The Deck Application Process
The homeowner's guide to the permitting process for deck projects

What is a Deck?
A deck is an unroofed structure attached to a home.

When is a building permit required?
- If the deck is new, or stairs are being added
- If the deck or stairs are being expanded
- If structural members including hand/guard rails are being replaced

When is a permit not required?
- If only the decking boards are being replaced or resurfaced
- If the deck is being stained

What are the setbacks for decks?

**Contact Planning and Development at 703-257-8278 to find out the zoning district for your home.**

**Front yard setbacks (R1, R2, & R2S single family detached homes):**
- The minimum distance to the front property line is 35 ft.

**Rear yard setbacks (R1, R2, & R2S single family detached homes):**
- If the deck is 4 ft. tall or less from the ground, the minimum distance to the rear property line is 15 feet.
- If the deck is higher than 4 ft. from the ground, the minimum distance to the rear property line is 20 feet.

**Side yard setback requirements:**
- R1 zoned homes: 15 ft. to each side property line
- R2 and R2S zoned homes: minimum of 10 ft. to each side property line. However, the total distance added between each side yard must be at least 25 ft.

**Townhome (R3 & R5 zones) setback requirements:**
- The minimum distance to the R3 rear property line is 8 ft.
- (R5 Townhomes): maximum encroachment of 10 ft. into the setback.

**What if I live in the Historic District?**
All decks in the Historic Overlay District must meet the City of Manassas Historic Design Guidelines, and may need Architectural Review Board approval before being constructed. To find out if your property is located in the Historic District, please contact the Historic Preservation Planner at 703-257-8247.

**What about unroofed stairs and ramps?**
Unroofed stairs and platforms may extend further to property lines than decks for single family detached house districts. The front and side setback is reduced to a maximum of 5 ft., but there cannot be more than a 3 ft. encroachment. The rear setback may be reduced to 15 ft., but there cannot be more than a 10 ft. encroachment.
What if I live on a R1, R2, or R2S corner lot?

Property lines that are perpendicular to streets:
- Same as rear yard setbacks noted above.
Property lines that are parallel to streets:
- The minimum distance is 20 feet.

What are the application requirements?

1) **Building Permit Application**: The form is posted at [www.manassasva.gov/permits](http://www.manassasva.gov/permits). The cost is dependent on the extent of the proposed work.

2) **House Location Survey**: This is a document created by a Land Surveyor that shows an aerial view of your property. The picture of the property is scaled, and the proposed deck should be drawn on it to scale, including the location of steps.

3) **A Deck Detail**: These are plans showing how the deck will be constructed including 1) footing size, depth and location, 2) post size location and the spans between posts, 3) beam sizes and spans, 4) how the deck will be attached to the house, 5) decking material and direction of installation, 6) guard rail material and size.

Inspections need to be completed while the deck is under construction. Call 703–257–8278, visit [www.manassasva.gov/permits](http://www.manassasva.gov/permits) or email permitstatus@manassasva.gov to schedule an inspection.

Other Requirements

Properties may be subject to additional restrictions, such as easements, and foodplains. In addition, residents should contact their HOA, if applicable, as HOA approvals may also be required.