

Framing a Pergola

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Material Options

Pergolas and arbors can be built from a variety of materials. Kits are available even in fiberglass (Figure 8) and aluminum. I tried out an aluminum pergola once. The brand I used was made out of a very thin aluminum; it was hard not to damage it during construction and my client wasn't happy after the first windstorm. Perhaps it's not fair to judge all aluminum arbors based on one bad experience, but I've avoided aluminum ever since.

I just installed my first **fiberglass pergola**, which came from **Arbors Direct, Inc.**
800/930-7495
www.arborsdirect.com

All the pieces were precut and finished to perfection. The assembly time was about six hours with a two-man crew, but after building one, I'm sure assembly time could be cut in half. The columns anchor using an all-thread that runs through the center of the column to the deck's substructure. Once the columns were placed, the beams, purlins, and runners were easily installed. Angle brackets reinforce the joints. **My client loves it**, and I was impressed, so I will definitely be selling more of these.

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Figure 8. Fiberglass arbor and pergola kits are available to create a classical or Tuscan look. These architecturally correct columns anchor to the deck framing using a length of all-thread.

