

Screws vs. Hidden Fixings

A lot of people ask us why we don't supply hidden fixings, we have a few reasons, here are the main ones:

- Screws add to the load bearing capability of the board whereas hidden fixings give a much smaller (if any) gain in overall board strength.
- Hidden fixings are generally more fiddly to fit.
- Hidden fixings are more expensive.
- When screwing through the board into the framework, you are creating a single rigid structure which will stay secure for many years to come, hidden fixings do not add the same structural integrity to the deck assembly.
- You need smaller end gaps with screwed down boards.
- Composite decking does expand and contract slightly with temperature variations. By screwing down the board, you are restricting that expansion/contraction to within each bearer span therefore meaning you can leave smaller end gaps. With hidden fixings you need to leave larger end gaps as they let the board expand & contract along its length with little or no restriction.
- Hidden fixings are just that, 'hidden' but our stainless and colour coated screws are hardly visible anyway (see picture), they sit at the bottom of the groove in the deck board out of harm's way.
- Most hidden fixing systems leave you with a BIG problem if you ever need to remove a board – you have to rip up all the deckboards leading up to the board to be removed one in order to change it – you don't have that problem with screwed down boards.
- Final reason? Many suppliers of hollow decking will rave about hidden fixings & try to tell you that screws are unsightly, but the REAL reason they do this is because hollow boards don't have the strength to take a screw! The screw would break the top surface of the board as it was driven in, it's because of this problem that hidden fixings are so widely used. We have covered the reasons why you should choose solid boards over hollow in the Solid vs Hollow Information Sheet, should you need further convincing.

