

BRITISH STANDARD

BY PLAIN ENGLISH

WHICH FLOORING?

—

SOME THOUGHTS

Guide No.5



Flooring is a huge subject but practicality and personal taste are key considerations. A kitchen floor is likely to have a hard life so delicate surfaces are a poor idea. Classic solutions include wood, stone, tiles or linoleum.

Heating is another element that needs to be planned from the start. Many projects now use underfloor heating which is great but which must be positioned so that it is not below the floor cupboards as it can spoil food and cause the joinery to shrink and split.

Adrian Bergman, Senior Designer



Stone

Options include, limestone, travertine, granite and slate. There are many beautiful stone floors out there varying in tone, texture and pattern so there will always be a something for every palette. It is also a very durable option if properly installed and treated.

It is important to consider the tile size, shape and bond as this will impact the overall look. Although sometimes more expensive, larger slabs will make a small space feel bigger.

All natural stones are porous, so it is worth bearing in mind that it will need to be re-sealed from time to time.

Stone can be colder on the foot so I would recommend underfloor heating if budget allows.

Wood

Wooden floor has an unparalleled warmth and character. It is often associated with practicality concerns but there are ways you can minimise the wear it receives.

The most effective way to protect and maintain the floor is to inset a door mat by any external entrances, the bigger the better, this is key to help trap any dirt or grit from outdoors that can cause damage.

Species and finish of wood vary, each with different properties, so be sure to seek advice from your supplier. A favourite of ours is Ash with a low sheen oil, cured using UV light, it is very durable whilst maintaining a natural look.

If you are looking to make more of a design statement, consider smart parquet or bring life to existing floorboards by painting them in a contrasting colour to your kitchen cabinets.

Tiles

Porcelain tiles are increasingly popular as they are extremely durable, available in a huge variety of finishes and tile sizes and require little maintenance –they are waterproof, stain resistant and scratch-proof.

If you love the look and feel of wood but need a more practical solution, there are some very good-looking wood effect porcelain tiles on the market.

Tiles are a great way to add colour and pattern. Terracotta tiles for example bring a lovely warmth and will sit very happily in a traditional kitchen, you could choose a simple square tile in a diamond pattern or a hexagonal tile for something a little different.

For a more modern look, use a geometric pattern, whilst they're not easy to source in the UK it's worth looking at eg. Italian brand Fornace Brioni for inspiration. A more attainable option might be to use encaustic tiles as there's a huge variety of shapes and patterns readily available.





Concrete

Whilst concrete is sometimes more complex and costly to install, a polished concrete floor is easy to maintain (it is resistant to chips and cracks), and offers a clean, seamless look. As it is becoming more popular, there are now a myriad of colour options on the market, some companies can even colour match, meaning it is very versatile.

Bricks

Bricks provide a warm, traditional cottage feel to a kitchen. They have a unique characterful surface, however, this does make them more difficult to maintain and clean. They work well and look especially good in ancillary rooms like boot rooms, sculleries and pantries where the footfall tends to be lower.



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