

flooring



Commercial floors: 5 things you should know

Learn how to spend your flooring dollars wisely...



Considering Commercial Flooring? Here's what you need to know...

Whether we own our own businesses or work for another, many of us work outside of our homes. Because of this, it's a possibility that you'll need to think about commercial flooring one day. This guide is designed to help you prepare and know what questions to ask should the opportunity ever present itself.

While it may not seem like it on the surface, floors are a critical component of our everyday lives. You might be surprised to know that not only do they affect us physically, they can change our behaviors and how we interact with each other.

A unique trait to floors is that they are industry agnostic. They support us in schools, hospitals, offices, restaurants, and really anywhere we walk indoors. If you think about it, we interact with our floors on a daily basis.

Floors can also affect our mood and the overall aesthetic. For instance, you can warm up a room with carpet or carpet tile, go classic or modern with resilient vinyl flooring, provide comfort and easy maintenance with rubber flooring, and even provide a sense of timeless style with wood flooring.

It's good to keep in mind that when chosen and installed correctly, your commercial flooring can create the ideal space for employees and clients. There are many factors, which affect our decisions, including but not limited to: budget, foot traffic, appearance, comfort, care and maintenance.

That's why it's important to really consider what you're investing in your floors and how you're going to strategically choose the right product to meet your individual needs.

#1: Durability Matters

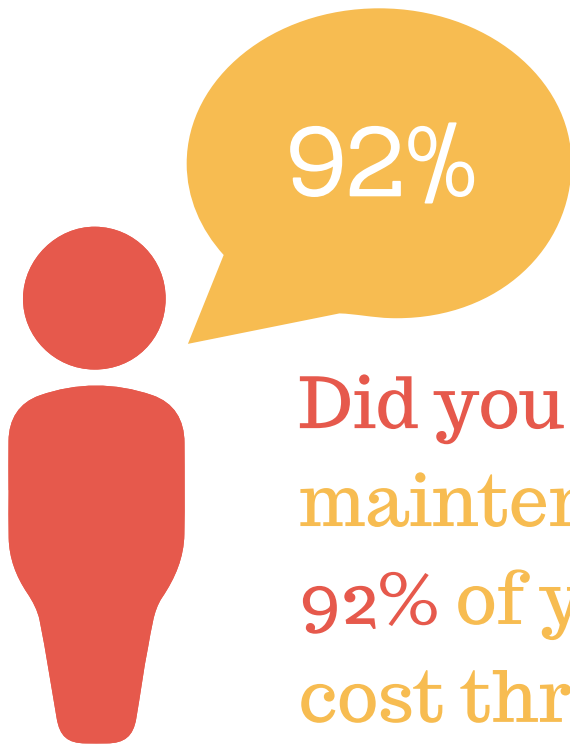
Studies have shown that commercial businesses change their flooring about once every 10-12 years. That means you'll want to find something durable that will hold up to your specific business needs. Some things to consider include:

- 1) Is there heavy foot traffic in the area?
- 2) Does it need to withstand large industrial equipment that could potentially damage a softer surface incapable of holding the weight?
- 3) Is it easy to clean and maintain so it will last as long as you plan?



#2: Maintenance Expense

It's important to consider the costs associated with maintaining your commercial flooring application. In fact, maintenance over the life of the floor is many times greater than the cost of the flooring material. In fact, industry studies have shown that flooring and installation costs alone are only about 8% of your floor's total lifecycle cost. This leaves 92% of your flooring cost tied up in maintenance.



Did you know?
maintenance accounts for
92% of your total flooring
cost throughout its lifecycle.

◀ maintenance tips ▶

Materials like [stained concrete](#) or [epoxy treated floors](#) are relatively easy to keep clean. Vacuuming on a regular basis will help you keep your [carpet](#) looking new and clean. However, if you plan to use materials like [natural stone](#) and/or [vinyl](#), you may want to budget a bit more. These materials will require more labor intensive cleaning and buffing to maintain.

#3: Moisture Control

In some areas, weather can greatly impact your choices when deciding on commercial flooring. If your area is particularly wet, or a place where snow tends to accumulate during winter months, you should consider flooring material in entry areas with a moisture control component.

Additionally, moisture vapor in concrete can be problematic for glue-down and non-permeable flooring systems. However, working with a flooring contractor who does a proper moisture test prior to flooring installation can reduce your risk of moisture-related problems in the future.

Before working with any company to install your flooring, you'll likely avoid long-term cost problems by asking them if they conduct moisture tests.



#4: Full Service Flooring Contractors vs. Installers

Choosing the right partner is critical to spending your flooring budget wisely. A successful installation is largely dependent on hiring the services of a firm that meets the needs of your individual project. What you might not realize is that flooring installers are *not* the same as full service flooring contractors.

The more logistically complex and challenging the installation is, the more you need a professional full service flooring contractor. The difference is quite significant so you should research who the right partner is for your individual needs. For example, a flooring installer is specialized in the physical installation of the project whereas a full service flooring contractor has numerous capabilities beyond install. While there are very qualified individual installers, it's best to fully understand the services offered by full service flooring contractors to see if they better align with your needs.

One reason to consider a full service flooring contractor is because they handle the whole flooring project from planning to management, estimating, logistics, storage, and transportation of the material. They're also used to working with project managers and general contractors, and many times, have an existing relationship with them. This can provide a superior overall experience, industry knowledge, full service ability, financial stability, and a proven service quality you would expect for an investment of this size.

Whichever method is best for you, it's good to know your options and outline what you are trying to accomplish before deciding upon a flooring installer or a full service flooring contractor.

Did you know?

A full service flooring contractor has: estimators, logistics, storage, project management and installers among other capabilities.

#5: Style & Movement

Have you ever stopped to think that flooring touches 100% of your space? While your furniture may only be present in 1/3 of your physical space, your flooring is seen everywhere. The look and feel of your floors is important and can impact your bottom line, if not well thought through.

For instance, think about where your associates are spending much of their time on their feet. Flooring should encourage movement and collaboration throughout the day, especially in these high traffic areas. Getting your associates on their feet will increase your productivity and help keep them healthy. However, you should think about how they move. If a large portion of your associates wears high heeled shoes, you might want to reconsider wood or cork flooring as an option. High heeled shoes (like stilettos) will cause considerable damage to wood or cork flooring by putting indentations in it, thereby causing a shorter lifetime for your floors.

Style is also a key factor. Love the look of those light colored floors? Light flooring can show dirt quickly. You could end up spending dollars trying to keep a high traffic area visibly clean whereas a darker colored floor would likely require less frequent cleaning. Or, want the organic feel beautiful bamboo floors can bring to your space? Make sure to evaluate the lighting in the area, as bamboo tends to fade and will need replaced if you want a consistent color throughout. When considering your style and how best to incorporate it in your floors, keep in mind considerations like these and many others can be a factor.

Lastly, Your space represents your brand both to internal associates and external clients and customers. Flooring is something every single one of them will touch, so your flooring not only has to be functional, it has to be inviting and represent who you are as a culture and brand. Let's face it; we're not just trying to attract the right customers, we're also trying to attract and retain talented associates. Your flooring speaks volumes about you internally and externally, so make sure it's sending the right message.



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