

Here is how they laid deck planks at the turn of the century, hope it helps out and makes your project a success for true scale.

Laying of wooded decks 1900 era, From the “Naval Artificer’s Hand book” printed 1896,(an Artificer is a repairman, who is clever and makes do with what's on hand)

Wooden decks on battleships and cruisers are of yellow pine, usually 4” to 5” sq on the main decks, 3” on upper decks and 2 ½” on the bridges. (Note that the yellow pine would turn blackish when exposed to the weather and salt water) Decks of the bridges are sometimes white pine. Plank shears and margins of teak are usually fitted at all hatches and bounders of decks, wakes of coal scuttles and around barbettes.

After getting the planks of decking in a straight line, thru bolt from under side and counter bore the holes from the top side to fit the bolt heads and a wooden deck plug. Deck bolts shall have a small grommet of lamp wick, soaked in white lead. The deck plug shall be dipped in white lead before being driven in and planed flush. A bevel called a (out gauge) of about 1/16” shall be cut on the top of each deck plank, running to nothing at the center to prevent splintering edges. The small gap between the deck planks shall be caulked with one thread of roven cotton first followed by 2 threads of oakum, then pitch.

The deck planks, as they are laid, shall be set into a thick, sufficient layer of red lead paint to fill any void areas remaining underneath. After a final planning and stoning, (rubbed out with pumice stone blocks) the deck is ready for service. If the ship was not to be placed into service the decks were sealed with turpentine and pitch.