

Installation

Start with the 3 3/4" face boards. Clamp the face boards loosely into position on the front and back of the post (**Fig. 4**). Quick clamps make this a lot easier than F-clamps. Place a cedar shim under the bottoms to keep them about a 1/16" - 1/8" above the decking to prevent water from wicking up the grain.

On the full height posts I wedged them up to meet the horizontal trim board covering the bottom of the laminated beam. Make sure the boards on the half-posts are slightly higher than the 4x4 and level to allow the post caps to sit flat (**Fig. 7**).

Use the square to check the clearance on each side of the post at various points from top to bottom (**Fig. 5**). There should be a slight gap of about 1/8" on either side and the faces of the boards should be parallel. Use shims as needed to compensate for any twists in the 4x4 post. Use the level to check that the boards are plumb. The critical issue is to make sure the 4x4 is fully within the 3 3/4" width from the top to the bottom of the post.

Tools & Hardware Needed

- Hammer
- Square
- Level
- Quick Clamps / F clamps
- Cedar shims
- 2 1/2" Galvanized nails



Fig.4 Clamp face boards to the post



Fig. 5 Use shims to keep boards straight and square to each other.



Fig. 6 The bottom of this board was out of alignment so I used clamps & blocks to force it into position for nailing.



Fig. 7 This wrapped stair-post shows how the twisted 4x4 has been squared up.

Start from either the top or the bottom of the post and tack it with a nail. Don't fully set the nails until you're satisfied that everything is square. If the 4x4 has some significant bends you may need to adjust the board slightly as you work your way to the other end (**Fig. 6**).

In some cases I needed to use a clamp and blocks to exert enough sideways pressure to position the longer boards for nailing. The one-handed quick clamps are great for this and allow you to make precise adjustments with a squeeze of the trigger. You may need to adjust and clamp the board every couple of feet and nail it before moving to the next position. Nail the boards with two 2 1/2" galvanized nails every 16" - 18".

Once the face boards are nailed, clamp the sideboards into position.

Centre the boards on each face so that the reveal is equal on each board from the top to the bottom.

Use the square to check that the corners are square. Use the same procedure as you did with the face boards starting from either the top or the bottom. If the face boards are square, the side boards should sit flat against the edges with no gaps. Nail into the edge of the face board (not the 4x4 post) with two 2 1/2" galvanized nails every 18" - 24".

NOTE: You'll find that the reveal may vary depending on how straight the structural posts are. Mine varied from the planned 1/8" to virtually none in one place.

Once the posts are wrapped set the nails and fill the holes. I caulked the joints at the reveals but left nail locations visible for 'character'. Once the caulking had dried I added a second finish coat of paint.

Railings Part 1 – Milling the Details

Tools Required:

- Table saw
- Table-Mounted router
- Router bits:
 - Ogee
 - 3/8 beading
 - 45 degree chamfering

These railings are comprised of four structural components :

- Bottom Rail - 2 x 4 cedar (1 1/2" x 3 1/2")
- Balusters - 2 x 2 cedar (1 1/2" x 1 1/2")
- Top Rail - 1 x 4 cedar (3/4" x 3 1/4")
- Cap Rail - 2 x 4 cedar (1 1/2" x 3 1/2")

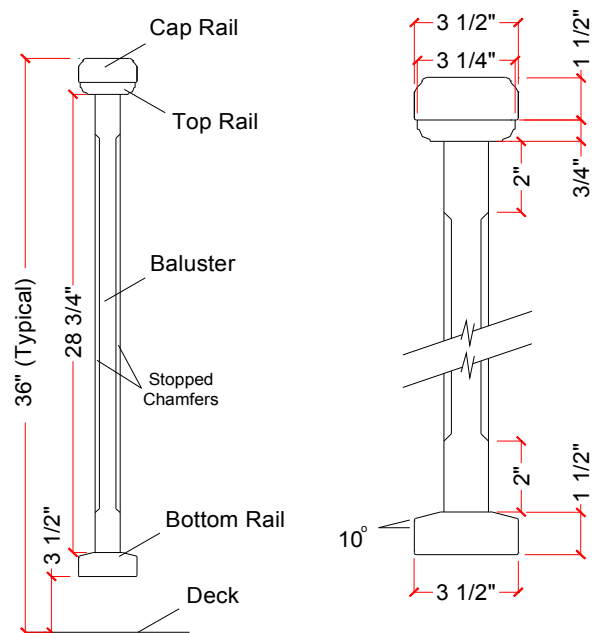


Fig. 8 Anatomy of a Railing

Building Code for Railings:

The railings detailed in these drawings are 36" high to meet the local building codes for this specific structure. Dimensions provided are based on this height. Structures with a deck level closer to grade may not require railings as tall. Conversely, decks further above grade may require taller railings (ie. 42" - 48" high). **Check your local codes before you begin your project.**

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