

## **Stainless steel and aluminium flooring**

Stainless steel and aluminium make a striking and durable floor finish for a kitchen.

The metals are available in various textures, some resembling chequer plate, which is necessary to make it non-slip.

Stainless steel is more hard wearing and costs about a third more than aluminium.

The finish can be *satın*, *brushed* or *bright*.

Aluminium must be *hard anodised*.

The finish can be *brushed*, *matt* or *shining*.

Both metals are available in sheet form, but tiles are easier to lay in small and awkward shaped areas. The metal is bonded on to MDF or marine ply with tongued and grooved joints which can be cut like a ceramic tile with a diamond tipped saw.

Tile size: 300 × 300 × 0.7 mm bonded on to 9, 12 or 15 mm tongued and grooved ply or MDF.

There are other stainless steel and aluminium tiles which are not bonded to a board but which can be stuck down to a substrate with a double-sided adhesive viscose sheet.

Tile size: 500 × 500 × 1.5 mm

The metals are not affected by acids, but bleach can dull the surface.

Normal cleaning is sweeping and washing.

Stubborn dirt can be removed with a product which is similar to a car-screen wash which removes dirt without leaving a greasy film.

**Sources:** Metex, THG International

## Wall finishes

Kitchen walls have to cope with condensation and grease even when an efficient extractor fan is installed.

Walls behind hobs get particularly greasy.

Walls and window cills behind sinks are liable to get splashed.

Therefore these wall surfaces particularly between the work-top and wall cupboards and for at least 300 mm high above worktops elsewhere, should be protected with easy-to-clean materials such as:

ceramic tiles, mosaic, stainless steel sheet, plastic laminate-faced board, gloss-varnished timber matchboarding.

The latter should be protected with a sheet of laminated glass or stainless steel behind the hob as it may scorch.

For walls elsewhere, above tall cabinets for instance, gloss paint is easier to wash and longer lasting than matt emulsion.