

Tile & Floor

— DESIGN · SOURCE · CREATE —



Tips article:

Which surface materials to use where?

You've scoured Instagram and Pinterest for inspiration, have a collection of paint charts and are now an expert on how to make a room look bigger. But it's also vital that you match the right surface materials to each of your spaces from a practical, as well as an aesthetic, perspective. *Tom Weaver*, our product expert, shares his top tips.



Materials overview

Firstly, a quick run down of the options:

- **Porcelain tiles** - durable, non-porous, low-maintenance, easy to clean and almost impossible to stain. They come in a huge range of colours to mimic marble, granite, wood or limestone and can be more affordable than stone.
- **Natural stone** - marble, limestone, sandstone and slate in formats ranging from mosaics, flagstones and bespoke slabs in a range of colours, finishes and sizes.
- **Encaustic tiles** - also called cement tiles, they're low maintenance and long-lasting. Available in plain, solid colours or patterns, and in a variety of shapes.
- **Engineered wood** - made up of a top layer of solid wood veneer glued onto several layers of thinner wood, engineered wood is durable and suitable for underfloor heating. It's available in a variety of woods, and can be laid in traditional plank, parquet, herringbone or chevron patterns.
- **Luxury vinyl** - high quality vinyl flooring enables you to create the illusion of real wood, stone or porcelain with the added benefits of durability, easy cleaning, heat insulation, and slip resistance. It's also very affordable.



Which products to use where?

1. Kitchen

Floors

When it comes to a high-traffic area like your kitchen floor, both porcelain and vinyl tiles are ideal, given their man-made durability. Certain natural stones will also work well. We recommend most limestones, although it's best to stay away from chalky and very pale ones, given the wear and tear in most kitchens.

With any natural stone installation, we always advise clients to use high quality sealants and finishing products - we stock

Fila sealers and Kerakoll grouts which are very reliable.

If you'd prefer a wood floor, engineered oak can be used in kitchens if the product is finished with a lacquer or UV oil. It's imperative that wood is maintained using the right cleaning products to ensure the finish can withstand foot traffic and spillages. Engineered oak floors are natural insulators and will offer an ambient solution, especially if underfloor heating isn't being incorporated.

Splashbacks & worktops

Ceramic or porcelain tiles are definitely the most popular choices for splashbacks, for their wipe-clean, easy

maintenance. Patterned or unusually shaped tiles will also add wow factor.

Large-format porcelain or quartz materials also work well for splashbacks and worktops as they're both durable and hygienic surfaces.



2. Hallway

Floors

An entrance hall is an opportunity to make a statement. An engineered oak herringbone floor or patterned tile are perfect for this and will lead the eye into other areas of the house.

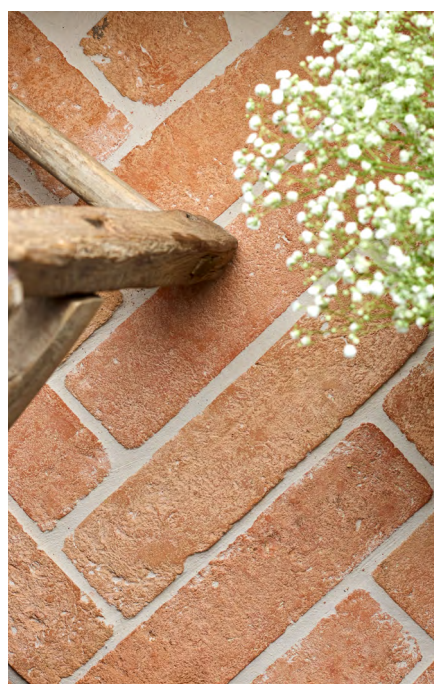
As the hall is another high-traffic area, our recommendations are similar to those for the kitchen - porcelain or vinyl tiles are easy to care for, whilst stone will give you



a lovely texture and provides a natural element, which subtly unites outside and in. Victorian tiles create a wonderful visual impact and are durable.

Walls

Wallpaper reproduction tiles from our National Trust range are very popular, with their natural, botanical look. For a heritage feel, painted tongue and groove cladding can add texture and will contrast with your floor for added elegance.



3. Utility / boot room floors

As the room most likely to house muddy boots and wet outdoor gear, your utility or boot room needs to be tougher than most. Porcelain or natural stone is an ideal choice, as is vinyl - durable products that will cope well with surface moisture and can be combined with underfloor heating. Terracotta is a very popular choice at the moment too.

4. Open / broken plan floors

Open and broken-plan designs are still hugely popular. Use larger-format floor tiles and wide board engineered oak floors for a spacious, uncluttered look.

Broken floor plans are an opportunity to use different styles to create zones

within the overall space. So, you could use a hardwearing vinyl or tile for the kitchen section, and a warmer wood for the dining area. Mix in a rug under a dining table or carpet in a seating area, to add colour and texture.

5. Sitting room floors

Classic wood for durability or carpet for comfort are the go-to coverings. In more modern schemes, we're increasingly using tiles which are a more practical solution where there are walkways through to terraces and gardens. Adding a rug beneath the sofa will soften this look.

6. Bedroom floors

Carpet is still the No.1 choice for bedroom floors for comfort and warmth. Wood flooring and luxury vinyl also have a tactile feel, but it's important to consider using an acoustic system to reduce sound to the rooms below.



7. Bathroom / shower room / wet room

When you're designing your bathroom, consider how much natural light the room has. Dark tiles will make it feel moodier, luxurious and cosy, while lighter shades will give it an airy atmosphere.

Floors

Luxury vinyl tiles and engineered wood floors are good, affordable options in standard bathrooms without underfloor heating as these products are more ambient. For a wetroom, you will need to use an unpolished tile with a suitable anti-slip rating - most porcelain tiles offer this, and there's a huge variety on offer.

Walls & splashbacks

Tiles are obviously the go-to for bathroom walls - and from there, it really depends on budget and the look you are trying to achieve. Smaller format bricks or squares will tie in better with a more traditional scheme, whilst larger format in a marble or porcelain will give a more modern, seamless look. Less grout is also easier to maintain.

8. Outdoor

For patios, terraces or garden pathways, porcelain tiles offer a very good low-maintenance and non-porous solution. However, they can feel a little 'clinical' or modern so a limestone, slate or sandstone will give a more traditional look.



For expert design, product and installation advice, make an appointment at our Design Centre or speak to a specialist on the phone. We'll advise on options for any scheme, style or budget.



Design Centre 1 Mile End, London Road, Bath, BA1 6PT | T 01225 310561 | www.tileandfloor.co.uk

PORCELAIN | STONE | PATTERNED | WOOD | CARPET | VINYL

