

## Buyer's Guide to Green Flooring Materials

Material	Look for the Following Attributes	Pros	Cons	Cost	Suggested Uses
<p><b>Bamboo</b></p> <p>Renewable resource. Fast-growing grass that can be selectively harvested annually.</p>	No formaldehyde added.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Renewable resource</li> <li>* Extremely durable</li> <li>* Harder than red oak or maple</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Overuse of natural bamboo forests may be destroying them</li> <li>* Asian sources require significant embodied energy for transport</li> </ul>	\$4 - \$8 per square foot	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Bedroom</li> <li>* Living room</li> <li>* Family room</li> <li>* Dining room</li> <li>* Kitchen</li> <li>* Entry way</li> </ul>
<p><b>Carpet</b></p> <p>Green carpets and area rugs are those made from natural fibers or with a high content of recycled synthetic fibers.</p>	The Carpet and Rug Institute's Green Label Plus certification. Area rugs and carpet tiles are preferable to broadloom (wall-to-wall) carpet.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Carpet industry is actively addressing its environmental issues</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Synthetic fibers are made from petroleum, a nonrenewable resource</li> <li>* Difficult to clean</li> <li>* Can harbor dirt, dust and mold</li> </ul>	\$4 and up per square foot	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Formal areas</li> <li>* Bedroom</li> <li>* Stairs</li> </ul>
<p><b>Cork</b></p> <p>Cork is a renewable resource made from the bark of the cork oak.</p>	No formaldehyde added. Avoid cork-vinyl composites.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Renewable resource</li> <li>* Sometimes has recycled content</li> <li>* Easy to clean if properly sealed</li> <li>* Good foot support</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Indoor air quality impacts from sealers used to create a durable surface</li> <li>* European sources result in higher embodied energy for transport</li> </ul>	\$3 - \$6 per square foot	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Kitchen</li> <li>* Family room</li> </ul>
<p><b>Linoleum</b></p> <p>Same ingredients today as when it was invented in 1863 -- linseed oil, cork dust, wood flour, tree resins, ground limestone and pigments, all pressed onto a jute backing.</p>	"Natural linoleum." Vinyl flooring is sometimes generically called "linoleum."	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Renewable ingredients</li> <li>* Often has recycled content</li> <li>* 30- to 40-year lifespan</li> <li>* Easy to clean</li> <li>* Good foot support</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Made in Europe, resulting in significant embodied energy for transport</li> <li>* Odor from linseed oil may irritate some people</li> </ul>	\$4 per square foot	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Kitchen</li> <li>* Bathroom</li> <li>* Family room</li> </ul>
<p><b>Rubber</b></p> <p>Virgin rubber is derived from rubber trees, a renewable resource; recycled rubber reduces the environmental burden of discarded tires.</p>	Almost all rubber, except virgin rubber, has a significant odor. Use indoors only in well-ventilated areas.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Often has recycled content</li> <li>* Easy to clean</li> <li>* Good foot support</li> <li>* Can be installed without adhesives</li> <li>* Durable (20-year lifespan)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Continual off-gassing has indoor air quality impact</li> </ul>	\$5 - \$7 per square foot	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Outdoors</li> <li>* Well-ventilated indoor space</li> </ul>

<b>Material</b>	<b>Look for the Following Attributes</b>	<b>Pros</b>	<b>Cons</b>	<b>Cost</b>	<b>Suggested Uses</b>
<b>Stone</b> Natural resource; durable material.	Locally mined and fabricated stone. Look for stone that does not have to be sealed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Easy to clean</li> <li>* Durable</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Stone is a finite resource</li> <li>* High embodied energy if stone is mined or fabricated overseas</li> <li>* Sealers produce potentially harmful VOC emissions</li> </ul>	\$3 - \$10 per square foot	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Kitchen</li> <li>* Bathroom</li> <li>* Entryway</li> <li>* Fireplace</li> </ul>
<b>Tile</b> Durable material, often with recycled content.	Locally manufactured tiles with high recycled content.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Easy to clean</li> <li>* Durable</li> <li>* Often has recycled content</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* High embodied energy (to fire tiles and produce cementitious materials)</li> <li>* Prioritize local sources because of heaviness</li> </ul>	\$1 - \$6 per square foot	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Kitchen</li> <li>* Bathroom</li> <li>* Entryway</li> <li>* Fireplace</li> </ul>
<b>Wood</b> Natural material; durable.	Forest Stewardship Council-certified, salvaged or reclaimed wood. Ask for a chain-of-custody certification.  Avoid laminated products with added formaldehyde. Look for sealers and cleaners that are environmentally benign and low-VOC emitting.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Renewable resource if from a sustainably managed forest</li> <li>* Low embodied energy, particularly if harvested and produced locally</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Conventional forestry causes over harvesting and destruction of habitat</li> <li>* Naturally occurring formaldehyde</li> </ul>	\$3 - \$6 per square foot	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Bedroom</li> <li>* Living room</li> <li>* Family room</li> <li>* Dining room</li> <li>* Stairs</li> </ul>