

YOUR STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE TO **FABULOUS** *timber* **FLOORS**

If you're looking to buy flooring for your home, say hello to your new best friend. Yes, this guide will take the stress (and endless research) out of finding your dream floor. Read it, keep it or pass it on!

Want more flooring
ideas and inspiration?
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QUICK-STEP®

YOU'RE BUILDING, renovating or perhaps simply revamping your home and you've reached that all important stage in the design process – choosing the flooring! Yep, it's no exaggeration, flooring is a vital design element in any interior – it's the first thing you see when you open the door, it's one of the biggest surface areas in your home, and it can instantly set the mood and style of a room, not to mention add value to your property. Now, if you're reading this you've probably already narrowed down your options to timber flooring – the timeless, streamlined look and versatility a wooden floor brings to an interior is hard to beat, right? But the decision-making doesn't stop there. Of course, appearance is a high priority when choosing flooring but so is practicality – if it doesn't have the necessary qualities to suit your space and lifestyle it isn't going to look good for long! There are heaps of factors to consider before you buy, from how much foot traffic the floor will get, comfort levels, humidity, size of your room, to the underlay and even the sound the timber floor makes. But do not fret over your flooring, this practical step-by-step guide is designed to help you through the tricky questions and arm you with the knowledge you need to make the right flooring choice for your home. So read on and get clued up on three of the most popular timber options – laminate, engineered timber flooring and bamboo.

1 QUICK TIP: FLOORING IS A CANVAS ON WHICH TO BUILD AN INTERIOR, SO INSTEAD OF CHOOSING YOUR PAINT, FURNITURE, ACCESSORIES, AND THEN CHOOSING A FLOOR THAT MATCHES, WORK FROM THE GROUND UP!

Quality & Cost

WHAT IS LAMINATE?

The science bit: a multi-layer synthetic flooring product made by laminating a digitally-printed image onto a glued high-density fibreboard (HDF).

Price: low range

TOP 3 ADVANTAGES

- > Scratch- and fade-resistant.
- > Easy to keep clean. The sealed surface means dirt can't accumulate.
- > Available in an extensive variety of designs and colours based on highly accurate representations of wood.

WHAT IS ENGINEERED TIMBER FLOORING?

The science bit: Quick-Step engineered boards are made up of three layers of real wood with a strong protective finish.

Price: higher range

TOP 3 ADVANTAGES

- > Natural timber look that brings warmth and authenticity to an interior.
- > Excellent stability and durability.
- > Pre-finished so no need for any messy sanding, varnishing, oiling, painting – it's ready to install!

WHAT IS BAMBOO FLOORING?

The science bit: strands of bamboo (a type of grass) woven and pressed into a solid product. Price: mid range

TOP 3 ADVANTAGES

- > Extremely solid and durable.
- > Eco-friendly and natural. The renewable raw material is harvested in managed forests.
- > A wood-like product for less.

Flooring is a huge investment for the home, so it pays to do some research before you buy

If you're dreaming of solid oak floorboards but only have enough in the budget to stretch to laminate, don't be disappointed. Laminate may be the more budget-friendly option to solid timber and engineered timber boards, but that doesn't mean it looks or feels "cheap". Laminate has come along way over the past 30 or so years since it was first introduced and gone are the "fake floor" tags. The majority of laminate flooring on the market today has such realistic finishes that it's hard to tell it apart from the real thing. But don't judge by appearances alone.

2 QUICK TIP: *You get what you pay for with timber flooring, so it's worth spending a little extra to get a good-quality product that will last years.*

If the price of a laminate seems too good to be true, then it probably is. For example, a low-cost laminate manufactured in China may look fine on the surface, but after exposure to spillages the material will soon swell causing no end of problems. However, take a Quick-Step laminate with its superior damp-proof characteristics and Uniclic Locking System (that locks planks tightly together to prevent spills from seeping), then swelling is significantly minimised. As a general guide when it comes to buying laminate, when the price comes down the swell factor goes up.

Here's a checklist of "quality control" questions to ask before buying:

- What type of joining system is used?
FYI: the best in the world is Uniclic.
- What warranties are offered?
FYI: A 25-year warranty will give you peace of mind, but always read the small print.
- How moisture resistant is the product?
FYI: With laminate, the harder the HDF core, the higher quality the flooring.
- Is the product reputable?
FYI: Get an understanding of how long the product has been sold in Australia, and always check reviews!

Colour & Style

To a large degree, the style and appearance of your room is determined by the colour of your floor. So before you make the big decision, check out these colour scheme ideas and interior tips

NATURAL TONES

Beiges, pale yellow tones, light oak, beech, maple, etc, are classic neutral tones that defy the latest trends. The peaceful character of a floor in natural tones lends itself to a wide variety of combinations. For example, natural floors with dark elements such as dark grey and black: stylish and chic; natural mixed with brown tones: cosy, country house, romantic; with bright colours: dynamic and modern; and when teamed with white: fresh and uplifting. Natural coloured flooring is a safe choice as it provides a neutral blank canvas, allowing furnishings and accessories in the space to take centre stage. Light, natural tones can make a dark room feel sunnier.

RED-ORANGE TONES

Floors with red-orange tones (think cherry and merbau) provide an exotic warmth and bring a sense of rich luxury to a room. This can be further accentuated by the addition of colonial and solid furniture. Red-orange floors look great teamed with a warm coloured wall.

WARM BROWN TONES

A warm timber floor gives an interior a cosy, intimate and homely feeling and can work well for a variety of decor styles: formal, traditional or contemporary. Rich brown tones like dark oak, wenge and walnut, are especially suited to a sitting room, bedroom and hallway. The warm brown tint makes a connection with the earth and nature and forms an excellent backdrop for rustic furniture and bright, strong colours. Team brown tones with yellow hues, shades of orange and red, and, of course, fresh white for a classic and dramatic contrast. Remember that a dark floor can make a small space feel even smaller.

BLACK

A black floor makes a serious style statement in a home and can bring a sense of drama to a scheme. It can look chic and contemporary when paired with crisp white walls, while pale accent colours soften the look. Bold, bright shades contrast sharply with black (think how fabulous flouro furniture pieces and rugs will pop against a black floor), creating an eye-catching and personality-filled space.

WHITE

Scandi, beachy, country, contemporary – yes, white timber floors can suit all manner of interior styles and they're not as high-maintenance as you may think. White floors are increasing in popularity as they make a room feel more spacious and bring a light, airy feel to a home. If teaming with light walls, introduce bold, colourful accents through furnishings and accessories; create a classic and elegant scheme by pairing with black; or team with natural wood tones to avoid a stark, clinical interior.

SHADES OF GREY

Smokey grey tones offer a soothing, cooling and chic vibe in a room and combine well with weathered wood types, but also with classic warm colours and vivid bright tones. A grey floor can look gorgeous combined with white walls and a white ceiling. But why not experiment by using an accent wall in a striking colour or a patterned wallpaper design – a grey floor can take it. Due to its versatile nature, a grey floor is often found in open-plan homes where it's laid in adjacent spaces such as the hall, living area, kitchen.

REMINDER: Just like buying paint, always take swatches of your fave flooring options home to see how they work in your space.

Natural tones
Quick-Step Eligna
laminare in White
Ash Planks

Red-orange tones
Quick-Step Eligna
laminare in Vintage Oak
Dark Varnished Planks

Warm tones Quick-Step
Eligna laminare in Wide
Reclaimed Chestnut
Brown Planks

Black Quick-Step
Readyflor engineered
timber in Wenge

White Quick-Step
Eligna laminare in
Brushed Pine
White Planks

Grey Quick-Step Largo
laminare in Grey
Vintage Oak Planks

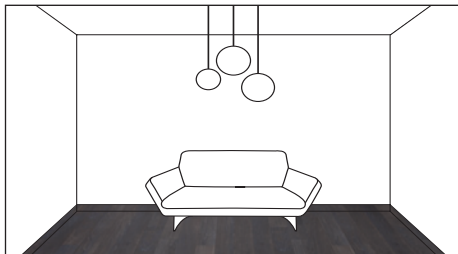
Quick-Step Colonial
laminare in Spotted Gum.

3 QUICK TIP: CREATE A SPACIOUS EFFECT WITH SKIRTING BOARD THAT'S THE SAME COLOUR AS THE FLOOR. WHEN THE SKIRTING IS THE SAME COLOUR AS THE WALL, A FLOOR WILL APPEAR SMALLER.



Choosing the right colour combinations for your wall, floor and ceiling are important to determine the mood and the way you feel and experience your space. Here are a few colour combos and the effect they achieve:

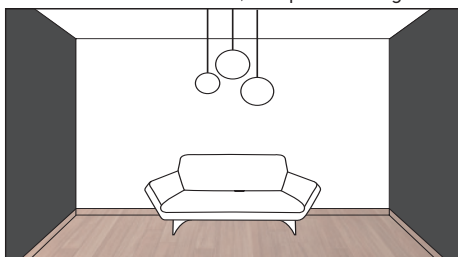
> A dark floor with light walls and light ceiling will make the room seem larger and emphasise the horizontal lines in the space.



> A dark floor and dark ceiling with light walls will make the room seem wider and lower.

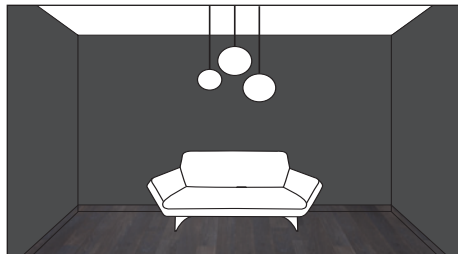


> A light floor, light ceiling and a light rear wall with dark remaining walls will make a room seem narrower, deeper and higher.

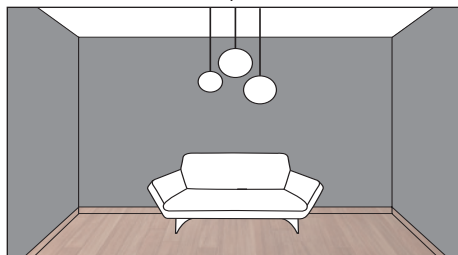


4 **QUICK TIP:** Having **one style** (and colour) of flooring throughout adjoining rooms helps to create a sense of continuity and a feeling of space. Great for **open-plan interiors**.

> A dark floor, dark walls and a lighter ceiling will create a sort of basement effect as the only light is coming from above.



> A light floor with light walls and light ceiling will feel spatial but can make the room feel cold and impersonal.



> If all surfaces have the same dark colour, they lose their shape and will give the room a sombre, enclosed feel.



5 **QUICK TIP:** LAMINATE COMES IN A WIDE RANGE OF COLOURS, SO HAVE FUN WITH YOUR FLOORING AND MIX 'N' MATCH COLOURED PLANKS. IT'LL ADD A UNIQUE, QUIRKY TOUCH TO A SPACE, AND IT'S A **PLAYFUL** WAY TO ADD PERSONALITY TO A KIDS ROOM.

Textures, Shapes & Sizes

Just like colour, the texture, size of planks and the direction in which they are laid can make a difference to the look and feel of your room

Smooth, matt, grainy, glossy? Long planks, wide planks, narrow? If you're umming and ahhing over what seems like an endless list of choices, check out the following top tips, clever tricks and interior advice.

TEXTURE

Here's a guide to flooring textures and the look they will achieve in your home.

WEATHERED/DISTRESSED

Creates a relaxed, rustic vibe – great for open-plan living areas and contemporary industrial spaces. If you love the look of timber's natural cracks, grain, woodworm and nail holes, this finish is for you. *Check out: Quick-Step Eligna Wide in Reclaimed*

SMOOTH

With no grooves or grains this floor finish results in a clean, immaculate and polished look. Suitable for any interior. *Check out: Quick-Step Eligna*

HIGH GLOSS

Ideal for formal, elegant and very polished interiors. The glossy finish reflects light back into a room, making the space seem larger. *Check out: Quick-Step Colonial*

MATT

More of a natural finish that brings out the pattern of the timber to its full extent. *Check out: Quick-Step Readyflor International*

6 **QUICK TIP:** The new generation of **laminat**e means you can have the texture & look of **reclaimed timber** flooring for a fraction of the cost!

PLANK SIZING & ROOM SHAPE

Think about the shape and size of your room before you lay your floor as it will make a difference to how the room is perceived.

> Got a **narrow, long space** such as a galley kitchen? It can be made to look wider, and therefore more spacious, by laying the planks across the room, rather than lengthways. This draws the eye from side to side, instead of down the length of the room.

> Laying your flooring **vertically** will help create the illusion of length in a room and balance it out (but this does not work if the space is narrow; see above).

> If you have a **boxy room**, laying the timber boards so they run away from the eye (vertically) as you enter the room will create the illusion of depth.

> **Small room?** Laying shorter plank lengths requires using more boards, which can trick the eye and give the illusion of more space.

> **Narrow planks** with lots of grain/knots or colour variation may look a little overpowering when used in a large space, but could work brilliantly in a smaller room. Also, narrow boards are often used to make small spaces appear larger.

> **Wide boards** bring a casual look and feel to an interior and suit small and large spaces. Wide timber planks were once the "too expensive" option for many, but laminate and engineered timber floorboards have made the wide plank look affordable.

> **Wide boards** show off rustic/weathered patterns to the maximum.

> Mixing **different plank lengths** in an open space can create visual interest.

GROOVES

Don't forget about grooves! Laminate floors can have different types of grooves that can affect the look of a room.

> Boards with an all-round V-groove will give the room a more rural feel.

> Boards without a V-groove are suited to sleeker, more streamlined interiors.

7 QUICK TIP: CLEAN YOUR TIMBER FLOOR WITH A MINIMAL AMOUNT OF MOISTURE – SWAP A WET MOP FOR A MICROFIBRE MOP! AND NEVER USE ABRASIVE CLEANERS OR DETERGENTS.



Quick-Step Readyflor engineered timber in Brushbox 1 strip.

Suitability & Durability

The thing to remember before buying your flooring is to choose a product that not only looks good but also fits with the primary purpose of your room and lifestyle. Here's some helpful guidance

Like most floor buyers you'll be looking for a product that's going to still look great after years of wear and tear (think spillages, scuffs, kids trampling through, pets with muddy paws, etc). A good way to achieve this goal is to discover which type of flooring best suits your space and the way you live. Here's a checklist of questions to ask yourself before you hit the flooring shops:

- > Is the flooring to be laid in a high traffic zone of the home like the kitchen or hallway?
Look for: scratch-resistant, stability, easy cleaning/maintenance.
- > Is it for a space that will receive a considerable amount of spillages or moisture like a kitchen, utility or bathroom?
Look for: resistance to moisture, spillages and scratches.
- > Does the room receive a lot of natural light?
Look for: fade-resistant.
- > Do you want to save money on installation?
Look for: easy DIY installation.
- > Will kids or pets be playing on the floor?
Look for: scratch-resistant, comfort, hardwearing, low-allergenic.
- > Do you want minimal cleaning?
Look for: dust-repellent, anti-static.
- > Do you want your flooring to last years without resanding/polishing/oiling?
Check suitability. Laminate or engineered timber flooring options are your best bet.

LOVIN' LAMINATE!

All types of timber flooring have their merits, but it has to be said that you really cannot beat laminate when it comes to versatility. In fact, it ticks all the boxes in the checklist shown left, and more! It may not win everyone over in terms of bringing that natural woody warmth and authenticity to a room, but for ease of maintenance it wins hands down when compared to any other type of timber flooring.

Quick-Step laminate has a sealed surface and an anti-static treatment so dirt and dust can't attach, which means it's an absolute cinch to clean and great for helping with allergies as bacteria can't build. The hygiene benefits also make laminate an inviting floor to really "live on" – perfect for bedrooms (especially kids spaces) and living rooms.

Unlike real wood flooring, laminate has a high UV resistance which blocks the harmful rays of the sun and protects the design from fading, so you won't move your sofa in a year's time and find a darker shade underneath! Quick-Step laminate flooring also comes with a splash warranty, which means it can deal with spillages and splashes better than any other laminate floor (another big tick!). And if you love an immaculate floor then you will love Quick-Step laminate – it's up to 10 times more scratch-resistant and it's impact-resistant, too (all down to the top-quality HDF core and super strong top layer) so you can keep your stilettos firmly on your feet and not have to worry about dints and dents.

8 QUICK TIP: PROACTIVELY PROTECT YOUR TIMBER FLOOR! A CREATIVE USE OF MATS, PADS & RUGS WILL DRAMATICALLY REDUCE WEAR & TEAR OF YOUR FLOOR, ESPECIALLY IN HIGH TRAFFIC AREAS.

The Eco Factor

Reduce your eco footprint by choosing sustainable timber flooring. Here's the lowdown

Many buyers go down the reclaimed timber route thinking that is the only eco-friendly option when it comes to timber flooring, but that's simply not the case. There are other "green" options available at a fraction of the cost (reclaimed boards can be extremely pricey in today's market).

> Quick-Step's ARC bamboo flooring has great eco credentials – it's sourced from dedicated plantations which are regrown in five to six year cycles, and it has been

awarded an independent environmental certification from both GECA (Green Environmental Choice Australia) and FSC (Forest Stewardship Council). Bamboo is not only a superior eco choice but it is super strong and durable.

> Bamboo isn't your only eco-friendly option. Quick-Step's engineered timber flooring has sound enviro-friendly properties at its core, literally! Unlike most floors of this type, the core is made from solid hardwood – the enviro-friendly Rubberwood – which gives the floor greater stability.

> To manufacture all of its floors, including laminate, Quick-Step selects certified wood from sustainable forests, also known as PEFC (Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification Schemes).

9 QUICK TIP: CHOOSE YOUR DREAM FLOOR WITH QUICK-STEP'S ONLINE FLOOR ADVISOR. SIMPLY UPLOAD A PICTURE OF YOUR ROOM AND FIND A FLOOR TO SUIT YOUR STYLE. SEE QUICK-STEP.COM

Installation

The condition of your subfloor and choice of underlay is just as important as the flooring itself. Here's why...

You can lay your new timber floor over almost any subfloor, including concrete, tiles, old boards, etc, but it's vital the surface is level, clean and generally in good condition. It's simple really: if the foundation is shoddy, your flooring will definitely not be fabulous. And after making such a big investment, you want it to be *nothing but fabulous!* Unfortunately, timber floors get a bad rap when it comes to being noisy underfoot, and no one wants a creaky, unstable, or "hollow" sounding floor. So, before laying your floor, you must install a good underlay to provide a stable foundation

and also insulate against sound and heat. To save you researching all the underlays out there, try **Quiet-Step Combi-Lay**. Compared to normal underlays, it reduces footstep noise by up to 30% (if you have neighbours downstairs they will love you!). Think of it as a cushioning blanket that provides a quieter and more solid sound and feel. It has heaps of other benefits too, such as continuous damp proof, super tough tear resistance, easy installation, low cost, and it works well with Uniclic systems (see below).

Wannabe DIY installers rejoice! You can lay your Quick-Step laminate, engineered timber or ARC bamboo floor without hassle thanks to Quick-Step's **Uniclic and Uniclic Multifit click systems** (FYI, they are the world's best glueless click floor systems). Both systems are user-friendly, a lot faster and a lot more solid than other systems. You simply have to slide and click the planks together. Too easy. Oh, and even the tightest of corners are a breeze. Honest!

10 QUICK TIP: YOU CAN USE A FLOOR TO MAKE A ROOM FEEL LARGER OR SMALLER, TO HIGHLIGHT FURNITURE OR RUGS BY CONTRASTING WITH THEM, OR TO MAKE A SPACE LOOK MORE MODERN OR TRADITIONAL.



This page Quick-Step Readyflor engineered timber in Wenge 1 strip.
On back cover Quick-Step Classic laminate in Moonlight Oak Light.

BTW. ALL QUICK-STEP FLOORS ARE SUITABLE FOR UNDERFLOOR HEATING AND COOLING.



Flick over for
fabulous flooring
ideas and inspiration