

[Home » Blog](#)

## Techno Metal Post vs Other Deck Footings

I love helping people to revitalize their outdoor living spaces, and transform their back yards into safe havens that will be a relaxing retreat for many years to come. An important part of that is using a solid foundation that'll last the test of time, because even the most beautiful deck is only as strong as the foundation beneath it! That's why I recommend **Techno Metal Post** to all my clients.



Here's a **Techno Metal Post** in a nutshell: A hollow galvanized steel tube tipped with a thick steel helix that is drilled straight down into the ground. They're installed by trained pros using specially designed hydraulic machinery which does the job without ripping up your yard, mixing messy concrete, or creating huge piles of dirt to deal with.

So how does **Techno Metal Post** compare to other deck footings? Let's take a look.

Traditional **concrete** footings are tradition for a reason: They work. But that doesn't mean they're efficient or ideal. Old timey hand-cranked drills work too, but why use them when you have a faster and more efficient alternative? Even in ideal conditions, **concrete** footings require that you dig a hole deep enough to safely support your deck structure, then keep water out of it while you wait for the inspector to sign off. After that, you must haul heavy concrete, mix it up, pour into place, and round the top to ensure water won't be able to pool on it once it's dry. *Then*, you have to pack up and wait for it to dry, which takes at least a day. Only then can

you drill & place your saddle to start building. And that's if the footings are straightforward! Sometimes you need to use a bell pier, which requires even more time. All of this can take days to prepare and install, so while **concrete** looks cheaper than **Techno Metal Post** on paper, the money you save in materials goes right back out in labour hours (and then some). Using **Techno Metal Post**, even my largest projects take less than a day to install footings for, sometimes even less than an hour! That means I waste no time getting right into framing, leaving me with tighter timeframes and faster builds.

**Deck blocks** – shaped concrete blocks that sit on top of the ground like feet – are occasionally selected for very small, very low decks. If your yard is very flat, if your deck will be very small and close to the ground, and if you don't mind your deck shifting with each freeze-thaw cycle, these can work. However, their shortcomings are varied and numerous! Because they sit on top of the ground, blocks have very little shear resistance, and any kind of slope in your yard will cause the structure to tilt over time. Is your home new? That's a potential issue as well, because the recently disturbed soil is more prone to settling beneath the blocks and causing the deck to shift. Their usage is also very limited, as these blocks simply cannot be safely used for any deck that is more than a step or two above ground level. In windy areas, a deck supported on blocks can even achieve "lift off" and rise out of the footings!! Altogether, a deck supported on blocks will not last long enough to pass down to your kids with the house, and its fast deterioration will negatively impact the value of your house if you sell. Nobody wants to be saddled with a deck that needs to be replaced within a few years. With **Techno Metal Post**, these issues simply don't exist. The installation technician uses readouts on the machine that tell them when the footing has reached a significant enough depth to support the load of the deck, and once these babies go in, they stay put. Thanks to the specially designed green sleeve, even frost can't grab a **Techno Metal Post**, which protects your deck from frost heave. This is definitely the foundation you want to turn to if you view your outdoor living space as a long-term investment to be protected.

**Ground Spikes** are another option for smaller, low-to-the-ground decks. They consist of a metal spike that is driven into the ground with brute force, such as with a sledgehammer or a jackhammer. The better quality ones also use a flat plate at the surface which helps to better distribute weight, but they still rely on soil friction and not soil bearing to support the load. Since they go into the ground, they provide better lateral strength than deck blocks, but are still vulnerable to heaving during the freeze/thaw cycle, and are again quite limited in their application. You must keep your structure very close to the ground, and it must be freestanding and not attach to the house via a ledger board. This means more footings and less options! **Techno Metal Post** is the clear winner here. No matter how crazy (or tall!) my design gets, the footings will be up to the job .

That's not all that puts **Techno Metal Post** in a class all its own. Each and every installation comes with an engineering certification that guarantees each footing is installed correctly and to the depth required to bear its load. Plus, Techno Metal Post is 100% CCMC (Canadian Construction Materials Centre) Approved, so you can rest easy knowing that your new deck will be strong and stable for many, many years to come.

Till next time,  
Paul Lafrance



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