



# Take the *floor*

Whether you opt for geometric tiles or herringbone wood, flooring is one of the most important design features in your home. Angelina Villa-Clarke reveals the latest trends going on under our feet

**ALL FIRED UP**

The marble tiles by Fired Earth (inset) can be mixed and matched to create various standout patterns





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# F

rom soft carpet to bold, painted floorboards, no matter what style of flooring you choose, it must be practical. Heavy footfall, wear and tear, plus the fact that flooring is integral to a room's design (so you won't want to change it frequently) mean you need to plan for floor coverings to be future-proof.

An expert in natural floors, Crucial Trading offers several stylish collections made from hard-wearing natural materials such as sisal, jute, coir, seagrass and wool. Its Sisal Ogee collection is decorative in form, yet 'is crafted with durable natural fibres', according to the company, making it suited to high-traffic areas like hallways and stairs. "Sisal is created from a type of agave plant native to South America, where it stands up to harsh conditions, just as this carpet stands up to wear inside the home," says Crucial Trading.

Meanwhile, the brand's luxury wool carpets work well in bedrooms to provide a cocooning, high-end feel. The Wool Alpine, for instance, comes in a birch white hue and is inspired by the serene beauty of birch trees. "The Alpine range has a woven texture and colour palette featuring hues of silver and pale beige, mirroring the majestic white bark," says the brand. "Made from 100% pure New Zealand wool in a classic herringbone pattern, this carpet provides timeless durability and insulation, keeping homes warm and comfortable."

For something hard-wearing that also brings the wow factor, Fired Earth suggests using natural marble tiles. Blends is the company's new mix-and-match collection, highlighting the versatility of marble across three distinctive shapes, which can be tessellated to create a myriad of unique designs. From timeless chequerboard

**WALK THIS WAY** Crucial Trading's (top right) natural floors blend durability with elegance



patterns to captivating circular layouts, each tile in this collection is designed to make a statement. The brand's Aegean Pink Marble collection, on the other hand, brings warmth and a romantic feel with its subtle rosy hue. Alternatively, the on-trend Seaspray Green Marble features an array of green tones – from deep emerald to subtle mint – plus a mix of mosaics and larger-format tiles ideal for creating eye-catching spaces in bathrooms and kitchens.

James Sirett, director of product and sourcing at Fired Earth, suggests patterned tiles for instant impact. "Incorporating tiles to bring pattern into a room elevates the space and creates a focal point," he says. "Patterned floor tiles deliver a versatile and durable way to bring colour, texture and

## STOCKISTS

### Bert & May

020 7352 4904 | bertandmay.com

### Chaunceys Timber Flooring

0117 971 3131 | chauncey.co.uk

### Crucial Trading

01562 743747 | crucial-trading.com

### Farrow & Ball

01202 876141 | farrow-ball.com

### Fired Earth

01223 300941 | firedearth.com

### Knot & Grain

knotandgrain.com

### Knots Rugs

020 7471 4707 | knotsrugs.co.uk

### Schotten & Hansen

schotten-hansen.com

### Willis & Stone

01353 361843 | willisandstone.co.uk



## HOME EDITION

personality. Simple, classic chequerboard layouts add timeless charm while offering a modern, sophisticated look.”

When it comes to kitchen flooring, acclaimed Ely-based kitchen and furniture manufacturer Willis & Stone reveals some expert tips on how to use pattern: “Classic patterns such as herringbone and chevron continue to be a popular way of creating a simple but striking finish,” explains tile specialist and director Ben Willis. “These patterns – characterised by their distinctive V-shaped arrangements – bring a dynamic look and sense of movement to surfaces. This look can be further enhanced by using two differing colours, which introduces a playful contrast or a subtle variation that highlights the geometric design.”

Created with longevity in mind, Bert & May states it is committed to fine craftsmanship in creating its colourful tiles. It also endorses the use of pattern and colour to create an inviting look in the bathroom or kitchen. “At Bert & May, our handmade tiles offer the opportunity to incorporate classic colours and unique geometric patterns,” begins founder Lee Thornley. “Our Henry Holland Studio Pour tile collection, for example, uses natural pigments and creates an abundance of possibilities to experiment and create a unique look with. The tiles draw you into the space and create a timeless, statement-making bathroom interior.”

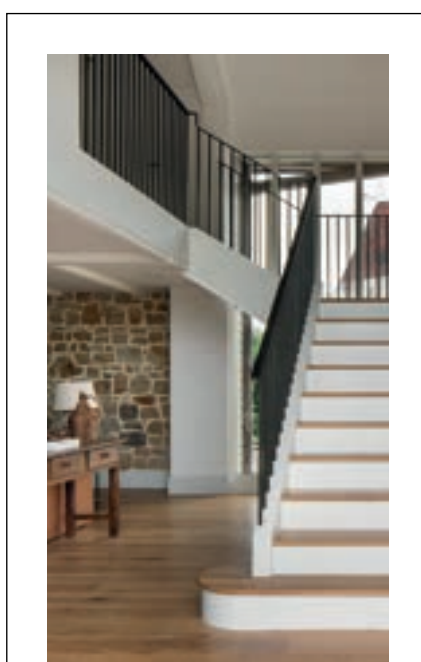
When it comes to wooden floors, specialist Knot & Grain offers a tailor-made option in which customers can design their own flooring, meaning each customer can achieve a bespoke floor product. Natalie Mudd, creative director, explains more: “Customers can bring their vision to life with custom-made flooring. The service was once something only professionals might have access to, but we’re able to offer customers the opportunity to craft their own flooring that truly reflects their personal style. A bespoke process involves choosing the precise wood grade, thickness and colour.”

Chaunceys Timber Flooring has been supplying sustainable, high-quality timber flooring since 1988. “When choosing a wood floor, there are many factors to consider: from the wood species, format and grade to texture and colour,” says Ian Tomlinson, managing director at the company. As well as solid wood, the company also supplies engineered wood flooring, which it says has a number of benefits. “One of the key advantages is its superior structural stability. The multi-layer construction, featuring a hardwood top layer bonded to a birch plywood base,

**TILE STYLE** Bert & May (right) offers tiles with unique patterns, while Knot & Grain (top right) specialises in custom wooden floors







## What's underneath?

Chaunceys Timber Flooring shares top trends

- **Bold colours:** Dramatic hues are a key element in statement design schemes. Use exciting combinations to redefine spaces.
- **Natural wood:** Natural wood remains a classic design element, emphasising real warmth and authenticity. It aligns with a commitment to sustainability, grounding spaces in a timeless and organic appeal.
- **Marble:** Its classic elegance and versatility make it a go-to material for flooring, seamlessly integrating into diverse design styles for a sophisticated touch.

resists natural expansion and contraction caused by heat and moisture. This makes it suitable for most environments, including kitchens, bathrooms and over underfloor heating systems. This stability ensures an extremely long-lasting and dependable floor. It's also a more eco-friendly choice."

For homeowners lucky enough to have original floorboards, Farrow & Ball suggests sanding them and treating them with a statement colour, like you would the walls of any room. The effect gives a talking point and anchors a room's scheme.

Based in Bavaria, Schotten & Hansen also champions colour on wood flooring and has been producing renewable wood surfaces since 1984. Individually produced by hand, the company's floorboards and parquet come in an almost limitless range of grains, wood finishes and colours. "Over decades of research, we have found unique ways of transferring the colours of nature to wood," shares product manager Maximilian Hansen. "Our pigments are sourced from plants or minerals, so they harmonise with the colouration of the wood, developing the finest nuances over time. We can adapt any colour to the individual requirements of customers."

Finally, don't forget that laying a rug on a hard surface in the home will bring a softness and warmth to any scheme. Harnessing the beauty of nature, London-based rug company Knots Rugs launched a new collection called Country Garden. The botanical-themed rugs are a collaboration with Rediscovered By – a British studio founded by artist Charlotte Krone, who specialises in historical textile techniques. Five original artworks, created from flowers sourced in the walled gardens of Keythorpe Hall, have been reimagined by Knots Rugs and its fine-artist founder Bonnie Sutton. The gardens, which serve as Charlotte's muse, are located near her Leicestershire studio. The collection boasts snapdragons, sweet peas and delphiniums, with each piece working as artwork for the floor. ●

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## READY TO LET?

Bush & Co's handy checklist ensures your property is rental-ready

- ☐ Ensure you have a valid Energy Performance Certificate (valid for 10 years)
- ☐ Ensure you have a valid Gas Safety Certificate (valid for 12 months)
- ☐ Ensure you have a valid EICR electrical check (valid for five years)
  - ☐ Carry out a Legionella risk assessment
  - ☐ Providing a fire blanket is recommended for the kitchen
- ☐ Ensure the property is left clean and the garden tidy
- ☐ Ensure there is a working smoke detector on each floor of the building and a carbon monoxide detector in any room containing a gas boiler or solid fuel appliance
- ☐ Ensure any furniture and soft furnishings comply with current fire safety regulations
- ☐ Obtain consent to let from your mortgage lender
- ☐ Arrange suitable buildings/landlord insurance and ensure your insurer is made aware that the property is to be let
- ☐ If you will be a non-UK resident landlord, contact HMRC and complete an NRL1 form.
- ☐ Collect any instruction manuals into a file and any helpful tips
- ☐ Organise sets of keys for each tenant and a management set for Bush & Co
  - ☐ Arrange for your post to be forwarded
  - ☐ Cancel any of your telecommunications contracts
- ☐ Notify your suppliers of the final readings of gas, electricity and water

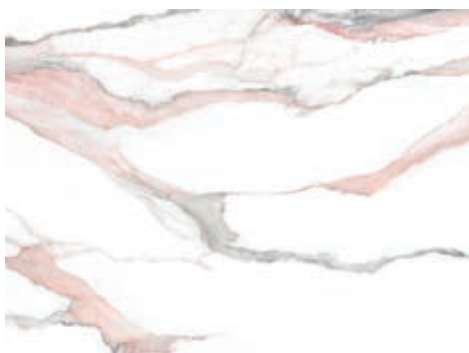


# Edition *loves*

From chic rugs to wood panels,  
browse these fine flooring options



Onyx marble  
effect dark  
grey polished  
porcelain wall  
and floor tile,  
£34.95  
per sq m  
**tilemountain.  
co.uk**



Fantasy Calacatta pink polished  
marble effect porcelain tile, £39.95  
per sq m **tilemountain.co.uk**



Clarke abstract design rug, from £69 **cultfurniture.com**



Churchill navy & pink mosaic  
matt tiles, £7.16 per sheet  
**wallsandfloors.com**



Chepstow Shale oak wood  
flooring, £134 per sq m  
**woodpeckerflooring.co.uk**

Ca' Pietra lily  
pad off black  
porcelain  
matt tiles,  
£29.76 for 10  
**sanctuary-  
bathrooms.  
co.uk**



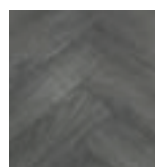
Milo rug, £269.99 **my-furniture.com**



Ezra pink patterned tiles, £48 per sq m  
**porcelainsuperstore.co.uk**



Kaia jute circles rug, £139  
**cultfurniture.com**



Brecon Whisper  
oak herringbone  
wood flooring,  
£53 per sq m  
**woodpeckerflooring.  
co.uk**