

# Benefits of Hardwood Floors

If you're in the market for a new floor in your home, you've probably considered hardwood, laminate, and carpets--these are the most common materials. This article takes a look at why hardwood flooring is the better choice.



[Enlarge Image](#)

You'd be hard-pressed to find a homeowner who doesn't want hardwood floors. Wall-to-wall carpeting is out, and hardwood floors are in. But are they worth the price? Let's face it: at \$8-\$10 per square foot (installed), wood flooring is more expensive than carpeting or the increasingly common laminates that offer a similar look.

If you're on the fence and can't decide whether to install hardwood floors (or maybe peel back your old carpeting and refinish the wood underneath), this list may be able to help. We're going to take a look at some of the benefits of hardwoods:

## 1. Longevity

Thanks to durable finishes that are easy to repair, solid-wood floors can last for a hundred years or more. There are very few flooring materials that have been around as long as wood. Over the centuries, it has shown itself to be a lovely and durable floor choice. Other newer materials have yet to prove themselves.

## 2. Coziness and Warmth

Not only is hardwood more pleasant to walk on than laminate (which always feel cold and a little "plastic" underfoot), but it is naturally warm. Wood is an excellent insulator, thanks to its thousands of tiny air chambers per cubic inch, which hold in heat.

## 3. Hypoallergenic

Got allergies? Unlike carpets (read: breeding grounds for mold, mildew, and dust mites, all of which can be tough on anyone with allergies), wood floors don't give pollen, animal

dander, mold, etc. any place to hide and thrive. Even when you steam clean carpets, it's impossible to get them entirely clean. In fact, getting them wet just makes things worse. Hardwood flooring is an excellent choice for anyone with any kind of environmental allergies. (And it makes good sense for everyone else too--who wants to lie down on a floor that's hiding mold?)

#### 4. Easy to Clean

A little sweeping and a little mopping, and your hardwood floors will keep looking nice for a long time to come. Even families with dogs and kids are realizing that it's easier to mop a hardwood floor than try to spray/scrub/wash grape Kool-Aid out of a carpet. Another perk is that a scratch here or a gouge there really just adds character to wood floors (of course, you can always have them refinished if you prefer perfection).

#### 5. Increase Home Value

Unless you're going to be living in the same house for the rest of your life, you should think about how the flooring choices you make today will affect the price you can get for your home when you sell it. Carpet will look old and used in just a few years, whereas wood floors last a long time and add value to a home (if you've ever watched those house hunter shows on television, you've doubtlessly seen just about every potential buyer looking around hopefully for hardwood floors). Even laminate flooring, which looks like wood flooring, is a distant second choice for homebuyers. It just doesn't have the same warmth and feel.

These are just a few of the benefits of hardwood floors. We didn't even mention the aesthetic value: at the end of the day, they just look better than the alternatives. If you can afford to pay an extra couple dollars per square foot, go with hardwood. If you have hardwoods hiding under your existing carpets, tear those suckers up and get the wood refinished.

If you settle for laminate or just replacing the carpeting, you may regret it down the road.

By [TC Thorn](#)

Published: 7/28/2006