

||||||| DESIGN |||||

# PATTERN OF SUCCESS

*How Armstrong Flooring's most popular pattern became ingrained in American culture*

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**I**t's underfoot everywhere. Yet in Armstrong Flooring's new headquarters, pattern 5352 hangs prominently on the wall.

Other vintage flooring samples sit in a corner, waiting to decorate the new space in Greenfield. Pattern 5352 is framed. It's the centerpiece that catches your eye. It's art.

"It's part of our history," says Di Anna Borders, the company's vice president of design.

No. 5352, today known as the Heritage Brick pattern, has been called the most popular resilient flooring pattern of the 20th century. For Armstrong, it's the Lancaster company's most popular pattern.

The Heritage Brick pattern flooring was made in Lancaster for decades. Last year, a modern version was released.

Not everyone's a fan, but No. 5352 has a fan club, from midcentury renovators to people who want to re-create a nostalgic room from the past.

Take a walk through this pattern's past.



No. 5352 came in reds, greens and neutrals through the years. The latest versions come in grays and blues.



The Lancaster plant produced this pattern for more than 70 years.

## HOW THEY MADE IT

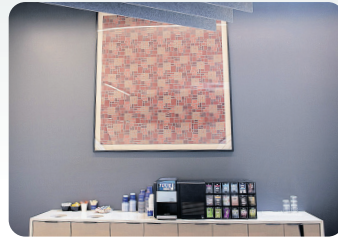
Making original linoleum was an involved process. Each shade had its own 6-by-6-foot stencil. For the "grout" part of the design for example, the stencil blocked out everything but the thin lines between the bricks. Linoleum chips were released. The chips were heated to form a sheet.

The flooring was embossed to create dimension around the design, mimicking the outline of the bricks. Both the stencils and embossing plates were made in the Lancaster tooling shop.

Today, designs are created with computers. There wasn't a digital file of the pattern for the revival, so designer Mark Zeamer researched No. 5352. He re-created it on his computer, using filters and editing software to mimic the shading and texture.

The new Heritage Brick patterns are printed and embossed, but the impressions are not as deep as earlier versions.

Instead of layering colors with stencils, this printed version layers the pattern with 12-foot-wide cylinders.



A framed piece of No. 5352 decorates Armstrong Flooring's headquarters in Greenfield.

## SPOTTED ON SCREEN

The pattern is not just in your grandparents' home. It also made cameos on screens big and small.

In "Apollo 13," set in 1970, the pattern's part of the Lovell family's kitchen.

A decade later, a brown and tan version of the pattern is in the Huxtable kitchen in "The Cosby Show."

And in the 1990 movie "Misery," Annie's kitchen has Heritage Brick floors.

Share your photos and memories of this pattern at [lanc.news/5352](http://lanc.news/5352).

## COLORWAYS

The original pattern was designed in shades of red, later known as coral. There also was a version with muted primary colors and a version with neutrals.

In the 1960s, the pattern was rebranded as Terra Cotta: "a tile design of ageless charm." It came in red, green, gold and white.

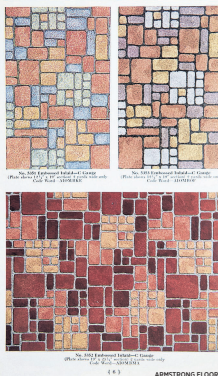
In the 1970s, a Solarian version "which shines without wax" came in light green, light gold, a deeper gold and white.

The latest version, released in 2020, had four colors. Camel and the iconic coral red didn't sell well, leaving dusk and serene blue on the market.

# 107

Number of comments on a Retro Renovation story about the pattern revival (e.g., "This also was the kitchen floor of my childhood. It was a 1956 ranch. It brings back wonderful memories").

## ARMSTRONG'S SHADED EMBOSSED ENLAIN LINOLEUM



# 6

Width of a path, in feet, reaching halfway around the world that could be covered by the amount of No. 5352 flooring Armstrong has produced.

## 5352 TIMELINE

