

## Ten top tips

From the Building Commission

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## How to prevent your decks and balconies from collapsing

Inspection statistics reveal that many rotting balconies and decks could cause injury or even death in the event of a collapse.

The following tips will help you maintain decks and balconies and, importantly the safety of those who use them:

- 1. Look for any compression or deformation of the supporting posts, beams or joists. Decayed timber, will feel soft and spongy.
- 2. Check underneath decks or balconies and look for deterioration, particularly where timber members join.
- 3. Make sure the deck or balcony structure is properly fixed to the building.
- 4. Check the base of timber posts for rot.
- 5. Check brackets and bolts for signs of rust.
- 6. Ensure that posts are securely anchored to the foundation in concrete or attached to concrete footings using proprietary metal brackets.
- 7. Make sure water does not pool at the base of a post or wall support.
- 8. Check handrails and balustrades to ensure they are not rotted, corroded, loose or unstable.
- 9. Be aware that certain timbers are more susceptible to external environments, requiring frequent inspections.
- 10. If you suspect a problem with your balcony or deck, contact a building surveyor, structural engineer or registered builder, architect or building inspector.

For further information or to obtain a brochure on balcony or deck maintenance, visit the Building Commission website www.buildingcommission.com.au

The Building Commission provides these tips as a guide to help consumers find out more information and assist their building process.