

FLOORING COMPARISON CHART

\$ = Low Cost \$\$ = Moderate Cost \$\$\$ = High Cost

Care/Maintenance

Tips

Cons

Pros

Cost

Type

Type	Cost	Pros	Cons	Tips	Care/Maintenance
Vinyl	\$ - \$\$	Low-cost; versatile; soft underfoot; easy to install.	Can't install over other flooring; may not wear well over time.	Look for thick wear-layer.	Sweep or vacuum up loose dirt. Wash with warm water (see manufacturer's directions to see if soap or detergent necessary). Rinse thoroughly with clear water if you use detergent. If desired, shine with polish made for vinyl floors.
Laminate	\$ - \$\$	Wood look for less; warm, springy underfoot; stain, scratch resistant; many color/design options; can install over other flooring.	May scratch; can't refinish.	Look for long warranty & a floating floor installation.	Sweep or vacuum up loose dirt. Clean with damp mop; don't use too much water. Dry thoroughly with soft cloth. Avoid soap-based detergents, abrasive cleaners, and "clean and shine" floor products. Acetone removes stubborn stains like scuff marks.
Tile	\$ - \$\$\$	Many design options, colors; durable; rich look; can add value to home.	Hard, cold underfoot; grout may stain; hard to replace broken tile; may need to reinforce subfloor.	Involve a designer in planning floor. Consider texture of tile in high-traffic, wet areas.	Seal if tiles not glazed. Sweep or vacuum up loose dirt. Clean tile with water and detergent made for tile floors. Treat grout stains with water/bleach solution. Wax tiles if desired to protect them.
Carpet	\$ - \$\$\$	Many looks, colors, textures; warm & soft underfoot.	Cheaper carpet may not wear well. Untreated carpet may stain.	Look for thick pile, tight tuft twist. Buy best pad possible.	Vacuum twice per week. Clean by dry- or wet-extraction (check with manufacturer to find out which cleaning method is preferred for your particular carpet) yearly or before carpet shows soiling.
Cork	\$\$	Soft & warm underfoot; hard-wearing; good acoustical effect; especially good in bath and kitchen.	Some tiles must be glued to subfloor; bath installations should get more urethane coats once installed.	Look for thick urethane layer.	Make sure the floor is well-sealed. Clean with damp mop. Avoid gouging it.
Wood	\$\$ - \$\$\$	Classic look, versatile; wears well; can be refinished, recycled; nice underfoot; adds value to home.	May warp or stain; expensive; not recommended for bath.	Use a professional installer for a professional look. Factory finishes give hard-wearing & warranted surface.	Sweep or vacuum up loose dirt. Wipe up spills immediately with dry or slightly damp cloth. Don't wax floors with urethane finish. Try buffing waxed floors when dull to avoid over-waxing. Don't use cleaning products intended for vinyl or tile floors (you may have to refinish your floors to restore their sheen if you do).
Concrete	\$\$ - \$\$\$	Many colors, design options; highly durable.	Labor-intensive installation; may need to reinforce subfloor.	Look for experienced contractor. Check out design options.	Keep floor sealed. Sweep or vacuum up loose dirt. Clean with clear water and a soft mop. Check with installer for dealing with tough stains.