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# flooring: what the pros know

Architects and designers share their favorite options



## ANTIQUE LIMESTONE

*Alexandra Misczynski*, interior designer: "Antique French limestone has a rustic feel that looks great with contemporary elements like stainless steel. We used it for floors at our Los Angeles home, indoors and out." Exquisite Surfaces' Dalle de Bourgogne limestone, [xsurfaces.com](http://xsurfaces.com).



## LINOLEUM

*Ghislaine Viñas*, interior designer: "Forbo's linoleum is a natural product that comes in great colors. Install it in a striped motif for something a little happy and crazy, such as this ruglike design I created for the entry of a beach house." Forbo Marmoleum, [forboflooringna.com](http://forboflooringna.com).



## LEATHER

*David Mann*, architect: "Leather scratches easily when new but after a couple of months it patinates nicely. For Pierre Hardy's shoe store in New York, I laid black leather tiles in long strips, like wood planks." Edelman leather floor tile, [edelmanleather.com](http://edelmanleather.com).



## RECLAIMED WOOD

*Brian Messana*, architect: "We create custom floors from wood that's been salvaged from old snow fences and horse barns. Don't use a urethane finish: Oil and wax really bring out the grain of the wood." LV Bespoke reclaimed floors, [lvwoodfloors.com](http://lvwoodfloors.com).



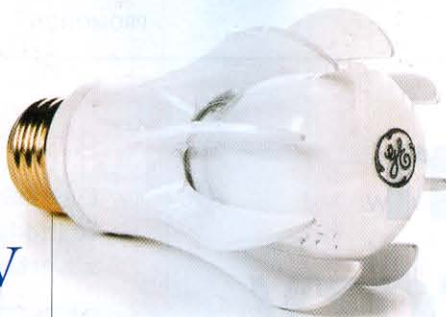
## CONCRETE

*Michael Gabellini*, architect: "For a New York loft, we combined poured concrete with a radiant floor system. It's a very sensual material." To give an existing floor the look of concrete: Ardex SD-M Designer Floor Finish, [ardex.com](http://ardex.com); Ann Sacks Aeon concrete tile, [annsacks.com](http://annsacks.com).



## ALUMINUM

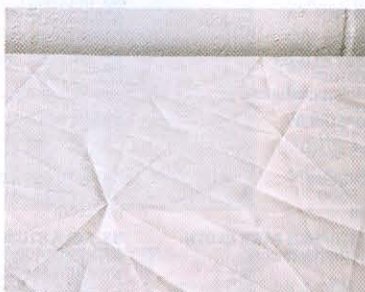
*Stephan Jaklitsch*, architect: "An aluminum floor is an unexpected way to add visual depth to a room. It's easy to maintain and good for high-traffic areas. I used it in the Marc by Marc Jacobs store in San Francisco." AlumnaFloor tiles, [aluminumfloors.com](http://aluminumfloors.com).



## LIGHT YEARS

Compact fluorescent lightbulbs last exponentially longer than incandescents, but they have drawbacks: They take a while to warm up and contain mercury. GE's recently launched Energy Smart 9-Watt LED Bulb—the first in its category to earn an Energy Star rating—is mercury free

and almost as bright as an incandescent bulb, but four times as efficient. Where a 40-watt incandescent typically lasts a year, says GE product manager Anh Marella, the LED version will keep shining for an estimated 22 years. The tulip-shaped Energy Smart bulb has fins that spread its soft light in many directions. The only issue is the cost (\$35 at [lowes.com](http://lowes.com)), but Marella is hopeful that the price will fall as the bulb gains in popularity. GE will release a dimmable version of the bulb this summer with a 60-watt-equivalent model to follow. [gelighting.com](http://gelighting.com).

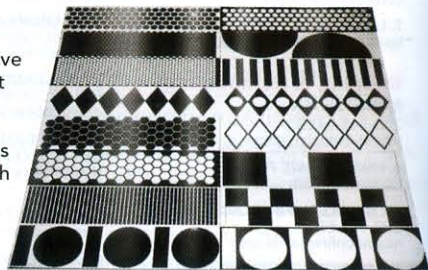


## FINE LINES

Imagine walking into a bathroom and finding it lined with paper. It's an illusion, of course: Mutina's Folded square tiles look like white paper but are made of ceramic. Yael Mer and Shay Alkalay of Raw-Edges Design Studio folded and unfolded sheets of paper into three random patterns that were cast in a mixture of ceramic and chalk. The tiles work equally well for walls and floors. [stonesource.com](http://stonesource.com).

## LASER SHARP

Lasertron's etched-metal backsplashes are an ingenious alternative to tile and the perfect complement to a kitchen with stainless-steel appliances. These pieces can be ordered in any size (up to 48 inches by 96 inches) and embellished with a variety of designs, including a trompe-l'oeil that resembles subway tile, as well as custom patterns. [lasertrondirect.com](http://lasertrondirect.com).



# floors for outdoors

Stephen Orr's *Tomorrow's Garden* (Rodale, \$25) showcases the latest trends in sustainable gardens from Brooklyn to Los Angeles. His ecofriendly picks for outdoor flooring:



**1 / GRAVEL** A staple of both modernist landscapes and Provençal-style gardens, gravel is making a comeback. Choose crushed stone over pea gravel, which is a nonrenewable resource.

**2 / PAVERS** A local stone (bluestone in the Northeast, sandstone in the Southwest) will look more natural with your area's native plants and soil—and is better for the environment than stone imported from great distances.

**3 / DECOMPOSED GRANITE** This sandlike ground cover has an attractive pink tint and would work well in an outdoor dining area.

**4 / LAWN** Big lawns are out; what's in, says Orr, are "lawns with a purpose." These smaller areas, framed by stone or gravel, act more like rugs than wall-to-wall carpeting. Don't rule out artificial turf: The new synthetic lawns are dead ringers for the real thing. Try [easyturf.com](http://easyturf.com) or [foreverlawn.com](http://foreverlawn.com).

BY INGRID ABRAMOVITCH