

Install Hardwood Floors

By Brian Madigan

The interesting thing about hardwood floors is that it is one of the few improvements that you can make to your house where the resale value may exceed the actual cost of the improvement.



There are all kinds of other improvements including renovations and additions to kitchens and bathrooms that simply add a percentage of their cost. Hardwood floors are exceptional in this regard. The return can easily amount to 150% to 200% or even more.

They can bring rooms together and create an expensive look of quality at the same time. Today, this is one of the most popular features sought in a home. Broadloom is out, and yes I do recall when it was all the rage. But, today purchasers are looking for quality hardwood floors. So, uncover them or install them.

If your house has wall-to-wall broadloom covering up hardwood, then you should consider removing it and refinishing the hardwood in order to maximize the resale value.

It would appear that medium rich tones are preferred. Try to stay away from stains that are either too light or too dark.

There are basically two types of hardwood floors:

- Unfinished wood strips, and
- Prefinished wood strips.

Unfinished

This is the type commonly used by custom homebuilders and was the original type used over one hundred years ago. The wood strips are cut to fit on site, and the

floor is then sanded and stained. This work needs to be undertaken by a professional. If you are renovating an entire floor this might be the solution. The two big pluses with this type are the ease of repair by simply re-sanding and the opportunity to re-stain and have a different colour.

Prefinished

Within the last twenty years this type of wood flooring has come into its own. It's used by renovators and handymen alike. The wood strips are finished on one side and fit together nicely in a tongue-in-groove format. The quality of the finish is often superior, and this together with the ease of installation make it very popular. The disadvantages are damage to the surface and the difficulty of refinishing. The solution however is usually to have some extra wood available for installation in the event of damage.

Both types seem to be about equal in terms of resale value. Purchasers seem not to be too fussy. They just like wood.

You will also want to be aware of design, wood types and durability before you make a selection.

Where should you put wood flooring? Just about everywhere, including kitchens and front halls that have traditionally been the mainstay of ceramic tiles. If you are facing a limited budget, put the hardwood where people will see it, and that means the main floor. Broadloom or tile will be quite suitable for other areas.

I've heard many people say that a particular tile or broadloom is "out-of-date", but I've never heard anyone say that an oak, brazilian cherry, maple or mahogany wood floor is no longer fashionable.

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