and reflect the natural environment. For instance, Trex Transcend features rich saturated colors inspired by outdoor elements—such as deep-burnished bronze, earthy brown, pristine grey and spicy red.

In terms of shape, remember that decks no longer need to be simply square. Think “outside the box” and consider an outdoor living space that spans multiple levels or wraps around two or more sides of your home. Take time to examine product samples and seek out online tools—such as the Trex Color Visualizer and Deck Designer—which let you experiment with different products, finishes and layouts. Finally, consider using a hidden fastener system during installation. A smooth deck surface without visible nails or screws can be an attractive extension of your home's interior style and create a more comfortable environment for children and pets.

- **Get on the rails.** Railing can upgrade any deck from drab to fab—and it's often the one element that truly sets your outdoor living space apart from others in

the neighborhood. While many homeowners decide to complement the color of their decks with contrasting railing, the most popular choice is to create a matching color scheme. Of course, trends and tastes may change, so consider a modular railing system that makes it possible to mix and match posts, caps and rails, as well as easily switch out the balusters if your style eventually evolves to be more colonial than contemporary.

- **Don't forget finishing touches.** Today's outdoor living spaces may be “decked out” with luxuries ranging from stainless steel appliances to flat-screen televisions to stone fire pits. However, if budget constraints don't allow such grand plans, try built-in flower boxes or benches and colorful lounge furniture. Finally, don't underestimate the impact of fencing to perfectly “frame” your outdoor living space. An ideal fence will add privacy and visual interest—not just define your property line. There are several wood-alternative fencing options that offer superior durability and aesthetics, while being easy to install and maintain.

For more information, visit www.trex.com.