



# DESIGN DECISIONS

## Hard Surface Flooring Characteristics

Type	Characteristics	Durability	Cleanability
<b>Tile, Stone, etc.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>· <i>Slate</i></li><li>· <i>Marble</i></li><li>· <i>Granite</i></li><li>· <i>Resin</i></li><li>· <i>Terrazzo</i></li><li>· <i>Ceramic</i></li><li>· <i>Porcelain</i></li></ul>	Many types of tile and stone tiles. Many sizes, shapes and colors	Durable although can chip or crack. If colored all the way through, it doesn't show scratches and chips as much as surface coated colorant tile. Surface coatings and sealants can wear off. May be difficult to repair.	Easy to clean unless textured or rough surface. <i>Glazed</i> tile has an outer coating making it easier to clean but can be slippery <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>Slate</i> is durable but more expensive. It can flake off small pieces and may have a rough texture making it harder to clean in heavy traffic areas. Must be sealed to resist stains.</li><li>• <i>Marble</i> is harder to maintain and can stain. Acid (soda, drinks etc.), oils and metals can stain marble. Marble is more porous than granite and some marbles can stain easily. Use a sealer made for marble and reapply on regularly basis – every 9 to 12 months.</li><li>• <i>Granite</i> is more stain resistant and more durable than marble because of the quartz in granite. Needs to be sealed and reapplied regularly.</li><li>• <i>Resin</i> can be very durable. It is a synthetic surface or tile.</li><li>• <i>Terrazzo</i> is usually made of marble chips mixed with a portland cement binder and/or epoxy. When hardened, the surface is ground smooth and polished. It is hard, smooth and easy to clean but more expensive. Terrazzo is very durable.</li></ul>

•The above-mentioned materials are only a few examples of the hard surfaced or resilient flooring available.



Type	Characteristics	Durability	Cleanability
<b>Tile, Stone, etc. (con't)</b>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Ceramic</i> tile is made from clay or shale fired at high temperatures to provide good abrasion resistance and a high degree of resistance to moisture. Durable and easy to care for. Ceramic type can be glazed, ceramic mosaic, quarry or paver tile.</li> <li>• <i>Glazed</i> tile is made of clay hardened with heat. It has an outer coating making it easier to clean but can be slippery. The glazing may be two or three coats. People are less likely to slip on textured or non-slip tile versus smooth tile. Glazing adds strength and seals pores to make in water resistant and to resist stains.</li> <li>• <i>Porcelain tile</i> is ceramic tile with a water absorption rate of less than 0.5 percent. They can either be unglazed or glazed. The tile hardness is rated from zero to five test for surface abrasion resistance of glazed tile. Coated with durable urethane to make them easier to clean and protects them from stains. Strong and hard but may be brittle.</li> </ul>
<b>Wood:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Solid</i></li> <li>• <i>Laminated</i></li> <li>• <i>Veneer</i></li> </ul>	Many types, sizes and construction. Some surfaces are photos of wood with a clear plastic covering.	<p>Some floors come pre-finished with durable coatings, but can wear off overtime.</p> <p>Solid wood is generally more expensive but can be refinished several times.</p> <p>Veneered wood, if damaged are more difficult to repair or refinish.</p> <p>Laminated “wood like” cannot be refinished or easily repaired.</p>	<p>Wood floors can be vacuumed, dusted or swept. Damp wipe if needed or use wood cleaners designed for the type of floor. Easy to remove most soil and dust.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Factory finished floors</i> are usually better quality than those finished on site as the environmental conditions are more easily controlled. Finishes may be <i>polyurethane</i> (low to high gloss), <i>urethane</i> (high gloss) or <i>acrylic-impregnated</i> (low gloss) making them water-resistant. These finishes should not be waxed. Other finishes are <i>oil and wax</i> finishes.</li> </ul>

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Type	Characteristics	Durability	Cleanability
<b>Wood (con't)</b>			<i>Plastic laminate</i> is typically made of fiberboard covered with a photo reproduction of wood grain or other material. A top layer of plastic protects the photo. It cannot be refinished if damaged or worn.
<b>Vinyl</b> · <i>Sheet</i> · <i>Tile</i>	Many patterns and construction types	Varies with quality of flooring, thickness of surface coating and if pattern or colorant goes all the way through the vinyl (called inlaid). Surface gouges show and are harder to repair.	Resists moisture and many stains and grease. Easy to clean unless textured or rough surface or embossed pattern. Damp wipe or use floor cleaners as indicated by the manufacturer . Easy to remove most soil and dust. Can be cut or scratched.
<b>Linoleum</b> · <i>Sheet</i> · <i>Tile</i>	Natural linoleum is made from renewable materials such as linseed oil, pine rosin, limestone dust, and jute, and wood and cork flour.	Very durable. Doesn't show cuts as easily as vinyl.	Easy to clean if sealed with acrylic coating and occasionally resealed. May stain if not coated with sealer or polish.
<b>Concrete</b>	Polished concrete with colorants added are available. Color or texture is added for design.	Durable. Concrete can crack over time. Surface sealants or coatings can wear off.	Easy to clean if sealed and smooth. Concrete can be painted or stained if properly prepared and the correct type of paint or stain is used.

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