



Frequently Asked Questions

Patriot Docks has one of the most extensive marine blogs on the web! Here you will find answers to some of the most commonly asked questions in the marine industry and about the different products we offer.

What is the process of shipping and receiving my new Patriot dock?

After the order has been received, the product is palletized on a 4 ft. x 8 ft. pallet and shipped via an LTL freight service. When the shipment arrives at the destination terminal, the freight carrier will contact the customer directly to coordinate the delivery. The freight service will require that someone be at the delivery point to inspect and sign for the shipment. If shipped to a business with a forklift or loading dock, the pallet will be removed using said facilities. If shipped to a residence, the driver will be able to move the pallet to the back of the trailer. The shrink wrap and banding will then be cut and the contents will be unloaded by hand, no piece weighs more than 50 lbs.

What is the expected lead time and transit time when placing an order to be shipped to my home or business?

Generally, the order lead time during peak season (Spring) is about seven business days. When the shipment is ready, it is then picked up by an LTL freight service from Patriot Dock's shipping location in Minnesota. Transit times can range widely depending on the destination location. Generally, transit time will range from ten to fourteen business days to reach the east or west coast. Transit time within the mid-west is typically two to five business days. Please send us a message with further questions regarding transit and lead times!

How easy is it to assemble a Patriot dock?

Assembling the Patriot dock is a little like putting together an erector set. Each 4 ft. by 8 ft. frame unit is assembled using eighteen bolts and takes about 30 minutes per frame to assemble the dock (i.e. a 32' straight dock will take about two hours to assemble). Assembly typically goes quicker after the first frame has been completed. We have detailed, written instructions as well as a step by step assembly video to guide customers through the assembly process. Knowledgeable staff is available to answer any questions you may have, send us a message or give us a call!

How much does a Patriot dock weigh?

The Patriot aluminum frame weighs about 45 lbs. and decking options weigh between 25 lbs for an aluminum panel up to 35 lbs for a cedar panel. Generally, one can figure a Patriot dock to weigh about 150 lbs per 8' section complete with decking and supports. With the decking removed for install and removal the dock weighs about half what it would when completely set up and installed.

What is the support span and weight capacity of a Patriot Dock?

The maximum span between supports of the aluminum frames is 16 ft. The weight limit of the Patriot Docks is 40 psf. The Patriot frames have been load tested at over 1000 lbs. on the center of

a 16 ft. span. For commercial or high traffic applications, it is recommended that additional supports be added. This will increase the stability by providing more contact with the lake bottom and by reducing the span between supports, the weight capacity is increased as well.

What size and length support posts are included with the dock package?

Patriot Docks uses 1-1/2" i.d., schedule 40, electro galvanized pipe for support posts. Standard dock packages include 4 ft. posts at up to 16' from shore, 6 ft. posts at up to 32' from shore and 8 ft. posts starting at 40 ft from shore. The longest support posts Patriot Docks is able to ship is 8 ft. long. Longer posts can be purchased from home improvement stores for deep water or custom applications.

How do I determine the length of dock I need?

The dock length will need to be long enough to reach the desired water depth for boating and/or swimming. The minimal depth customers typically need to dock a boat is between two and three feet with four to five feet being optimal.

Which support style should I use to best suit my lake bottom (sand, mud, rock)?

The three most common lake bottoms are going to be sand, mud/muck and rock. Floating docks will work with all lake bottoms and may be the best option for situations that are exceptionally mucky or rocky. Floating docks are usually secured in place using pilings driven into the lake bottom or by using multiple anchors. Rolling docks are highly recommended for ease of use and will work with any of these lake bottom types as long as they aren't too extreme. In situations where the lake bottom is very soft, wheels can be doubled up to provide more tread surface, increasing the rolling surface and reducing the amount of settling. Rolling over very soft or rocky lake bottoms can be difficult to maneuver and can cause added strain on the dock frames. Patriot offers a brace kit that reinforces the vertical pipe going down to the wheel helping to ensure that the vertical support doesn't bend or twist. Stationary docks work very well with sandy bottoms and are an option for soft and rock lake bottoms as long as the flat bases can find firm ground and don't have large rocks preventing the the bases from sitting level. Stationary docks need to be carrier or floated into position in any situation.

Which decking option is right for me?

Each decking option has its pros and cons. The aluminum decking is the lightest, longest lasting and most rigid style deck. The two tone, wood grain powder coat finish is beautiful and very durable. Aluminum decking is quickly becoming the industry standard for dock decking and is our most popular and recommended style of decking. The poly decking is maintenance free and cool to the touch. The textured surface provides excellent traction and the slotted design allows for great water and light filtration. The cedar decking is an economical, naturally beautiful and timeless decking option. The kiln dried western red cedar is naturally weather resistant and is sure to last many years.

What is the process of installing and removing the dock with the seasons?

Before installing or removing a Patriot Dock, the drop in decking should be removed to reduce the overall weight of the pier. If a rolling dock, the flat base supports should be raised to the highest

setting then the dock is ready to be rolled in or out. If a stationary dock, the decking should be removed and the dock will need to be carried or floated in or out and typically requires multiple people. Floating docks can be floated to or from the shoreline and lifted to or from shore. Every application is different and may very well require additional steps and precautions depending on the dock configuration and lake shore.

How is the dock raised and lowered when the water level changes?

The height is adjusted manually at the support posts. Make sure there is no additional weight on the dock while the adjustments are being made. Making an adjustment typically requires getting into the water to loosen the set bolts on the Post Bracket, adjust the frames to the desired height and tightening up the set bolts again. Repeat this process at each support post, adjusting both sides of the dock as you work towards the lake end.

How far out of the water should my dock frames be positioned?

The dock framework should always be positioned above the water. Generally, a couple inches above the water at its highest point is typical. If large waves are a common occurrence then the dock should be positioned so that the frame clears the waves.

How to store the dock during the off season?

Whichever style dock you choose, stationary, rolling or floating, the off season storage is generally the same. The decking should be removed from the dock, stacked up and covered. The dock should then be rolled or carried into position on shore for storage. Once in place, all of the supports should be lowered and secured to support the dock frame. If you have a dock longer than the shoreline allows for storing in one piece, the dock length can be split into multiple sections using our Quick Connects (PN10808). It is common for floating docks to be left to freeze in place on smaller bodies of water with no risk of ice heaves. Another option for floating docks is to turn the dock inward so that the dock is up against and parallel with the shoreline, again, as long as there is no possibility of ice heaves.

Can I add more wheels to my existing dock?

Additional wheels can be added to any dock. Patriot rolling docks include a pair of wheels on the lake end of the dock. It is common on longer docks for additional wheels to be added throughout the pier to help distribute some of the load while moving. Adding wheels to an existing dock is as simple as adding a pair of axle converters, pair of wheels, pair of stop clamps and axle pipe to the existing vertical supports. It is recommended that the wheels be positioned outside the width of the dock frame on docks 4 ft. wide for maximum stability (use 6' axle pipe).

Should the dock wheel float or sink?

For most applications, the dock wheel works best when it is allowed to fill with water and sink. The wheel has one hole in the tread left from the manufacturing process. It is recommended that two, half inch holes are drilled to allow water to enter the wheel and air to escape. There is four dimples toward the outside diameter of the wheel (about 8-1/2" from center hub) on the hub side of the wheel, these dimples should be used as locations for drilling additional holes. If using the wheel on a heavy application such as a boat lift or a heavy dock, it may be helpful to have the

additional buoyancy from the floating wheels. To keep the wheels from filling with water, a silicone caulk or sealant can be used in the single manufacturing hole to keep water out and air in.

Can I add Patriot frames to my existing dock?

Patriot frames are very versatile! Patriot frames can be added to existing Patriot Docks, no matter when the frames were purchased! They are a direct mount and when adding additional length, the frames are typically added to the shore end of the existing dock. Patriot frames may also be attached to other manufacturer's docks whether aluminum, steel or wood framing. The two most common ways of joining Patriot frames to an existing dock is to either bolt the frame on directly or to use a set of Quick Connects for a little more flexibility.

Can I add a floating dock to a stationary pier?

Patriot offers a special hinge product specifically designed for joining a floating pier to a stationary pier. The Floating Hinge Kit allows for the floating pier to articulate from the stationary unit. This allows the floating pier to move up and down freely with the waves and changing water levels.

How is the decking secured to the frame?

The aluminum and poly decking are able to be secured to the frame using deck locker bolts. The cedar decking does not incorporate a deck locking mechanism.

Can I retro-fit my old dock with Patriot's Dock-Top decking options?

Dock-Top decking is an excellent choice for replacing old worn out decking and will fit in most 4 ft. wide docks. The maximum support span for Dock-Top decking is 24 in. but these panels will also work with lesser spans like 16 in. If using the aluminum panels for the retro-fitting project, the Deck End Caps may be necessary to finish off the edge of the panel if the dock frame doesn't cover the decking's exposed edges.

Can I moor/dock a boat or pontoon to a Patriot Dock?

Yes, it is very common that boats are moored to Patriot Docks. Here are a couple of best practices when mooring a boat to the dock. If mooring a large, heavy boat, consider adding a couple extra supports to add stability and weight to the dock to support the load of the boat. The boat should be tied off to the vertical angles of the aluminum frame or to the dock supports. If installing cleats or mooring whips to the dock, the accessories should be mounted through the decking and through the aluminum framework for the strongest connections. Add bumpers or fenders between the dock and the boat to avoid collisions.

Warranty replacement and other replacement parts?

Replacement parts are available if any issue does occur. If an aluminum component of the dock frame fails under normal use, Patriot Docks will replace the part in accordance with the warranty policy. Generally, this requires the defective item be shipped back to the factory and a replacement piece will be sent out upon receiving and inspecting the defective part. If a part or component is damaged due to user error, replacement parts can be purchased through a dealer or by contacting Patriot Docks directly.

How do I go about regular servicing of my Aluminum Screw Jacks?

The Aluminum Jacks can be serviced at home. The quickest way to apply grease to the jack screw is to insert the grease gun hose into the open jack tube on the bottom of the jack. Apply grease to the screw then operate the jack to distribute the grease along the screw shaft. The Aluminum Jack can be completely disassembled for comprehensive cleaning or repair by removing the roll pin in the top hex nut.

Are hand railings available for Patriot Docks?

Yes, hand railings are available for Patriot Docks. There are a couple ways to create a railing for the dock. The first and most economical method is to use galvanized fence brackets and light duty chain to create a chain railing. A solid railing can be created using our railing adapters atop the steel support posts where either aluminum or plastic pipe is used horizontally to create the solid railing between vertical supports.