

HOMES & GARDENS®

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INSPIRING STYLE

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MODERN LIVING

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**DECORATIVE
FLOORING**
IDEAS FOR CARPETS,
TILES & WOOD

RECALL: 4/2/15



Colour confidence

BOLD LOOKS FOR EVERY SPACE

EXPERT VIEW DESIGNING A BOLD SCHEME



ASHLEY HICKS.
Ashley Hicks
Design Studio.
ashleyhicks.com.

■ I have no strict rules, although I do like the floor to contrast with the walls; it's usually a mistake to have them exactly the same colour, as the space can feel like a vacuum. However, when I was 15, my bedroom walls, ceiling and floor were all black and it was beautiful, so rules don't really work.

■ Consider the acoustics of the room before you lay a new floor. If noise is an issue, you may want to choose carpet. If you'd like a warm, textured hard floor that absorbs sound, cork can be a great option. I recently used a Wicanders stained wood-veneered cork throughout a studio flat, and it was very effective.

■ Choose a pattern that is stronger than all the other patterns in the room and pick out at least one colour from it, perhaps with a lampshade or cushion. I laid decorative cement tiles in the hall, dining room, kitchen and bathrooms of my country house, and it looks great. Plus, the pattern hides dirt brilliantly and adds life to the rooms.

■ Try not to obsess over retaining old wooden floorboards – they can end up dominating the space to adverse effect. Floors are best when they form a textured ground for other things to sit on. The boldest pattern can sometimes do this in a way that an old wooden floor will not.

■ Consider your new flooring in relation to what you've laid in the rooms next to it. You might want the same material to run through both spaces to unite them. Usually I like a real contrast; if one is patterned, the other should be plain, or have a very different scale of pattern.

▷ **MAIN STRIP** A panel of encaustic tiles with a carefully considered clash of patterns sets the cooking zone apart in this open-plan space. A mix of Valetta and Toulouse tiles, from £7 each, Fired Earth, 0845 366 0400, firedearth.com, will create a similar effect.

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With statement flooring, use block colour on the walls to give the eyes a rest. If you're adding other patterns, choose multiple-scale designs and ensure they complement the floor.”

LORNA HAIGH, Alternative Flooring, 01264 335111, alternativeflooring.com.



GO GRAND An oversized rug can shape the room layout and give a scheme a more contemporary look than wall-to-wall carpet. Sellarsbrook rug, from £735sq m. The Rug Company, 020 7243 7342, therugcompany.com.



ADVICE
CARPETS & RUGS
Create a warm and cosy space

CONTEMPORARY SOLUTIONS Colour confidence is growing as more viable bold options come on to the market. Pattern can also be very forgiving, helping to hide marks and damage. That said, many homeowners continue to opt for a safe, neutral base. "Carpet is more of an investment, so if you plan to stay in your home for a long time, go for carpets and use rugs for decorative accents," says Lorna Haigh, head of marketing at Alternative Flooring, 01264 335111, alternativeflooring.com.

PRACTICAL TIP It is most important to use a good underlay, as Lorna explains: "It will give your carpet an ultra-luxurious feel and help to prolong its life, and it's a great insulator, too."

RUG MATTERS Always choose the largest size rug you can, as it gives a generous, calming effect to a room. Pattern is also a good way to create strong impact in a narrow corridor. "Scale and repeat work brilliantly in this type of area," says Suzanne Sharp, creative director and co-founder of The Rug Company, 020 7243 7342, therugcompany.com. "The scale of the pattern can help to make a small room feel much more spacious." □

▷ **MIX IT UP** Combine different prints and hues for a confident and design-led hallway. Here, the acid-green stair runner provides a lively injection of colour to the monochrome space. For a similar runner, try the New Hadley flatweave in Lime, W71cm, £115m, Roger Oates, 01531 632718, rogeroates.com. Shown on the ground floor is the Quirky Skinny runner in Black, W69cm, £99.80m, Alternative Flooring, 01264 335111, alternativeflooring.com, and the Geometric rug, from £150, Plantation Rug Company, 0800 012 1511, plantationrug.co.uk.



KEY CONTACTS

TILES

Bert & May, 020 3673 4264, bertandmay.com
Bisazza, 020 7584 8837, bisazza.com
De Ferranti, 020 7384 4424, deferranti.com
Lapicida, 020 3012 1000, lapicida.com
Mandarin Stone, 0160 071 5444, mandarinstone.com
Original Style, 01392 473000, originalstyle.com
Topps Tiles, 0800 783 6262, toppstiles.co.uk
Walls and Floors, 01536 314730, wallsandfloors.co.uk

WOOD

Element7, 020 7736 2366, element7.co.uk
Luxury Wood Flooring, 020 8458 0201, luxurywoodflooring.com
Martin Kingdon, 01704 550468,

martinkingdon.co.uk
The Natural Wood Floor Company, 020 8871 9771, naturalwoodfloor.co.uk
Solid Floor, 020 7221 9166, solidfloor.co.uk
Tutto Parquet, 020 7435 8282, tuttoparquet.co.uk
Quick-Step, 0032 5667 5211, quick-step.co.uk

CARPETS & RUGS

Bazaar Velvet, 020 7736 9693, bazaarvelvet.com
Blenheim Carpets, 020 7823 6333, blenheim-carpets.com
Crucial Trading, 01562 743747, crucialtrading.com
Flock Living, 020 8440 8777, flock-living.com
Luke Irwin, 020 7730 6070, lukeirwin.com
Natural Elements, 020 7394 5016, naturalelementsflooring.com
WovenGround, 020 7193 0905, wovenground.net

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