

PRODUCTS

by Scott Gibson



1. Wood Alternative

TruGrain decking, porch flooring, and siding are manufactured from rice husks—an agricultural waste product—along with salt, mineral oil, and plastic polymers. Westech calls the composite “Resysta” and says it was developed in Europe. TruGrain requires minimal maintenance, is weather-resistant and waterproof, is impervious to insects and fungi, and is recyclable, according to the maker. The decking and tongue-and-groove porch flooring come in standard lengths, in a variety of colors. One-inch by 5½-inch decking retails for \$5.50 per lineal foot, while 1-inch by 7½-inch decking costs \$7.20 per foot. Westech Building Products, westechbp.com

2. Vinyl Columns

Designed to support more than 17,000 lb. of axial loading without an internal metal or wood post, Fairway Building Products’ LandMarke Builder’s Vinyl Column is 8⅜ inches in diameter and 9 feet tall and can be cut to size in the field with common tools and blades. The mounting plate has an uplift capacity of 1,750 lb., according to the manufacturer. Once the attachment plates are mounted at the base and the header, trim rings slide into place and conceal the fasteners. A column costs about \$200; two attachment plates, trim, and fasteners are another \$82. Fairway Building Products, fairwaybp.com



3. Wood Finish

Cabot says its new Cabot Gold finish gives exterior wood surfaces the appearance of interior hardwood floors. After a deck has been stripped of stain, paint, and sealer, the finish is applied in two coats. The first, which covers 250 to 350 square feet per gallon, should dry for at least 24 hours before the second is applied. The second coat covers 300 to 400 square feet per gallon and needs to dry for three days before the deck is used. Cleanup is with mineral spirits. Cabot Gold is available in four colors—oak, walnut, cherry, and mahogany—and retails for about \$20 (quart) or \$46 (gallon). Cabot Woodcare, cabotwoodcare.com



4. Outdoor Entertainment Centers

Upscale decks often have upscale kitchens, with grills, sinks, cabinets, and more. Now they can have TVs too. Brown Jordan Outdoor Kitchens has added a line of outdoor entertainment centers with retractable supports for televisions. The company said the new line is a natural result of growing interest from homeowners and designers in creating “backyard havens.” Available with a variety of powder-coated finishes and door styles, units are 6 feet long and 30 inches deep and start at about \$15,000. Brown Jordan Outdoor Kitchens, brownjordanoutdoorkitchens.com



5. Accent Light

Feeney has introduced an LED Post Accent Light for the company's DesignRail system. The 24-volt light, which debuted at this year's International Builders' Show, comes with a powder-coated finish that is matched in color to Feeney's DesignRail aluminum railing. It's attached to the face of the post and casts light downward. Protected by a polycarbonate lens, the LED lamp will last for as many as 50,000 hours and has a high color rendering index, according to Feeney. The light is compatible with third-party dimmers and switches and retails for \$68. Feeney, feeneyinc.com

6. Joist Tape

Trex Protect is a peel-and-stick butyl tape that's applied to the tops of joists, rim joists, and ledgers to protect the wood against decay. According to the manufacturer, the tape also increases the holding power of deck screws; acts as a barrier between treated wood and galvanized metal in hardware such as joist hangers; and seals holes around deck fasteners to prevent water infiltration. Trex recommends the tape be applied in temperatures warmer than 50°F. Tape comes in 50-foot rolls in two widths: 1 5/8 inches and 3 1/8 inches. Joist tape lists for \$18.60 a roll; the wider, beam tape costs \$33.30 per roll. Trex, trex.com



7. Deck Tension Tie

MiTek's new Adjustable Deck Tension Tie resists lateral loads that can pull a deck away from the structure of a house and brings builders into compliance with the 2015 IRC provision requiring hold-downs rated at 750 pounds in each of four deck locations. The ADTT-TZ can be installed with the screw adjustment up to 4 3/8 inches below the deck joist to avoid the need for blocking extensions, according to the company. Ties are made from 14-gauge steel with a G-185 galvanized coating, and they cost \$3.50 each. MiTek Builder Products, mitekbuilderproducts.com



8. Concealed Beam Tie

For those homeowners who don't want to see any hardware, a new connector from Simpson Strong-Tie provides a strong but mostly invisible link between a beam and a post, the company says. Designed to be used with 4-by, 6-by, and larger beams and posts, Simpson's CBTZ consists of a galvanized steel tube—which is inserted into both the beam and the post—and steel dowel pins, which anchor the tube. The connector is available in two versions: the CBT2Z with four dowels for a minimum 4x4 post, and the CBT4Z with six dowels for a 6x6 post and a 6x8 beam. Load ratings are available at Simpson's website. Prices range from \$30 to \$40, depending on size. Simpson Strong-Tie, strongtie.com ♦