

INDIA
TODAY

HOME

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HOW TO MAKE YOUR ROOMS SHINE

TOP TIPS FOR
MAKING YOUR
INTERIORS BOLD
AND BEAUTIFUL

A bedroom
in Anand,
Gujarat by
Ace Associates



IN CONVERSATION
WITH ARCHITECT
RAHUL KADRI

FOCUS ON FLOORING
A COMPREHENSIVE
FLOOR GUIDE

Contents

INDIA TODAY
HOME

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10 PRINTS AND PATTERNS SPECIAL
 A beautiful home, a how-to guide, and looks to replicate—this is all you need to know to bring magical motifs indoors

33 profile **36 architecture**
6 LAUNCHES
40 LAST LOOK

THE MAVERICK
 Architect Rahul Kadri shares his design journey

COLOUR CODED
 This home in Gujarat by Ace Associates uses different shades of pink

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GROUND REPORT

Before you redo your floors take a look at this comprehensive comparative analysis of different types of flooring

By MEENA MURTHY KAKKAR AND VISHAL KAKKAR

Your floors set the tone for your interiors. So picking one that suits your needs both in form and function is imperative. But before the selection process one should know what each type of flooring is all about, the pros and the cons.

Italian Stone

It's a go to solution for those wanting luxe interiors. There is a high demand in the market for Italian stones of a wide range and class. One needs

to choose carefully to get the desired impact and quality. It's the softness of the stone that gives it the high shine. But the flip side are the cheaper ones that come with a lot of filling. Checking the lot for the amount of filling is mandatory. So is picking up a lot which has a size that will ensure minimum wastage in laying.

Indian Stone

Our country has had a beautiful love story with stone over centuries now. Be it our forts, palaces, streets

or homes, local stones have always played an important role and which have also passed the test of time with flying colors. They are extremely rugged and come in a huge variety across the span of the country. Most Indian stones become smoother and shinier with usage.

Tiles

The most cost effective and durable flooring available in market currently happens to be tiles. They come in a great variety and range and newer improved material variants keep getting added quite often as well. Ceramic, porcelain, vitrified, full body, glass tiles, the list is endless. If the base is laid out properly, then tiles can last you a lifetime.

Laminated Wooden Flooring

A popular choice for making a space look warm and cosy. This flooring has become a preferred choice for bedrooms. It's also one of the fastest to lay. There are different grades of laminated wooden flooring that one needs to choose keeping in mind the footfall expected over it.

Hardwood Flooring

Looks extremely beautiful, but requires maintenance. The natural grain variation makes it look better than the slightly uniform laminated version. Avoidable in areas with great temperature variation or in zones with a termite threat.

Vinyl

This is the cheapest and the fastest to lay flooring option. Comes in a wide range of colours and prints and is easily customisable as well. Needs a good quality and finished subfloor. It has a lesser lifespan as compared to other flooring options.



WALK ON IT

(clockwise from left) hardwood floor; laminated wooden floor; tiled flooring; another example of tiled flooring, from different private residences by Envisage



Cast In-situ / Cement Based Flooring

Terrazzo is a beautiful flooring technique that's making a strong comeback in recent times. Extremely easy to maintain, this once commonly opted for flooring has gone into the luxury segment due to the unavailability of skilled labourers now. Then there is micro concrete flooring that is getting a lot of players in the market. The laying varies for different companies, but most involve a PCC base with an added pigment. It's a preferred flooring for heavy machinery zones. Traditional Indian homes used to have a version of this (still extremely popular in southern India) known as the red oxide floor. Being cast in-situ ensures a very even product. The spans are larger and the

dividers could be designed as a design insert as well.

Bamboo

Bamboo flooring is quite like wooden flooring, but is a sustainable option as bamboo grows much faster. If treated properly it can be highly termite resistant as well.

Carpeted

A popular option for offices due to both its sound absorption capability as well as for providing friction for chair wheels. It used to be a popular option for the hospitality industry as well. But in the Indian weather conditions, maintenance of a carpet becomes quite tricky. So the usage in hotels has gone down tremendously in the last decade.



Meena Murthy Kakkar is the design head and partner, and Vishal Kakkar is the business head and partner of Delhi-based design studio Envisage. www.envisageprojects.in

FLOORING	VARIANTS	INDOOR/OUTDOOR	COST RS PER SQ FT	INSTALLATION COST	BEST SPACES	PROS	CONS	CONSIDERATION
								
Italian Marble	Innumerable variety, popular ones include bottochino, crema marfil, diana and travertine	Mostly Indoors. Only travertine can be used outdoors as a cladding	Good ones range from ₹350 to ₹800 per sq ft	Simple installation starts at ₹40 per sq ft. Polishing is ₹55 per sq ft upwards. Mouldings, inserts etc range ₹80 per running foot upwards. Material cost is extra	Mostly formal areas	Brilliant shine, joints appear seamless. Can take inserts, patterns and etching very well	Is expensive both in terms of material and labour. Requires regular buffing. The lowest end available in the market comes with a lot of holes filled up which show only after regular usage	Do not buy cheap Italian marble. It's better to go in for another material if the budget is lower. Buy the right slab size to avoid wastage.
Indian Stone	Every region has its popular choice based on local availability. But Indian marble, granites, kota, limestone, sandstones, and kudappah are popular	Works very well both indoors and outdoors	Local stones cost lesser than stones from other parts of the country. In NCR, the price ranges from ₹30 to ₹150 per sq ft	Costs ₹30 per sq ft minimum. Polishing ₹25 per sq ft onwards. Material cost is extra	Exterior staircase, places with high footfall, window ledges. The hard ones can be used anywhere	Cost and durability. Ease of applying textures due to its hardness	They mostly come in darker hues which makes it less popular as a full indoor flooring option	A word of caution against using porous stones such as limestone on terraces. They let water permeate in to the slab. Granite and marble work extremely well in all locations.
Tiles	Ceramic, porcelain, vitrified, fullbody vitrified, glass, and terracotta	Manufacturer recommendation needs to be referred to for differentiating between indoor and outdoor variants. The treatment differs for both. It also differs for indoor wall and floor application	₹35 to ₹2,000 per sq ft	₹25 to ₹40 per sq ft. Material cost is extra	Everywhere except countertops. Countertops need only fullbody vitrified tiles that can be moulded and curved at the edges. Not recommended for staircases.	Cost, immense variety and ease of maintenance make it a very popular option across projects of different budgets	The joints are tricky. Some tiles especially the larger ones and the cheapest ones come with a slight bending issue that translates into uneven joint junctions. If used with a spacer, this can be overcome. But the spacer grout turns darker over time and the spacer takes away the seamlessness	Invest in good labour for laying the tiles. A bad subfloor creates air pockets under the tiles thus giving them a knocking sound when walking over it as well as making it prone to breakage.
Laminated wooden flooring	Comes in grades based on durability. AC refers to abrasion criteria and measures from AC1 to AC6. Variations include colour, texture, size and pattern (plank, chevron or herringbone)	Strictly indoors	₹65 to ₹225 per sq ft	Mostly included in material cost	Bedrooms or any area that has average footfall	Looks beautiful. Adds instant warmth to a space. Extremely quick to install and is comparable to tiles in terms of cost in the mid segment.	Can get scratched if used carelessly. Can also be pierced through by any sharp instrument.	A common myth associated with it is that they can't be wet mopped. You can. Only concentrated water spillage shouldn't be allowed to stand.
Hardwood flooring	Oak, maple, walnut, cherry and mahogany	Both indoors and outdoors. But outdoor application needs special top coat treatment.	₹300 to ₹650 per sq ft	Inclusive of installation cost	Anywhere except bathrooms. Not recommended for outdoors with extreme temperature variation	Extremely beautiful. Is reusable. Can be polished to make it look brand new again	Expensive and high maintenance. Very scratch prone and isn't suited for areas with termite issues	Special polishes and treatments are available as top coats to add durability. Most hardwoods nowadays are obtained from relatively younger trees. They have dampness deep within and are less termite resistant
Vinyl	The roll width varies from 5' to 6.5'. And it comes in innumerable colours and prints	Indoors	₹35 to ₹125 per sq ft	₹10 to ₹15 per sq ft	Larger areas with lesser budget can go with vinyl flooring, it has the least number of joints	Cost, super quick installation, ease of cleaning make it a lucrative option to be considered	They are made of PVC and so VOC emissions are a concern. They are essentially a sheet so that makes it prone to tears	It's a good option for giving a quick facelift to spaces as it is only 2mm thick and can flow under doors and over existing old flooring. The subfloor has to be well levelled before laying the vinyl sheet
Cast In-situ	Has interesting variants. Terrazzo, stamped concrete/micro topping concrete floor, pigmented cement floor (red oxide)	Both indoors and outdoors. It depends on the variant chosen	₹50 to ₹450 per sq ft, depending upon the vendor brand or skilled labour executing it. Brass spacers are an additional (basis the design)		Anywhere and everywhere. Floor, skirting, staircases and counters. The colour range is wide, just add the desired pigment to cement	The beautiful seamless look of the cast in-situ floors is one of absolute delight. Skirting gets moulded with the floor itself making it jointless as well.	The material involved is extremely cheap. But the labour skilled enough to execute it flawlessly has reduced greatly in numbers. This has made this flooring expensive in big cities	The beauty of terrazzo or a red oxide floor is unmatched
Bamboo	Horizontal bamboo, vertical bamboo and strand woven bamboo	Indoors	₹245 to ₹350 per sq ft	Included in material cost	Good for bedrooms and formal areas	More termite resistant and sustainable compared to hardwood. It can handle condensation and dampness as well.	The same as hardwood in terms of getting scratched. Can cause off-gassing as well sometimes due to the adhesives used in cheaper variants.	Not commonly available, so most buyers aren't aware of the details while buying
Carpeted	Tiles, wall to wall/roll	Indoors	₹60 to ₹250 per sq ft	₹25 to ₹40 per sq ft	Good for air conditioned dust free areas, where one needs a little sound absorption	Gives a space a plush yet cosy feel. Works well in offices. Quick to lay and replace in case of carpet tiles	Dust is a great deterrent. Can cause allergies. Tedious to clean on a regular basis.	Needs a very well cast sub floor. The edges need to be secured with a beading. If used in a combination with other flooring, there would be a level difference at the junction