



Canada's **Building** Centre

**Project Of The Month**

# FLOORING







# DIY flooring

A new floor will give a dramatic instant update to your home and installing it yourself will save you a lot of money. Whether you are considering a small project like replacing a bathroom floor or going for a big home improvement project and replacing the floor in your entire house, you should do your homework prior to starting. Great flooring poorly installed can turn into a huge mess so it's a good idea to learn as much as you can about the flooring you choose and the process of installing it. As with any home improvement project, thorough prep work is key to a successful outcome. Preparing your subfloor is a big job if you are looking at demolishing an old floor first. When laying your new flooring, start in an out-of-the-way room while you hone your installation skills. Using the right tools for your particular flooring material will make the job easier, faster and give you a better finished result. Your flooring project will probably take longer to install than expected so take your time and don't rush. A TIMBER MART Flooring Expert can offer expert installation advice and answer any questions you may have. We will help you with your flooring project from start to finish.





# The look of wood for less



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## Vinyl plank

Vinyl plank flooring is growing in popularity. It's available in a variety of wood colours, patterns, textures and can convincingly simulate the look of a hardwood floor. Vinyl is a tough material that stands up to both moisture and heavy traffic. There are a few installation options depending on the manufacturer including peel-&-stick and gluing. Vinyl planks are comfortable to walk on and can be an economical choice.

## Engineered

Engineered hardwood comes in a wide variety of wood types, patterns, and board widths. It has a plywood-like base with a solid hardwood top layer giving it the same appearance as hardwood but at a lower cost. It can be used above grade, below grade and on concrete slabs making it a great choice for basements and condominiums. Engineered hardwood can be nailed, glued or installed as a floating floor with a special tongue and groove system that clicks into place without glue or nails.

## Laminate

Laminate flooring is made with an MDF core topped with a wood photo layer and a thick polymer finish. It can copy almost any hardwood style from traditional maple and cherry to specialty types like wide-plank pine and reclaimed barn wood. It has a tough, moisture and stain resistant finish but is vulnerable to moisture in the joints between planks. Can be installed over existing floors that are flat and in good condition. Almost all types of laminate are designed for quick and easy installation.



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### Product profile

We carry quality

# Taiga flooring

Taiga Building Products is a leading distributor of engineered wood, laminate and vinyl floor coverings in Canada. They have a wide range of stylish flooring lines in unique designs and colours as well as a great homeowner warranty. Ease of installation is a popular Taiga feature. Their laminate flooring features a glueless drop-lock system and their luxury vinyl doesn't require glue or underlay. Taiga's luxury vinyl planks are particularly in-demand because of their realistic resemblance to hardwood. Ask one of our Flooring Experts to show you the Taiga flooring products we carry and find out the features and benefits they have to offer.

**taiga**  
building products



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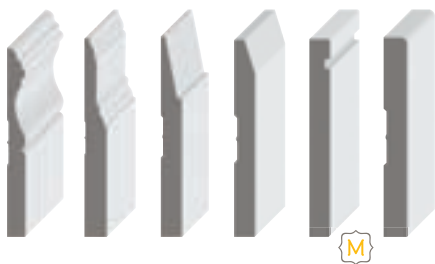


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## Finishing

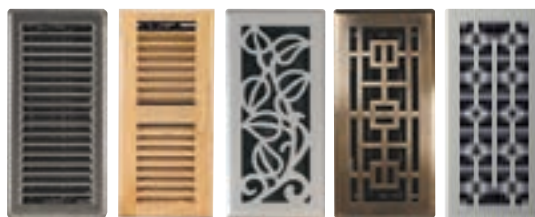
# touches

Enhance your flooring project with these finishing touches that will update your style and make your space feel complete. It's the small details that give a room personality and create an overall impact.



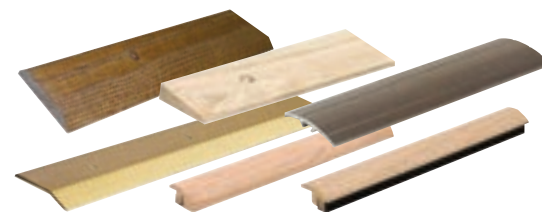
### Baseboard METRIE

The purpose of baseboard is to hide the gap where the flooring meets the wall. When installing new flooring, baseboards should be removed and it is often too damaged to be reused. This is an opportunity to update your baseboard to a more modern style. Today's baseboards have a simpler profile to go with a more minimal design trend. Choose a style that ties in with the room's other trim and it should have similar detail and proportion. If you're installing on wonky walls, it's best to use baseboard made of MDF which has more flexibility than wood. After installing, caulk the gap where the baseboard meets the wall for a professional finish.



### Floor registers

An inexpensive upgrade for your flooring project is to replace old and worn floor registers with stylish new ones. Most new registers include closable dampers allowing you total control of air flow from your heating and cooling system. They are available in a variety of styles and finishes to suit any decorating style. Choose a finish that complements the colour of your new floor or perhaps matches the other metal elements in your room. If you have wood floors and don't really want to see your floor registers, choose a wood register that will blend in. Be sure to buy registers that are the same size as your old registers.



### Transition strips

Where two floors meet, a transition strip made of PVC, metal or wood is used in between. This strip hides the gap between two floors and bridges any change in floor height. It allows for smooth traffic flow and acts as a visual break between two different flooring materials. There are several types of transition strips and each is designed for specific flooring pairings. A strip for transitioning two floors of the same material will be different than the strip for transitioning wood and carpet. The height difference between your two floors will determine which type of transition strip to use. Available in assorted colours to match your floor.





## The pros and cons of heated floors

**Radiant floor heating is not new technology but it is growing in popularity with homeowners who are replacing or installing new flooring. Below is a list of the major pros and cons for both electric and water-based radiant floor heating systems.**

**PRO Comfort** Nothing can beat the high level of comfort a heated floor can bring to every inch of a room. Because a radiant flooring system is laid across the entire floor, heating is uniform and there are no cold spots.

**PRO Energy efficient** Radiant floors do not consume a lot of energy and the system doesn't take long to heat up. Temperature can be set by thermostat which allows custom comfort on a room-by-room basis.

**PRO No maintenance** Radiant floor systems are virtually maintenance free. If an electric system is damaged, a thermal imaging camera can locate the problem so that a repair can be made. Water-based systems do not have this benefit.

**PRO Convenient** Heated floors are a great solution for adding supplementary heating to problem areas of your home. With no ducting required, it is also an inexpensive way to add heating to an addition, basement, attic or shed.

**CON Floor height** Adding a layer of heating to your floor will increase the height of the floor and if you add a layer of insulation to increase efficiency, the floor height will increase again. For large renovation projects, this can be taken into consideration but if you are retrofitting into an existing room, floor height could be an issue. Luckily, there are super-thin systems available that address this issue.

**CON Cost** Depending on the system you buy, radiant floor heating can be costly. Water-based systems have the added cost of a boiler and pump and electric systems can have high operation costs if electricity is expensive in your area.



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# How to choose wood flooring colour

Ideally, your home should have a minimal number of different floorings so that your home has a singular, cohesive appearance. That makes choosing the colour of wood for the main flooring in your home, a pretty big decision. Once you have narrowed down your flooring choice to one of two product lines, you will have several colour options to choose from. Take into consideration the style of your home, your existing colour scheme and the permanent elements like fireplace and cabinet colour. Most flooring manufacturers provide flooring samples so take a few colours home and place them next to each of your permanent elements at different times of the day so you can see how they look with your colour scheme in the changing light. If you have a lot of existing wood tone in your home, it is better to choose a flooring colour that will compliment those tones rather than trying to match them. If your existing wood is dark, go lighter with flooring. If it is light wood, go darker with flooring. But keep in mind that there is an age-old rule that still holds true and that is, dark colours will make a space look smaller and cozier while light colours can open up a space. Also keep in mind that very light or very dark colours will easily show dirt. Some flooring has a lot of variation in the colours of the planks and others are a single colour so if possible, look at manufacturer photos of the floor installed so you can see the overall look. Flooring with a lot of colour variation can have a very busy appearance once installed. Longevity is another thing to consider. If you are going to be in your home for many years, you will want a floor colour that will stand the test of time. Find old photos of interiors from 10 or 20 years ago and see what floor colours are classic and still look great today and which ones look dated. If you are selling your home in the near future, go with today's hot new trendy colours that will attract buyers. Choosing a flooring colour is a truly personal choice. If you have questions, a TIMBER MART Flooring Expert has the answers.



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X



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# Concrete floor paint

A great way to clean up the appearance of a well used concrete floor is to give it a coat of paint. Not only will you be giving your floor a fresh new look, you'll be adding a layer of protection as well. Specialized concrete paint protects surfaces from spills, stains and will provide a nonslip surface for safe walking. These hardworking floors require thorough preparation for a successful result. Start with a super clean surface and repair cracks and holes. For preparation and painting instructions, click the links below for information from the paint experts at PPG and Sico for your garage or basement floor painting project.



**PPG: Step by step tutorial on coating basement floors to last**  
How to clean, prep & coat basement floors



**Sico: Our guide on how to paint a garage floor**  
How to paint a garage floor



**With PPG, coating concrete floors is easier than ever**  
How to clean, prep & coat garage floors





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# Installation tips & tricks

Proper installation will make the difference between a beautiful finished floor and a DIY disaster. For all the different types of flooring, here are a few tips that should make installation easier and with a good result.

**Read the instructions** Flooring manufacturers supply specific instructions for your particular flooring. Read them from start to finish before you start. Chances are, you can also find online installation videos that can be a big help.

**Start with a level subfloor** A dip in the subfloor can cause a soft, spongy spot in your completed project. Make sure your subfloor is level and solid.

**Protect your knees** Flooring installation is hard on the knees so protect yourself with kneepads. Gell-filled cloth, foam or soft rubber kneepads are the best for distributing weight and protecting your floor.

**Tapping block** For wood or wood-look floors, use a scrap piece of flooring as a tapping block when fitting pieces together. Tapping directly on the tongue-and-groove edge will cause damage and pieces won't fit together properly.

**Doorways** Installing flooring around doorways is tricky. To make the process easier, start your first row of flooring on the wall with the most doors.

**Taper both sides of the room** If your room isn't completely square, it's better to make adjustments to both sides of the room rather than ripping an odd shaped piece of flooring for the last row on one side.



## How to measure a room for flooring

Figuring out the quantity of flooring you need requires a bit of math and the first step is to measure your room. Measure width and length and factor in all floorspace including closets, nooks and bump-outs. Multiply these numbers together and round up to give you the square footage of your room. If you are installing flooring in multiple rooms, measure the square footage of each room and add these numbers together so you have a combined square footage. Keep in mind that you will need to add 5% to 10% to this number to account for material overages. An overage can be installing mishaps, defects in the flooring material or if your room is an irregular shape and will

require more cutting. If you are a novice DIY-er you may need a higher overage to account for mistakes. Add the overage to your combined square footage and you now know your overall square footage. Next, check the square footage coverage number provided by the manufacturer for your chosen flooring. Most flooring is sold by the carton and each carton will have a coverage number. Divide your overall square footage number by the coverage number and you will have how many cartons you need to buy. For example, if your overall square footage is 100 and the carton of flooring covers 20 sq. ft, you will need 5 cartons.  $100 \div 20 = 5$ .

**Having trouble figuring out how much flooring you need?**

A TIMBER MART Flooring Expert can guide you through all the variables to calculate the quantity of flooring needed for your project. If you have questions, we have answers.

**We can help!**





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# What lies beneath

## A solid flooring installation starts with a strong subfloor

A subfloor is the structural layer that is attached to the floor joists below and finished flooring attaches directly on top. Standard A/C grade plywood (smooth on one side, rough on the other) can be used for subfloors but it is more common to use tongue-and-groove sheets that fit together to reduce movement and squeaks. Also available are OSB sheets (oriented strand board) which already have a tongue-and-groove edge. There is debate about whether plywood or OSB is better as a subfloor but both are good materials and are acceptable when installed correctly. Each is available in 4'x 8' or 4' x 12' sheets and at different thicknesses. The spacing of your floor joists will determine the thickness of the subfloor. The more widely joists are spaced, the thicker the subfloor required. Both plywood and OSB sheets install similarly on top of the joists. Use as many full sheets as possible for optimum strength and make sure the ends are centered on the joists. Stagger sheets so that they don't line up and make sure four sheets don't meet at one point. Leave a 1/8 inch gap between sheets to allow for expansion. Whether to use nails or screws to fasten a subfloor is a personal choice. Nails will fasten faster when using a nail gun but screws have a greater holding power. Whichever you choose, fasten the subfloor to the joists every 8 inches. Construction adhesive can add another level of strength to your subfloor. Apply a bead of adhesive to the top of floor joists and on the tongue-and-groove edge of your plywood or OSB for maximum strength. A good, strong subfloor should be solidly built and with no movement or flex. If your subfloor has movement, the result is a failure in the finished floor. Cracked floor tiles, broken floor grout, gaps between planks and squeaky flooring are usually the result of a weak subfloor. Some types of flooring have specific subfloor requirements so read the entire manufacturers directions. Have questions? Take advantage of our expertise to avoid mistakes. TIMBER MART has the advice and materials to build a strong subfloor that will last for years.



### Barricade Subfloor

Specifically designed for basement concrete floors, Barricade Subfloor Products have a raised design that allows moisture to evaporate naturally, helping to limit the growth of mould and mildew, as well as protect against small water leaks. This system also provides a thermal break between the cold concrete and your finished floors, which can raise the flooring temperature by up to 10°C making your basement floor feel warm and comfortable.



## How to level a subfloor

If your floors have high and low spots that are not a structural problem, you'll want to level out these areas before you lay your flooring. Start by making sure your wood subfloor is securely fastened to the joists. Use a long straight edge, like a long level or a straight pipe, and mark out the high and low areas. Sand down the high spots in the wood subfloor and thoroughly vacuum up the dust. Use a floor leveler or floor patch product to fix low spots in the wood subfloor. Pour the leveler on top of the subfloor and smooth with a trowel making sure to feather the edges. Gravity will allow it to settle in the low areas. Follow the manufacturer directions on how to apply the leveller and how long it takes to dry. When completely dry, sand down any high spots and thoroughly vacuum. Do a final check with your long straight edge and a level and make any necessary adjustments. Use this same method for leveling a concrete floor except use a concrete grinder to level out high spots.



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# Tools to get the job done

With the right tools and equipment, your flooring installation project will go a lot smoother and finish faster. Always read the manufacturer tool recommendations when you are planning your project and make sure you have everything you need before you start. Below is a list of common tools that you'll need for any wood flooring installation:

- Utility knife
- Carpenter's square
- Dust mask
- Jigsaw for intricate cuts
- Pry bar
- Measuring tape
- Safety glasses
- Rubber mallet
- Chalk line
- Hammer
- Tapping block

For laminate and vinyl plank straight cuts, you can go the low-tech route and use a laminate/vinyl floor cutter or go high-tech with a power mitre saw. Engineered and hardwood flooring will need a power mitre saw, a power nailer with compressor and ear protection. For a full list of tools and equipment for your upcoming flooring project, consult your local TIMBER MART Flooring Experts.



The Quik Drive® Cordless Screw Driving System from Simpson Strong-Tie makes driving screws faster and easier so you can install more screws per hour and per battery charge.



Makita offers a wide range of innovative, lightweight and efficient tools that are easy to use. A TIMBER MART Tool Expert can guide you to the right Makita model for your needs.



# How to remove an old floor

You can save a lot of time by installing your new flooring directly on top of your old flooring if it's in good shape. Make sure to fill any patchy spots with patching compound so your floor is completely smooth. Keep in mind that installing new on top of old will raise the floor height which could be a concern with your appliances, around doorways and the way your flooring flows from room to room. Removing your old floor may be the best option and there are specific ways to remove the different types of flooring.

**Linoleum or vinyl** There are two parts to this flooring, the the top surface and the adhesive backer, which can often become separated during removal.. For sheet floors, use a utility knife to cut the top surface into 6" to 12" strips and remove with a scraper. For tile floors, remove each tile with a scraper. Use heat to remove the adhesive backing that is stuck to the subfloor. This can be a wallpaper steamer, a hair dryer or a heat gun for stubborn adhesive. Use a sander to get your subfloor completely smooth.

**Laminate** If your old laminate is a floating floor, meaning it is not glued down, you should be able to cut one piece as a starting point and disassemble the floor. If your laminate is glued down, follow the same steps as linoleum or vinyl removal.

**Carpet** Use a utility knife to cut carpet and the underlay into strips and remove. Also remove the tack strips around the perimeter of the room as well as all the staples used to attach the underlay to the subfloor.

**Ceramic tile** Use a hammer on one tile to break it up so you have a starting point. Use a chisel and pry-bar with your hammer or small sledgehammer to remove the tiles and the mortar. Next, use a pole scraper to remove all the smaller bits of mortar from the subfloor.

**Wood** If you are saving your old wood flooring, use a pry-bar to carefully lift each individual plank. If you are not saving your old floor, use a circular saw to carefully cut the flooring perpendicular to the direction of the boards in 2' rows. Then use a pry-bar and a maul to pull up boards making sure to pull out any nails left in subfloor. If your old wood floor was glued down, remove adhesive with a pole scraper. If this doesn't work, you might need to use a scraper attachment on a reciprocating saw. If you still have residual glue and as a last resort, try using a chemical adhesive stripper.

**Pro tip:** Demolishing a floor is messy and baseboards can be easily damaged so it's better to carefully remove them before you start. Remove all nails and number the pieces so you can re-install when you are finished laying your new floor.

**Old asbestos flooring warning** If your home was built or renovated during the 1950s to the 1980s, there's a chance you may have asbestos in your old floor tiles. There are major health risks in disturbing asbestos let alone removing it so it must be left to a professional asbestos removal company. It's difficult to visually identify asbestos floor tiles because of it's prolific use during this time so it's recommended to go by the age of your house and have your old flooring tested. You can either hire a local asbestos remediation expert to do the testing or obtain a mail-in test kit for your area.

