



Flooring 101

Which choice is right for your home?



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DESIGN TRENDS

For years they've been underfoot — covered up, covered over, spilled and walked upon. But in 2011, floors are entering the limelight as design-savvy condo buyers seek seamless flooring options that enhance the overall decor of their unit.

Homeowners are trending away from carpet in their condos, instead they are choosing from the large variety of wood and wood alternatives, such as laminate.

Carpet has become blase, making way for a variety of gleaming wood floor options. And wood isn't just for the dining room anymore. Since wood and laminate flooring offer attractive, smooth, hard surfaces that are ostensibly easy to clean, many of today's condo suites are carrying the look of wood through the living areas and even the master bedroom as well as into areas that were once the domain of tile — like the kitchen.

There are many flooring options available to condo owners but topping the list of choices for condo purchasers are laminate and engineered hardwood.

Laminate flooring comprises a picture of a real wood floor bonded to a core of high density fibreboard. The picture is overlain with a transparent wearing layer and then coated with an aluminum oxide finish, producing a hard wearing and scratch resistant surface. High quality photographs faithfully reproduce the grain and colour of natural hardwood and the surface closely resembles real wood without the price tag. Laminates are now available in a wide range of colours, plank lengths and widths, mimicking options available for hardwood.

Laminate flooring is exceptionally versatile both in texture and style and gives condo owners the look and feel of real wood. Child and pet friendly, the laminate flooring can be installed in any room and is resistant to moisture, dents, scratches and stains. It requires minimal maintenance to keep the

flooring looking like the day it was installed. And while laminate is not real wood, the new laminate selections are almost impossible to discern from wood and are less susceptible to damage.

Engineered hardwood consists of a layer of real hardwood bonded to a core of a stable material. Some brands come with a thin wear layer, while other styles or brands have thicker layers of hardwood, varying from 2 to 5 millimetres in

thickness, which can be sanded and refinished. This product displays all the warmth and character of natural wood, but being real wood, it is susceptible to damage from scratches and dents from falling objects, shoes, pets etc.

Engineered wood floors are also more susceptible to changes in suite humidity, which can result in either swelling or separating of the planks. Diligence in maintaining proper humidity levels is most important.

Both of these products are laid flat on the concrete floor on sound isolation and the pieces joined together at the edges by a tongue and groove click system — without glue or nails. These floors “float”

and are a perfect choice for condominiums.

The type of flooring you choose can set the tone for the entire room and complement your personal taste while adding to the design and flow of your rooms.

When deciding on the type of flooring for your condo, you should consider its versatility, maintenance, and of course, your budget!

Adding wood flooring to your condo suite will not only add value to your home, it also adds an air of warm sophistication. And investing in wood flooring for your condo doesn't have to break the bank.

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lent reputation are largely responsible for a substantial level of the public's trust. People feel more comfortable buying from a builder with a proven track record who they know is in it for the long run. As the result of Monarch's excellent reputation, they were awarded the prestigious Home Builder of the Year title for 2010. Presented by the Building Industry and Land Development Association (BILD), the award recognizes the builder who is setting the standard for the rest of the industry by excelling in quality, service and customer commitment.

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