



## Post Protection

by David Balzer

Rather than pour concrete piers to support my deck framing, I prefer to embed PT support posts in the ground. Installation is quicker and easier, and I like the lateral stability that the embedded posts have. However, I have never liked the idea of exposed wood being in direct contact with the soil. To address this, I slip composite post sleeves—which are readily available and long enough to reach down to frost depth in my area—over the posts before installing them (1).

I also add galvanized steel hardware, like USP's PA44E post

anchors or Simpson Strong-Tie's AB series of standoff post bases, to the bottom of the post to lift it up off the footing and allow for drainage (2). After backfilling around the post, I finish off the top with a couple of inches of gravel so that soil doesn't come in contact with the post (3). Even though the PT posts I use are treated for ground contact, I feel better having the added protection against the elements. ♦

*David Balzer is a deck builder in Rockford, Ill.*

## Send Us Your Tips

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