



Linoleum: The "Green" Flooring

Many people get confused between linoleum and vinyl sheet flooring. Real linoleum, also known as marmoleum, has been around since 1863 and is made from natural raw materials. It contains linseed oil, wood flour, powdered cork, pine resin and ground limestone. It also has a natural jute backing.

Vinyl sheet flooring is made out of polyvinyl chloride. Its main advantage over linoleum is that it comes in a wider variety of colors and patterns; it is 12' wide (linoleum is 6.5' wide); and it's easier and cheaper to install.

Linoleum however is a much more durable product than sheet vinyl. It's highly resistant to heavy rolling loads and foot traffic; it resists cigarette burns and staining from chemical spills; it is so anti-static it actually repels dust. If well maintained , linoleum can last well over 40 years. There are some residences that still have linoleum floors dating from the 1920's!

It used to be that linoleum was more difficult to maintain than sheet vinyl, because it had to be waxed regularly. Now, many linoleums come with a "Topshield" protective coating, so waxing is no longer necessary. Linoleum needs to be cleaned with a PH balanced product. Don't use the same cleaning products that you use on sheet vinyl, or it may discolor.

Linoleum comes in a wide variety of vibrant colors. Borders and shapes in contrasting colours can be cut into it, for a custom look. How about blue linoleum, in a bathroom, with light grey footprint motifs leading up to the tub? How about a slick contemporary kitchen, with a leather-look medium brown linoleum, bordered in black?

Linoleum offers many opportunities for a custom look. It's a natural and sustainable product, and it will provide many years of strength, beauty and durability.

