

# ADORE YOUR FLOOR

How to wax passionate about a room's bottom surface? First, let these five Bergen designers level with you.

**A room would be lost** without a floor. In terms of design, this flat, sometimes undercelebrated foundation may seem a mere given—or a hasty afterthought. But don't make that mistake. Your floor actually has a lot to say about your home's aesthetics and its functionality, and it deserves smart planning whether it's to be a showpiece by itself, a venue for tap dancing, a resting place for fine furniture or simply a way to get to the next room on foot. Applying the insights below from five interior designers in our county will help you love your floor all the more.

## OUR EXPERTS:



**Denise Pough**, A-Jay Interiors by Dee, Paramus



**Jessica Meissner**, White Oak Design, Englewood



**Ruba Hrieb**, RH Interiors, Ridgefield 111



**Simone Rebhun**, The Collective Interior, Englewood



**Tara Rotelli**, Rotelli Interiors, Hasbrouck Heights



### TAKE A TIP ON TILE.

Most of our experts applaud tile—porcelain tile specifically—as the flooring of choice for many rooms thanks to its durability and relatively affordability. “A good-quality porcelain floor will outlive almost any material in your home because of its density,” says Tara Rotelli. “Its technology has advanced in the last 20, 30 years—it has more depth and interest.” You can also find a porcelain tile that emulates natural stone such as marble, she says. Tile “comes in so many styles these days that you don’t have to sacrifice design integrity in order to maintain durability,” adds Simone Rebhun. Tile works especially well in high-water-use areas such as kitchens, bathrooms, mudrooms and laundry rooms, Denise Pough notes, because it allows for easy cleanup. Ruba Hrieb says that for safety purposes, you could add a slightly textured or matte-finished, non-slip tile.



### MAXIMIZE YOUR SPACE.

Room on the smaller side? Use flooring to your advantage. "If you're using hardwood or laminate planks, find a 5-inch or greater width of the plank," says Pough. "Use a larger, 20-inch-by-20-inch or 12-inch-by-24-inch slab of tile or stone. It draws your eye to give the illusion that the space is larger." Hrieb agrees that big planks with fewer seams make a big statement, especially if they're lighter in color. Another consideration is the direction in which you lay your flooring, which can make an immense impact on the overall appearance of the space. "I'd recommend placing your planks parallel to the widest wall to elongate the room," says Meissner. "This can add to the space in a beautiful way and maximize the size to the naked eye."

### CHOOSE A COMPLEMENTARY STYLE.

Go into a project with a clear vision of what you want, and be certain of your choice, because flooring is difficult and expensive to replace. "Be selective when considering different floor options," advises Meissner. "You want to be cost-efficient and make the right choice the first time around." Rotelli says style preference really varies from person to person, but the general rule of thumb is to contrast a darker floor with light colors elsewhere such as on walls or cabinets—or vice versa. Can't choose just one material? "You can mix-and-match to create a unique, eclectic design," says Meissner. One idea: consider laying an intricate pattern of marble tile and wood, which works especially well in a primary bathroom or a walk-in closet.

### SET A REASONABLE BUDGET.

As with any home design project, establishing your budget upfront is important as you choose your flooring. (A designer can help you crunch the numbers if you're not sure where to begin.) "The most expensive flooring is marble tile, and the least expensive is vinyl," says Hrieb. Pough counsels that the type of stone you choose varies in price too; for example, "slate is more affordable than granite, marble and travertine." A key point that Rotelli drive homes is that as with anything, you get what you pay for when it comes to flooring. "Be mindful when you're pricing things out," she says. "A big-box store may sell tiles for \$3 each while the same item is \$6 at a specialty store, but the bigger store is getting its product second-hand instead of directly from the manufacturer," she says. Her tip: Ask the salesperson why it's on sale, and splurge on the more expensive option if you can swing it to avoid potential cracking edges and repairs years down the line.

### KEEP MAINTENANCE IN MIND.

If you're thinking of day-to-day wear and tear, says Rotelli, multi-tonal floors with taupe or gray mixed in hide the most dirt. "If you go solid white or dark, you more clearly see the contrast of the dirt or dust on the material." Hrieb says hardwood floors should be cleaned with a duster; that will sweep and mop the floor without its becoming too slippery. However, this can't be done too often—vinyl and laminate, on the other hand, can handle more frequent and rigorous mopping. "Wood can also ding or mark from cans or silverware dropping and will need to be refinished about every 10 years," warns Rebhun. In general, our experts all agree that tile floors are the easiest to clean, the most durable and the most water-resistant.



### CONSIDER YOUR MATERIALS.

Hardwood flooring is arguably one of the most beautiful flooring options, but it requires more maintenance and is more prone to water damage than other options such as tile, laminate and vinyl, which are less expensive but not as long-lasting. Plus, it likely needs to be sanded, refinished or even replaced roughly every ten years, says Rotelli. However, notes Jessica Meissner, "solid wood floors are aesthetically pleasing, comfortable on the foot and always an elegant, timeless choice, especially when laid in a beautiful way." "Herringbone pattern is a popular placement as of late," as are wider-wood planks, she adds. Other natural materials (rather than manmade ones) such as marble and stone can work for a foyer, a mudroom or main-floor common areas, says Rebhun, but keep in mind they need to be protected and maintained. "Still, it might be worth it for the value they deliver in the overall feel of the home, creating a warm and inviting space."

### BEST STORES FOR FLOORS

These establishments are where the five Bergen County designers quoted above shop when they want the best-of-the-best flooring selection and customer service for their clients:

- **Avano's Tile**, 614 Broad Ave., Ridgefield; [avanostilekitchen.com](http://avanostilekitchen.com)
- **Ceramic Creations**, 62 Route 59, Monsey, N.Y.; [ceramiccreation.net](http://ceramiccreation.net)
- **Floor & Decor**, 50 A&S Dr., Paramus; [flooranddecor.com](http://flooranddecor.com)
- **TileBar**, 443 Route 17, Paramus; [tilebar.com](http://tilebar.com)
- **The Tile Shop**, 156 Route 17, Rochelle Park; [tileshop.com](http://tileshop.com)
- **Wayne Tile**, 50 Spring St., Ramsey; [waynetile.com](http://waynetile.com)