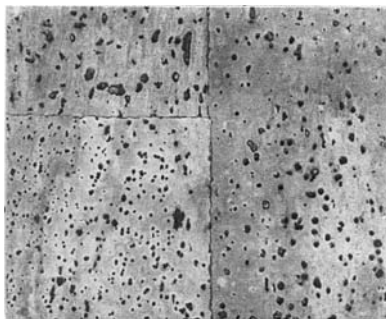


Timber floor finishes are NOT suitable for kitchens, even if well sealed, as water will eventually get underneath the seal and lift it off allowing the wood below to swell and discolour.

Described below are floor finishes which are suitable for domestic kitchen use. They divide basically into *soft* floor finishes which have the benefit of being quiet and kinder to feet, and *hard* floor finishes which are more durable but can be cold, noisy and hard on the feet. Hard finishes may also be more suitable for solid rather than suspended floors.



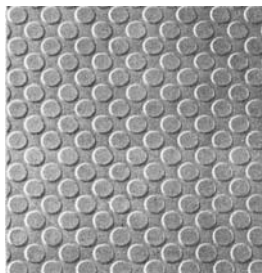
Cork tile – vinyl faced
300 × 300 × 3.2 mm – by Wicanders



Vinyl tile – 'Stones'
305 × 305 × 2 mm
by Harvey Maria



Linoleum tiles
500 × 500 × 2.5 mm
by Forbo-Nairn



Rubber stud tiles
503 × 503 × 3.2 mm
by Freudenberg

Floor tiles – soft

Soft floors

Vinyl flooring

Available in sheet or tile form with a vast choice of designs ranging from plain colours through random patterns to often very creditable imitations of natural materials. Generally vinyl floors are easy to keep clean with sweeping and washing. Some incorporate carborundum to make a lightly textured non-slip finish. These should be sealed to make them easier to clean.

typical sizes: 2 m rolls and $600 \times 600 \times 2$ mm tiles.

Linoleum flooring

Linoleum is made from predominantly natural materials: linseed oil, rosin, wood flour and chalk backed with jute. It is environmentally friendly as it is largely emission free and non-allergenic. Its resilience makes it kind to feet, quiet and hard wearing.

typical sizes: 2 m rolls and $500 \times 500 \times 2.5$ mm tiles.

Cork tiles – vinyl faced

This is one of the most practical and handsome floor finishes for a kitchen. It has the warmth, resilience and beauty of cork with the protection of a 0.5 mm clear vinyl sheet bonded on top as the wear layer. The random pattern of natural cork disguises dirt so effectively that the need for cleaning is only felt when one hears the sugar crunch underfoot, making it the perfect floor for the less than house-proud cook.

typical sizes: $300 \times 300 \times 3.2$ mm tiles and
 $900 \times 295 \times 12$ mm interlocking planks where
 the cork is bonded to high density fibreboard with
 an insulating layer of cork to the underside.

Sources: Armstrong, Forbo-Nairn, Freudenberg, Harvey Maria, Wicanders