

# Buyer's guide to... wood floors

Want to install natural flooring but can't see the wood for the trees? Whatever

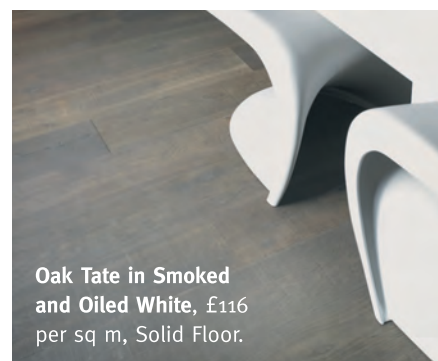


Engineered Classic 3050  
Smoked Oak Finline boards,  
£92.41 per sq m, Parador.

## Before you buy

- **Clean, uniform boards** give a **contemporary look**. For a **rustic** feel, go for more **knots** and **colour variations**.
- **Slim boards** can help to make a **narrow room look wider**, while **wide boards** can help to **balance the proportions** of a large space.
- Both **solid wood** and **engineered boards** can be finished with **polyurethane lacquer** or **natural linseed oil**, and most sealants will stand up to a good few years of wear before they need reapplying.
- Both **laminated** and **engineered flooring** (including bamboo) work well with **underfloor heating**. Solid woods may shift and warp.
- Some **buildings** have **clauses** regarding **sound insulation**, so you may need to install an **acoustic insulation layer**. See [domesticsoundproofing.co.uk](http://domesticsoundproofing.co.uk) for more details.

## The options



Oak Tate in Smoked  
and Oiled White, £116  
per sq m, Solid Floor.

## What is it?

### Solid wood flooring

Solid floors are generally made from tough hardwoods, such as oak, walnut, cherry, ash and maple. Softwoods, like pine or spruce, are less popular as they dent easily.

## Pros

Durable, renewable and recyclable, solid wood gives an elegant look and a high-end feel. It can also be sanded to remove scratches and scuffs when necessary.

## Cons

Expands and contracts more than other materials, so is not suitable for damp areas or for use with underfloor heating.

## What's new?

'Texture is important,' says Eelke Bles at Solid Floor. 'We're seeing lots of worn or reclaimed looks – saw-marked, hand-carved and scraped effects.'

## Cost

**From £23.50 per sq m at Greenwood.**

## Head to

Broadleaf, Dinesen, Junckers, Parador, Solid Floor, Ebony and Co, Greenwood.