

# Balustrade FAQs

## Q. What is a Balustrade?

A Balustrade is a railing, or support system forming a divide between one area and another. This divide can be for safety, or aesthetic reasons. Balustrades can often be installed at the edge of a raised area such as a veranda or balcony and can be used as a prevention to stop people from falling over the edge. Balustrades are available in a range of materials, including timber, metal, composite and glass.

## Q. How to fit a Decking Balustrade?

When attaching your Balustrade to your decking frame, it is vital that it is installed safely and securely. Please see the Cladco Balustrade Installation Guide for a step-by-step guide on how to install your Cladco Balustrade System.

## Q. What does Balustrade mean?

The word Balustrade has 17th-century Italian origins, when the word 'balusters' referred to the columns used in traditional Italian architecture. Today, Balustrade means a row of balusters (posts) topped by a rail or a low parapet or barrier, designed for safety around areas such as raised deckings or balconies.

## Q. How to build a Decking Balustrade?

Balustrades can be made out of a variety of materials such as powder coated aluminium, timber, metal, composite or glass. A Balustrade simply creates a protective or aesthetic divider between one area such as a balcony and the surrounding other areas. To install the Powder-Coated Aluminium Balustrades, please follow our Installation Guide.

## Q. What is the best material for a Balustrade?

Choosing a style of Balustrade for your property is a tough decision, as different materials bring distinctive styles, features and benefits. Cladco offers a premium Powder-Coated Aluminium Balustrade System that has superior strength properties when compared to alternatives on the market. A major advantage with Cladco Aluminium Balustrade is that it can be painted meaning you can ensure it compliments any design it is attached to.

Alternative options available on the market are timber, glass, composite or wire.

Timber Balustrades are more likely to need constant care and maintenance and may not last as long. Glass also requires significant maintenance and thorough cleaning.

Cladco Powder-Coated Balustrade is a superior material meaning it does not need ongoing maintenance and will stand the test of time with its long-lasting and durable properties.

Visit the product page for more information about Cladco Aluminium Balustrades.

## Q. What is a staircase Balustrade?

Many architects and interior designers often refer to a staircase Balustrade as a 'bannister'. Balustrades are usually used on the exterior of a Composite Decking project and can be a great way to secure off an area or set a divide between to aspects of an outdoor space.

To install a staircase Balustrade System, please call our helpful sales

team on **01837 659901** who can advise you on the best solution.

## Q. How to work out Balustrade spacing?

The required spacing between Balustrade Posts differs from materials used and the thickness of materials used. Cladco Profiles Balustrades are designed and manufactured as a complete section, no self-assembly or spacing required, simply install each section between the Posts. Cladco Profiles offers a range of Handrail widths, ranging from 1000mm to 2600mm, each at 1050mm in height.

## Q. How to fit Balustrade to Decking:

Balustrades can be fitted with ease to Cladco Solid Core Composite or PVC Decking. Refer to the easy-to-follow Installation Guide.

## Q. What is the difference between a Balustrade and a Handrail?

A Balustrade System is made using vertical posts which have vertical or horizontal rows between the sections. Balustrades are often supplied with a handrail section at the top for a comfortable design when using the Balustrade for support.

Handrails are often a section of material which can be used for support or guides, along corridors or upstairs, designed as a curved section which can comfortably be gripped by a hand.

Cladco Balustrade System incorporates an easy-to-hold handrail across the top of the Balustrade System matched to the same powder-coated material.

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## **Q. Is planning permission required for a Balustrade installation?**

If your project requires a Balustrade, and is defined as 'out of character' or 'detrimental to the local environment', or if you are planning on building in a conservation area, then planning permission may need to be required. Check with your local planning department, building surveyor or local authority before beginning work, if in doubt.

## **Q. Will aluminium Balustrades scratch or rust?**

Aluminium Balustrades are less likely to scratch or rust. Aluminium is a durable and highly resistant material which will not corrode or rust over time. The perfect material for outdoor installations. Should any damage occur to the material, this may damage the exterior surface integrity and should be painted at first chance.

## **Q. Balustrades made with powder-coated material, do they rust?**

The powder coating on aluminium Balustrades is a thick, dense finish, providing the Balustrade with a durable long-lasting finish. With a number of benefits:

1. The thick coating protects the material from scratching, fading and rusting.
2. The coating can be applied quickly and easily, only one coat is necessary to see results.
3. Colours or other custom finishes can be added to the powder coating for a unique and stylised protective look.

4. Powder-coated aluminium Balustrades produce less volatile organic compounds than alternative finishing processes, making it more environmentally friendly.

5. As the powder coating is applied using a heated spray, an even finish across all surfaces occurs with no drips or traces of application. A smooth, seamless finish.

## **Q. How strong is the Cladco Aluminium Balustrade?**

Cladco Aluminium Balustrades are stronger than timber or composite options, and are not susceptible to rotting, warping or splintering. Toughened glass Balustrades offer similar strength, however require ongoing care and maintenance.

Cladco Balustrades are a superior choice of Balustrade, offering peace of mind when installed on any project.

## **Q. What are some of the benefits of the Cladco Aluminium Balustrade system?**

- Cladco Powder-Coated Aluminium Balustrade Systems can be painted in any colour you like, to complement or contrast your property.

- Balustrades are corrosion resistant and do not need to be painted, sealed or varnished like traditional timber balustrades. Cladco Balustrades require less maintenance overall than alternatives such as glass.

- If you're pairing the Balustrade to your Composite or PVC Decking, the Balustrade material offers a superior look and will finish off the decking area to a high-end standard. The

low maintenance material means there is no need to constantly clean or maintain it as you would with a glass balustrade.

- Airflow can travel freely with Cladco Balustrade unlike solid sections of glass or timber. The design of the Balustrade ensures high winds will not affect the stability.

- The Powder-Coated Aluminium Balustrade sections are simple to install, with full fixing and Installation Guides available.

- Unlike glass materials, aluminium is easy to cut to size, any competent DIYer should be able to fix and install the Balustrade with relative ease.

- Unlike timber, where the colours can vary and fade over time, aluminium colours stay uniform and will not fade over time.

- Unlike glass, which will show smudges, finger marks and dirt easily, aluminium Balustrades do not require regular cleaning.

## **Q. What if I live near the coast? Will the sea air effect the aluminium material?**

Cladco Aluminium Balustrades are suited for any location. Thanks to the corrosion-resistant properties found in aluminium, unlike steel and timber the material will not suffer extensive corrosion due to exposure to sea air.

## **Q. How do I paint over powder-coated aluminium?**

### **1. Clean the Substrate**

Remove any grease or dirt which could inhibit the subsequent coating

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from attaching. Ensure all dirt particles are removed. This can be done either by hand with a sponge and soap, or if the surface has a lot of dirt, pressure washing with an alkaline-based degreasing detergent can be used. Ensure all washing products are thoroughly rinsed off leave the Balustrade to dry.

## 2. Remove Corrosion

If the Balustrade is older, the powder coating on the material may have started to corrode, leaving a small number of corrosion deposits. Ensure your powder coating does not show signs of breaking down, otherwise the coating will need to be stripped off. A chalky, white residue over the powder coating is a form of rust and must be removed. A nylon scouring pad will work or a power sander will remove any red or white residue and corrosion, leaving a plain metal surface. Once all rust and corrosive coating has been removed, ensure any dust is cleared thoroughly.

## 3. Abrade the Metal Surface

One of the most difficult obstacles in painting over the powder coating is ensuring the new coating bonds to the aluminium. Sanding the substrate removes the gloss from the original powder coating so that the fresh coating will stick. If parts of the powder coating remain it is important to feather the edges, so that there aren't any bumps or ridges on the surface. Once this is done, ensure any dust or residue is removed.

## 4. Mask off Adjacent Surfaces

Some areas may need to be protected from the primer or paint. Areas can be covered with decorators' tape, masking paper or sheeting, preventing the surfaces becoming resprayed or over-sprayed.

## 5. Prime the Substrate

As soon as the metalwork is cleaned, removed of any rust and thoroughly dried, the areas can be primed and left to cure. It is best to do this as soon as possible, so the exposed areas do not get dirty or oxidised. Certain primers are appropriate for different alloys, so ensure the correct primer is used for the different alloys and aluminium. To check if you're using the correct primer, apply to a small area if the primer smears or can be wiped off with ease, then further abrading is needed.

## 6. Spray Apply the Top Coat

There are many top coats available on the market, ensure you purchase the top coat designed for the material you wish to paint. A top coat can be selected in a choice of colours and gloss levels appropriate for painting over powder-coated aluminium, but it is crucial to select the right one. The top layer needs to be chosen to adhere to the primer or directly on to the aluminium if a primer hasn't been used. Again, a professional spray-painting company will ensure the most appropriate product is used.

