



Nova USA

How To Install Trailer Decking Screws

Marking Hole Locations

- Avoid Old Holes:** Do not re-use old holes; they are typically located in the center of the cross-member's width.
- Target the Web:** Mark new locations on top of the deck to hit the cross members perfectly.
- Placement:** Pre-drill closer to the vertical side (web side) of the cross member for better structural integrity.



Predrilling

Should be done in three steps

1. PRE-DRILL – Create the pilot hole.
2. COUNTERSINK: Create the seat for the screw head
3. CLEAN OUT: Remove debris to prevent fastener binding



Step 1. Pre-Drilling

- Procedure:** Drill completely through the wood and the metal cross member.
- Location:** Two holes per location, approx. 1" in from each edge.
- Bit Sizing (Critical):**
 - For 1/4" x 20 TPI screws: Use a #1 (0.228") bit.
 - For 5/16" x 18 TPI screws: Use a 9/32" (0.2812") bit.
 - Tip: The inside diameter of the screw shank should be the same as the outside diameter of your pilot bit.



Step 2. Countersink

- Goal:** Cut an even 45-degree bevel around the hole.
- Depth:** The screw should sit flush or slightly below the wood surface.
- Why it Matters:** Prevents the screw from splitting the wood (especially hardwoods) and ensures the screw head does not sit above the deck surface.
- Tip:** Using an adjustable stop collar will aid in repetition and ensure you do not overdrive your countersink bit. The inside diameter of the stop collar should be the same as the outside diameter of the countersink.



Step 3. Clean Out the Hole

- Tool:** Compressed air.
- Reasoning:** Metal and wood shavings remaining in the hole will bind with the screw threads.
- Result:** Prevents binding and allows the screw to drive in cleanly.



TIPS

- **Thermal Expansion:** Metal components (aluminum floors) expand on hot days.
Tip: Install wood tight against aluminum on hot days; gaps will minimize as the temperature drops.
- **Moisture Swelling:** Wood expands in **width and thickness** (not length) when wet.
 - Coating all four sides with a penetrating oil-based finish like ExoShield Apitong Oil will aid in dimensional stability of the wood.
 - Employing an endgrain sealer like Nova's ExoWax will prevent the wood from absorbing and desorbing water on the end grain, which is where most water ingresses and egresses.
- **Spacing Standard:** A **1/8" gap** edge-to-edge between deck boards is generally recommended.
- A corded drill with a clutch is the preferred driver. This will ensure you do not overdrive the fasteners.

