

How Much Will That Patio or Deck Cost?

From piers to patio pavers, there's a lot that goes into pricing your suburban oasis.



While you'll certainly enjoy lounging and eating on your deck or patio, installing either will also increase your home's resale value.

By [Geoff Williams](#) | June 30, 2014 | 9:15 a.m. EDT

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If you're a homeowner with nothing special outside your back door, you've probably felt the pang of patio or deck envy. You go to a friend's house, and he has an incredible layout in his backyard. Someone is grilling, and friends and family are lounging in comfortable chairs on the patio. Everyone's laughing and having fun, and you remember your own place and think: *I want this.*

So how much does a patio or deck cost? And what should you know before building one? Here are some basic blueprints to go over before you get too deep into daydreaming and planning.

A low-frills patio or deck is pretty cheap. Everyone's definition of cheap is different, but decks can be had for as low as \$1,000, according to Jessica Piha, a spokeswoman for [Porch.com](#), a website that helps homeowners find the right contractor. But the average deck costs \$8,300, Piha says.

And how much is a cheap patio? The cost to install a 200-square-foot concrete patio is about \$740 to \$840 on average, according to [HomeWyse.com](#), an online reference for home projects.

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But here's why you probably won't buy a cheap patio. If you're pining over someone's patio, you presumably don't want a concrete slab. You probably want something like attractive patio pavers (flat stones) or rocks to tread upon.

Home improvement chain stores sell the patio pavers for around a buck and upward. If you need, say, 800 inexpensive patio pavers for a 200-square-foot patio, that will generally equate to the price of a concrete patio. Not too bad, until you factor in the price of hiring someone to put them in the ground and any other extras your patio might need.

HomeWyse.com places the average cost of a 230-square-foot patio that uses patio stones from about \$2,850 to \$3,540. Want flagstone instead? Expect to pay between \$3,530 and \$4,440.

Don't go too cheap on the deck. If you install a cheap patio, someone could stumble on a loose rock, but at least you're unlikely to have any guests taken away in an ambulance.

As Marc Barnes puts it, "No one ever fell off a patio, no patio has ever collapsed under the weight of guests and no one has ever turned a turkey fryer onto a patio and set their house afire."

Barnes works in public relations, and it isn't surprising he feels this way. One of his clients is on "team patio." He represents Pine Hall Brick Company, which makes brick veneers as well as pavers for patios, driveways and other hardscapes.

His point underscores why you want someone competent building your deck. Even if it isn't made of wood but, say, plastic lumber or a wood-plastic composite, and you aren't worried about your deck suddenly catching on fire, it will still be at least several feet, and maybe a lot of feet, off the ground.

"A contractor who is proud they do only 'code-quality work' is proud they do the minimum allowed by law," says John Mease, who owns John Mease Home Inspections in Roswell, Georgia. He warns that you'll need a building permit to have a deck installed. It's also a project you want to wade into very carefully, he adds.

"Different areas have different requirements," Mease says. "if you just moved from the Northwest to the Southeast, do not build your new deck like you did back home. There's a reason there are different requirements for different climates."

For instance, if you live in a cold climate, you might find that the pier is required to extend below the frost line of the house so that a frost heave doesn't occur. For those who don't speak deck, a pier is a component that supports a deck, and a frost heave happens when ice causes your soil to swell during freezing conditions.

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Of course, if you don't know what a pier is or a joist (boards that offer support to the deck), you should hire someone to build your deck rather than doing it yourself. Mease recommends looking at your neighbors' decks, and when you find your favorite, ask who constructed it – then give the builder a call.



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