



Layers of Laminate

Happy New Year!!! Laminate flooring is one of the options on the market if you are looking for a durable and resilient floor surface. It is a relatively new invention and it has gained in popularity due to its low maintenance requirements, long life and ease of installation. Laminate flooring also has the ability to be printed to simulate a variety of natural flooring materials such as ceramic tiles, slate, and hardwoods.

Laminate is a man-made material that has been used in surfaces such as counters and back splashes since the early 1920's. Originally it was not strong enough to be used as flooring. Over time, innovations in the manufacturing process refined the finished product and made laminate increasingly durable. In 1977, a company in Sweden called Perstorp invented the first laminate flooring material. In 1984 they began to market the product in Europe under the name Pergo and by the mid-nineties it had spread to the United States. Today the word Pergo is almost synonymous with laminate flooring, although there are other manufactures of the material.

Laminate is a type of synthetic flooring that is made by fusing several layers of different material together using heat, pressure, and adhesive in a process known as lamination. While laminates are often manufactured to replicate the look of a variety of hardwood surfaces, they actually contain no wood materials. Rather, they are constructed from resins and fiberboard particles.

The top layer of a laminate floor is known as the wear layer. It is an invisible surface that rests over the material that protects it from scratches and other damage. Typically this layer is made from an aluminum oxide chemical treatment. The next layer is the decorative layer or photograph layer. It is the layer that gives the laminate its actual appearance. A pattern or image is printed on a paper like material and then embedded in resin. The actual image can be almost anything, but typically laminate floors are manufactured to simulate the look of cork, bamboo, natural stone, ceramic, hardwood, or even brick. The heart of the laminate floor is the fiberboard core. It provides the depth, stability and structure of the material. Laminate flooring must be installed over underlayment. This is most often cork or foam rolls. An appropriate underlayment can also reduce the hollow noise that occurs when walking on some laminate floors.

Laminate flooring can be used in high traffic area such as hallways, living rooms, entry ways, and dining rooms. It can also be made water resistant during the manufacturing process, making certain laminate floors appropriate for kitchens, bathrooms and laundry rooms. Below are a few pros and cons for laminate flooring:

Pros

- Installs fast and easy. Today's laminate have a click/lock or fold/lock design that allows planks to fit like puzzle pieces.
- Laminate flooring is almost impervious to dents and scratches, unlike wood. It is also resistant to most stains.
- Laminate flooring faithfully reproduces the look of wood, stone, and other natural materials. Unlike real hardwood, which comes with many imperfect pieces that need to be discarded or re-engineered.

Cons

- Laminate flooring has classically been tough at commanding higher resale value when selling your home. Hardwood and engineered wood provide a better value when selling your home.
- Traditionally, laminate flooring has been very slippery. Manufactures have been developing slip-resistant wear layers to combat this.
- Laminate flooring will not do well with standing pools of water. This can cause the flooring to buckle and de-laminate.
- While designed to be easy to install, if you force the boards into place, you run the risk of curling up the top wear layer.

If you have any questions on laminate flooring or would like to see some samples, please reach out to our professionals at Gerloff Floors and Fixtures. Until next time my friends, be prepared and stay safe.

From all of us at the Gerloff Companies, we would like to wish each of you a Happy and Prosperous New Year.

Reference: "Basic Laminate Flooring Information" By: Joseph Lewitin and "Laminate Flooring Pros and Cons That Help you Decide" By: Lee Wallender

Happy New Year! 2018
Thank you for your business and support in 2017

January 2018

	<u>Events</u>
January 1:	Office Closed
January 3:	IFMA Luncheon
January 9:	SACA Luncheon
January 10:	AAFAME Luncheon
January 11:	IREM Luncheon
January 17:	HASA Luncheon
January 17:	SABOMA Luncheon
January 18:	Austin BOMA
January 18:	CAMO Meeting
January 18:	SAABE Luncheon
January 25:	IWSA Luncheon
January 28-31:	TASA Mid Winter Conference

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 News Years Day Office Closed	2	3 IFMA Luncheon	4	5	6
7	8	9 SACA Luncheon	10 AAFAME	11 IREM Luncheon	12	13
14	15	16	17 SA Boma Lunch HASA Luncheon	18 Austin BOMA CAMO Meeting SAABE	19	20
21	22	23	24	25 IWSA Luncheon	26	27
28 -----TASA-----	29 --Mid Winter--	30 -----Conference-----	31			

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