



Bamboo Flooring: An Eco-friendly and Stylish Upgrade to Your Home
Written by: Jude Herr on Sept. 19, 2007

Looking for an eco-friendly and stylish upgrade for your house? Try replacing your carpeting and/or linoleum flooring with Bamboo flooring. While an oak tree takes 30 years to grow large enough to harvest, the same amount of bamboo can be harvested every 3-5 years. Bamboo is the fastest growing plant on the planet, growing one third faster than the fastest growing tree. Some species of bamboo grow as much as four feet a day. One bamboo clump can produce 200 poles in the five years that it takes one tree to reach maturity.



If you're concerned about Bamboo's strength and durability compared to hardwood, don't be. Bamboo is harder than Red oak, Ash, Maple or Beech - one of the strongest building materials, with a tensile strength that rivals steel and weight-to-strength ratio surpassing that of graphite. It withstands up to 52,000 pounds of pressure PSI. Because it regenerates through its root system, it can be harvested and is capable of regeneration without the need to replant. There is virtually no impact to the environment with bamboo and with a 3-5 year return on investment for a new bamboo plantation, it makes good economic sense as well.

As durable as hardwood, Bamboo is installed the same as you would a hardwood floor - with a flooring Stapler such as the Stanley-Bostich M111 FS. You will also need a quality chop saw or miter saw to cut clean edges on your pieces, safety glasses, a tapping block, tape measure and a Square.



An installation option to stapling is floating your bamboo floor. Floating a bamboo floor over various types of underlayment provides a cushioned feel and also adds an element of soundproofing if soundproofing underlay is used. Bamboo floors can also be glued down; be sure to use the recommended Urethane-type adhesive to prevent cupping. Water based adhesives should be avoided! It is necessary to purchase the type of bamboo floor that is made for floating and/or glue-down versus the staple-down installation. Typically engineered bamboo is better for floating or glue down installation while solid 5/8" bamboo should be installed using staples. For installation instructions, go [here](#).



Bamboo comes in a variety of shades from a light "natural" to a dark "carbonized" color. The dark shades are created by pressure and heat which actually reduces the hardness of the bamboo slightly. If you want the most scratch resistant bamboo, then stick with the lighter shades. Regardless of the shade you choose, always utilize three or four cartons of flooring when installing to obtain a better distribution of color. You can purchase bamboo flooring via the Internet or at any of your local home improvement and flooring stores. As with any hardwoods, be sure to let your bamboo acclimate inside for at least two weeks prior installation to reduce any shrinkage or swelling that may occur due to climate and altitude changes from shipping.

Resources:

www.bambootechnologies.com/allabout.htm

www.hardwoodinstaller.com

www.toolking.com