

From Drab Deck to **Outdoor Oasis**

online
extra!

On the following pages, you'll find detailed photos and instructions that will help you make over your deck and add a privacy screen and pergola. For more information see the May/June 2011 issue of *My Home My Style*.



STEP
BY
step

Remove Old Rails and Add New posts for Privacy



A

Remove the old railings to get your deck makeover underway. Try to locate all of the screws or nails that hold the rails in place, and then work carefully so that you don't damage the pieces as you remove them. If the rails and balusters are in good shape, you can reuse them to save time and money.



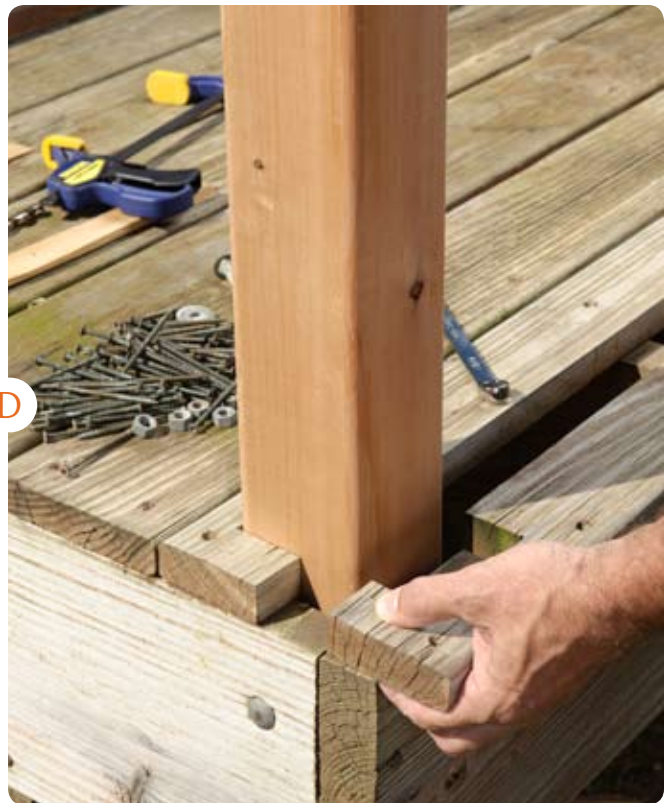
B

Replace short posts with tall ones in the area where you want to put up the privacy screen. If your deck boards are notched around the posts like these, then it may be necessary to remove a few boards to get access to the post-mounting hardware. Remove the boards carefully so that you can reuse them later.



C

Mount the new posts using galvanized lag bolts. Make sure that the posts are standing plumb (straight up and down) by checking them on two adjacent faces with a level. Then use shims where needed to hold the posts plumb. Once the posts are tight, just cut the shims off below the decking.



D

Reinstall the deck boards around the new posts. If you have to reposition any posts, you'll need to cut new notches in the decking. If your new post layout leaves you with exposed notches in the old deck boards, try to recut and reposition your existing deck boards if possible. If you can't, you'll need to replace those boards.

STEP
BY
step

Clean the Boards to Make Old Decking Look Like New



Prepare to clean the old decking by covering the home's siding with plastic. This will prevent splashing that could bleach out the paint. Be sure to read the instructions on the deck cleaner for any other usage and safety precautions before you begin.



Apply the deck cleaner following the manufacturer's instructions. In most cases you'll dampen the decking first, and then pour or spray the cleaner on. Work in a fairly small so that you can get through the next steps before the cleaner dries.



Scrub the decking after applying the cleaner using a stiff-bristle brush on a long handle. This takes some effort, but the results are worth it. You'll soon see how much dirt deck boards can hold as a dingy slurry begins to form on top of the decking.



Rinse the deck cleaner off of the area you've just scrubbed using a garden hose to reveal the refreshed deck boards underneath. After rinsing, be sure to wet the grass and plants around the deck again in order to dilute any deck cleaner that gets on them.



Apply a fresh finish to the deck boards once they've been allowed to dry for 24 hours. You can choose a clear finish, one that's tinted, or a solid-color stain to get the look you want. Just be sure that the finish is designed for use on deck boards to withstand foot traffic.

STEP
BY
step

Complete the Look with a Privacy Screen and Railings



A

Begin building the privacy screen by installing lower rails. These will support the tall spindles that provide privacy. You can save a lot of time and effort by painting or staining all of the parts before installation. To keep spacing consistent, use small pieces of a 2x4 board as spacers between the decking and the rail.



B

Add an upper rail and then a pair of beams at the top to support the pergola slats. Like the rails, the beams are just cut from 2x4s. The beams get attached to opposite faces of the posts with screws. You can make it easier to install the long beams by using clamps to hold them in place while you drive in the screws.



C

Decorative "tails" at the ends of the pergola beams give the illusion that the beams are notched to that they lock together and pass through one another. Adding this detail is easy, though. Just cut short pieces of 2x4 so that their ends are angled like the real beams, and then screw the pieces to the beams.



D

Start the pergola at the corner by attaching slats to a long piece that sits at 45 degrees to the corner. The easiest way to do this is to assemble the corner pieces on the ground, and then lift it in place as a unit. After that, you can just screw the rest of the pergola slats in place.



E

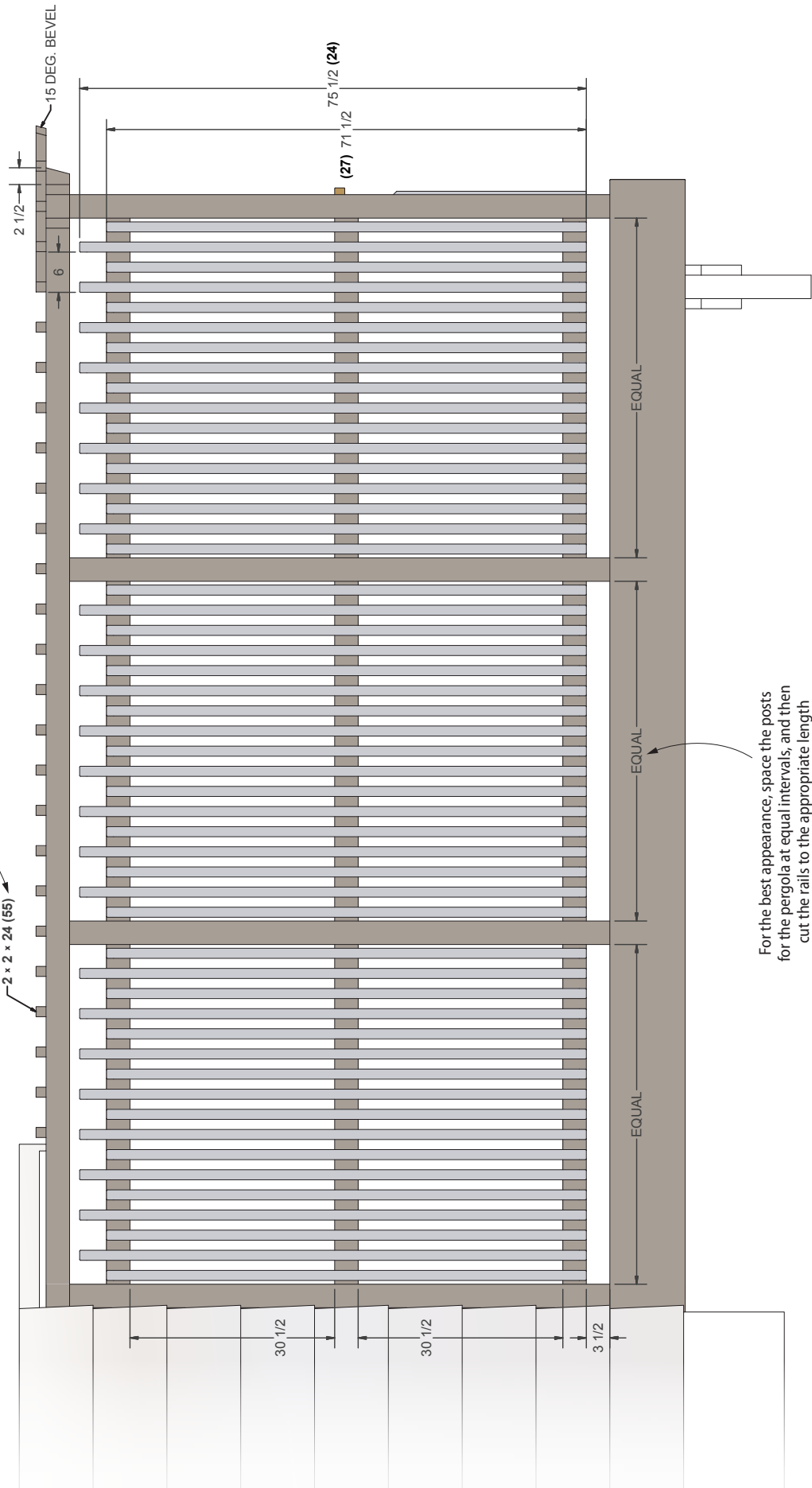
Complete the privacy screen by attaching the tall slats. They get screwed to the lower and upper rails, and to a middle rail. This rail provides extra strength and holds the slats securely so they don't warp. To keep the distance between the slats consistent, use a cut-off piece of 2x4 as a spacer.



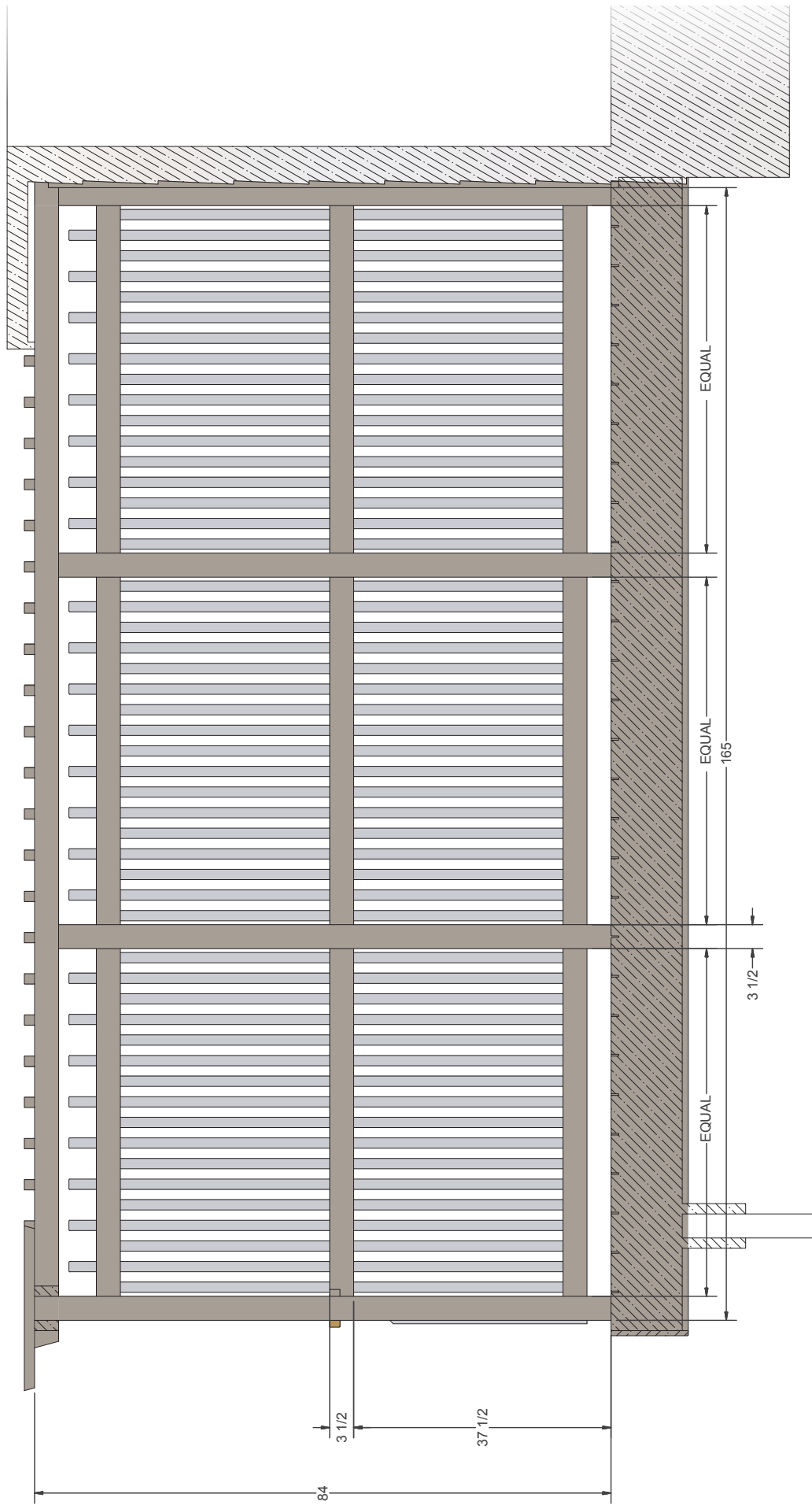
F

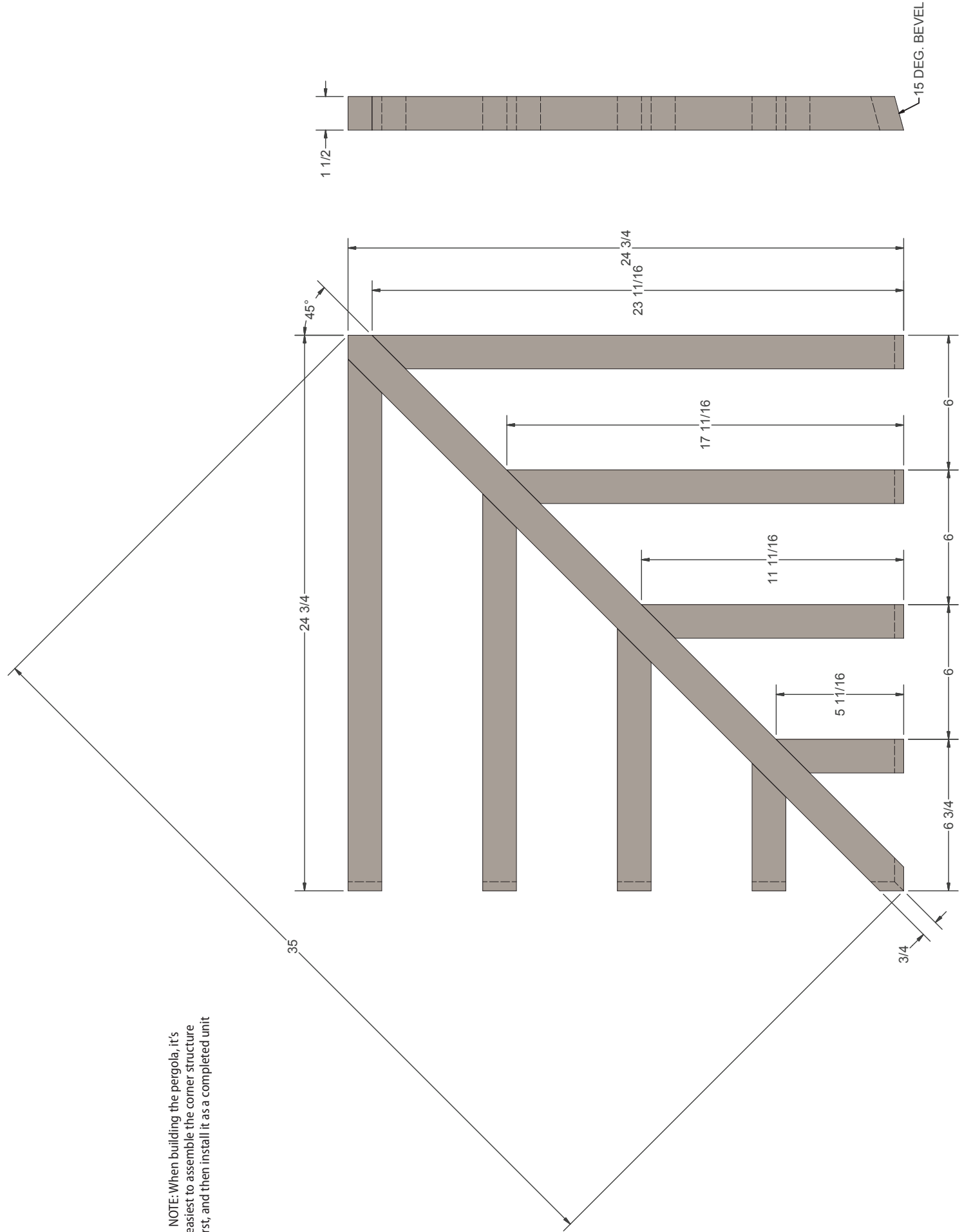
Complete the railing by reattaching the old deck rails. Then screw on the slats. On our deck we dressed up the rail further by adding a flat top rail. It's made from cedar deck boards and, for contrast against the painted railing components, gets the same clear finish as the decking.

NOTE: The number of pergla slats and tall spindles we used are shown in parentheses. The quantity you need may vary based on the dimensions of your deck



For the best appearance, space the posts for the pergola at equal intervals, and then cut the rails to the appropriate length





NOTE: When building the pergola, it's easiest to assemble the corner structure first, and then install it as a completed unit