

# flooring trends

## in Bathroom and Kitchen Designs



A special thanks to Merv Miller Builders. All photos with this article were taken from a Merv Miller built home. Martin's Flooring provided the interior decorating, window treatments and flooring.

Photography by Don Carrick, Studio 413

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For the homeowner that is looking to give their kitchen or bath a major renovation, or maybe just a cosmetic facelift, starting with the flooring is the best place to start, usually before the demo work even begins. Many times the homeowner will select the cabinets, countertops and paint before they think about flooring, and the design professionals at Martin's are left with the task of trying to find an appropriate flooring choice to accent and complement the selections of paint, countertop and cabinets. Connie Lapp, manager of Martin's Lancaster store, recommends that the homeowner take a global approach to their project. Each selection, including flooring, should be taken into consideration before finalizing individual choices.

Choosing flooring for your bath or kitchen renovation project has 3 primary components: Inspiration, Customization and Adaptation.

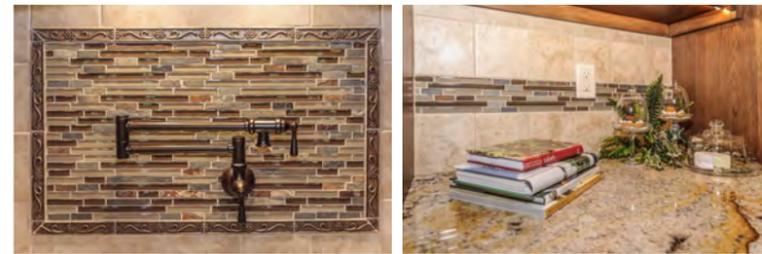
**INSPIRATION.** Today's homeowner has many avenues available to get their inspirational ideas for their project. In print media, the Lancaster area is blessed with several great local publications like R&A Magazine. The articles and high quality photos in these publications are a way for the homeowner to dream and be inspired to do the same in their living space. Plus, there are many other regional and national publications that are available to help jumpstart the homeowner's creativity. Along with print resources, you have cable TV channels like HGTV, DIY network and others that have become great infomercials for homeowners that are looking for renovation ideas. Perhaps the fastest area of homeowner inspiration today, that's growing exponentially, are the social media channels like Pinterest and Houzz that allow the homeowner to pick, choose and control content like never before.

**CUSTOMIZATION.** The challenge for the inspired homeowner is to refine their inspiration into what works best for them individually through customization. This process is accomplished by taking bits and pieces of ideas from several examples of projects that they have pinned to their

personal Pinterest boards, or that are taken from magazines or seen on TV and pulling it together into a remodel plan that fits their tastes, lifestyle and budget.

Gaining a better understanding of the many different flooring choices and styles available that work with today's design trends is extremely helpful. Today's design trend in color is toward grayer tones. Gray is big. It is the neutral color of choice in today's designs, instead of beige, white and off-white. This is leading today's homeowners towards choosing a cooler color palette as they fully embrace the gray tones. Today's beige palette consists of gray hints rather than the yellow and gold nodes found in past years. The regenerated beige colors work nicely as a warmer choice, while still partnering nicely when used with a grayer palette.

Today's flooring choices in both type, color, size and accents will complement the variations of neutral colors used in designs today and give that bath or kitchen remodel the WOW! factor, not to mention provide years of enjoyment, while being virtually maintenance free. Those choices include the following.



The preference for glass backsplashes has grown dramatically over the past three years. The choice in selections in color and size continues to grow. Linear glass tiles are hot. Installing a 4 x 12 glass subway tile can be a stunning choice for the kitchen or even bath backsplash. Many homeowners are mixing glass accents with ceramic, porcelain, stones and slates creating their own unique design.



FEATURE



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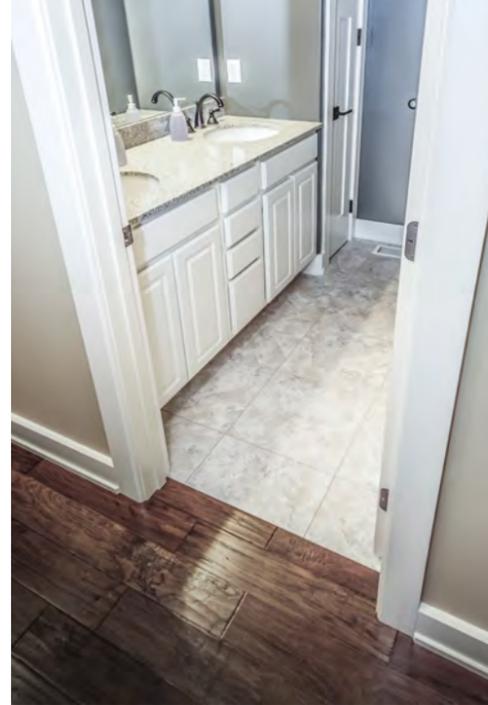
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**Ceramic and Porcelain Tile.**

Even though there has been a slight decline over the past few years in popularity, ceramic and porcelain still remain the most popular of all tile materials used. Ceramic tile is softer than and not as durable as porcelain, but is more budget friendly. Porcelain, particularly through-body porcelain, where the tile color runs throughout the tile, is the best choice for floor tile, if the budget allows, and most can be used in outside applications for patios and pool decks. The biggest change and trend with ceramics and porcelains is in size, shape and design. The days of primarily just using 12 x 12 tiles are over. 12 x 24, 18 x 18 or using a combination of multiple size tiles are very popular. Wood-look porcelain is extremely popular, especially in kitchen and baths.



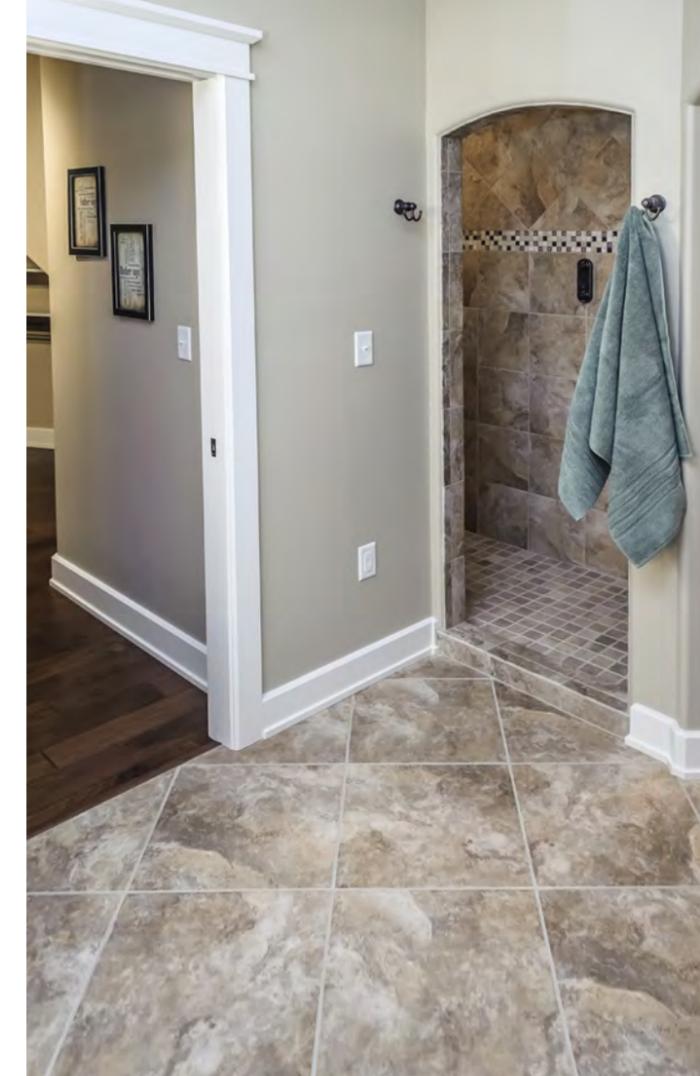
As mentioned earlier, there are wood-look porcelains that can be butted together without grouting and also wood-look Luxury Vinyl Tile available that are great alternatives to real wood.

**Vinyl.** Vinyl is not normally a flooring product spoken of when discussing design trends, but with the technological advances in composition and finishes, it can be an attractive alternative. High resolution imagery can give vinyl the look and feel of tile or hardwood.

**ADAPTATION.** Adaptation is the third component to consider when thinking about renovating the kitchen or bath. Sifting through the multitude of choices of flooring available can be a daunting task for anyone, but one factor for consideration that should not be forgotten in the process is how the choices and selections made will fit the homeowner's lifestyle. Children, pets, maintenance, design fads, etc. are all things that should be thought through during the selection process.

Finally, yet maybe most importantly, flooring choices may need to be adapted to fit the homeowner's budget. With the many styling choices available from vinyl to stone, there are flooring choices, stylish flooring choices available, which can fit any budget. Regardless of the budget, you, the homeowner, can have the kitchen or bath of your dreams.

R&A



**Natural Stone.** Natural stone continues to be very popular with its natural textures and colors, and can be used both interior and exterior. Natural stone possesses a depth of beauty that is impossible to replicate, since it is formed and remains untouched in the earth, until it is cut out of rock, and may have a lot of color variation. If color variation is a concern, natural stone may not be the homeowner's first choice. With a little education and the use of a premium stone sealer, stone will give natural beauty to any space for many years.

**Luxury Vinyl Tile.** Over the last few years, Luxury Vinyl Tile has taken a big portion of the market for kitchen and bath floors away from tile and sheet vinyl floors. Luxury Vinyl Tile is by its name a vinyl product, but it is warmer, more durable, and with the advancements in technology, the surfaces are being produced with more detail and definition, giving it an even more tile-like appearance. It can either be grouted or not grouted when installed. With the grouted joints, it can easily be mistaken for a regular tile floor.

**Hardwood.** Wood continues to be a very popular choice, but homeowners need to be very careful when selecting wood. Natural woods are not water friendly. Placing them in environments where water accidents can and will happen may create problems later. There are alternatives for those wanting that look and feel of wood in their kitchen or bath.



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