

Laminate Flooring Shopping List

Laminate flooring is quickly becoming the most popular floor used today. It's designed for the consumer who likes the look of wood, but wants ease of maintenance, and at a fraction of the cost. Laminate flooring is very durable and constructed to resist furniture indentations, scuff-marks, and in some cases water. It is an interlocking floor that uses a tongue and groove system to keep the floor in place. Laminate flooring "floats" on top of the existing sub floor (concrete, wood sub floor, vinyl, hardwood and other existing floors), and it is not attached to it. When installed, on some floors, special water-resistant glue is applied between each tongue and groove to hold the planks together and keep out moisture. Prior to installation, a polyurethane pad is laid down to keep the flooring from sticking to the sub floor and deadening the "clap-clap" of heels. Laminate flooring is made up of several layers, a hard core material in the center, a special backing, and a laminated printed layer to give it the desired look. It is then coated in a plastic resin that helps make it very durable.

Laminate flooring is available in a wide array of styles, colors, patterns, and installation systems both "click" and glue down variety. All are relatively easy to install if you're handy.

Originally, laminate flooring only simulated the look of hardwood, but is now available in marble and slate patterns as well. Because of the printed layer, it is easy to achieve realistic looking floors that you otherwise couldn't find or afford. Laminate flooring is made mostly in rectangular 8 inch planks, but some square tiles are available as well.

Laminate floors are sold by the square foot. Its durability, resistance to stains, and lasting beauty however, make laminate flooring a good value. **When choosing laminate flooring, pay close attention to the warranties offered by each manufacturer, as well as the wear layer that is measured in thickness by mils. Many are clearly different and often are a good indication of the quality of the product.**