



Learning Objectives:

- The features and benefits of the products you sell.
- How to answer your customers' product-related questions.
- How to help your customer choose the right products.
- How to increase transaction sizes by learning more about add-on sales and upselling techniques.

Chapter 1: Interior Panels

Module 1: Unfinished Panels

Product Knowledge:



Gypsum Drywall

- Gypsum drywall is a versatile building panel made of calcined gypsum (commonly called plaster of Paris) and other ingredients sandwiched between two sheets of specially manufactured paper.
- Other names are wall board or Sheetrock, a popular brand name.
- Drywall attaches to wall and ceiling structures made of wood or metal frames.
- It attaches with nail, screw or adhesive fasteners and cuts with a utility knife.
- The edges along the length are tapered to allow for finishing with tape and joint compound.
- They generally come packaged in pairs.
- Most panels are 4' wide and available in 8', 10', 12', 14' and 16' lengths.
- Some products incorporate sound control properties.

Drywall sizes

Here are some of the common drywall sizes and where they are used.

- 5/8" thick panels are recommended for the finest single-layer drywall construction, typically used on ceilings. Greater thickness provides increased resistance to fire exposure, sound transmission and sagging.
- 1/2" thick panels are for single-layer application in typical new construction mostly for walls.
- 3/8" thick panels are applied mainly in double-layer systems, in repair and remodel work over existing surfaces and as a backer for paneling.
- 1/4" thick panels are a lightweight, low-cost, utility gypsum panel used as a base layer for improving sound control in multilayered partitions and in covering old wall and ceiling surfaces. These panels are often used for installations on curved surfaces, such as curved wall, ceilings or archways.



Fire-Rated Drywall

- Fire-rated drywall is also known as Type X or One-Hour Fire Wallboard.
- This type of panel is not fire-proof, but rather it contains glass fiber reinforcement and other additives that help it resist flames longer than regular drywall.
- It is typically 5/8" thick.
- Since it is denser than regular drywall, it absorbs sound and resists impact better than regular drywall.
- Type C drywall is similar to Type X, but has properties that make it more fire resistant than Type X.



Moisture-Resistant Drywall

- Moisture-resistant drywall is made with a wax emulsion to resist moisture and some types resist mold.
- May use it as backer for tile in areas with no or limited water exposure, such as above toilets and sinks or above bathtubs.
- Do not use in places where it will come in direct contact with water or places of extreme humidity, such as saunas or tiled shower stalls.
- It is sometimes called greenboard because of the green paper some manufacturers use.



Shaftwall Board

- Shaftwall board is a drywall product usually rated for fire-resistance.
- It is used to replace masonry in the interior core of buildings, mainly commercial and industrial. It lines shaftwalls, stairwells and other vertical chases such as elevator shafts.
- It is also used in area separation applications in residential housing.
- Shaftwall board is lighter in weight and more cost effective than masonry as a shaft liner.
- Some types are faced with moisture, mold and mildew resistant paper for protection against the weather during installation.



Abuse-Resistant Drywall

- May be designed to be abuse resistant or impact resistant, or both.
- Uses an extra-durable paper face to withstand scuffs and abrasions. Impact resistant designs have a special backing or a fiberglass mesh imbedded in the core to withstand impacts from penetrating walls.
- Ideal for use in high-traffic areas such as schools, offices and public buildings.
- Manufacturers may also incorporate fire resistant, mold and mildew resistant properties into the panel.
- Cuts, fastens and finishes like standard gypsum panels.



Ceiling Board

- Gypsum board designed specifically for installation in interior ceilings.
- Designed with sag-resistant qualities for use in high-humidity applications or placed where wet-application texturing will be used.
- Usually 1/2" thick. Sag resistant qualities are similar to 5/8" regular drywall.
- Most types can be attached where supports are up to 24" on center where board is perpendicular to framing.



Plasterbase Board

- Used as a base under a veneer plaster finish.
- For use on interior walls and ceilings.
- Has a blue paper face that is designed to be absorptive and allow for troweling on a plaster veneer.
- Can be attached directly to wood or metal framing.

Foil-Backed Panel

- Used on exterior walls.
- Has a heavy paper on the finish side. The backside is laminated with an aluminum foil. The foil acts as a vapor retarder.
- Use with furred masonry, wood or steel framing.
- If it has an aluminum backing it can be used as a reflective barrier for temperature control.



Paperless Drywall

- Designed to replace paper-faced drywall for interior applications.
- Some manufacturers use glass-mat to replace the paper.
- The chief purpose of this type is to protect against mold. It is not mold-proof, but eliminates the paper facing, which is a good food source for mold.
- Check manufacturer's material for installation and finishing instructions, but most types can be installed and finished according to standard techniques.



Corner Bead

- Edging applied to a drywalled corner to protect it. Also gives a crisp edge to a drywalled corner.
- Spans the entire length of the corner.
- Typically comes in 8', 9' or 10' lengths.
- One type is an angled metal that attaches with nails or screws. It is covered with drywall mud during the finishing process.
- Another type is an angled metal that has a paper cover. This type attaches with a layer of drywall mud.



Drywall Tape

- Covers the joints between installed sheets of drywall.
- Attached by spreading a layer of mud on the joint, then embedding the tape with a 4" taping knife.
- Tape is covered with subsequent layers of drywall mud.
- Also available as fiberglass mesh tape, which adds more strength to the joint. It is often used for repairing holes in drywall or plaster.



Drywall Joint Compound

- Also known as drywall mud.
- Used to cover joints, nail dents and other imperfections in drywall.
- A common type is the triple duty compound. It is used in all three stages of the drywall finishing process.
- Powder mix type is available in bags or boxes.
- Ready mix type is available in pails and boxes.

Taking it to the Floor:

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: Is there a special way to finish moisture-resistant drywall?

A: No. You mud and tape it with regular joint compound. If you are going to finish it with tile, do so on the green side of the panel. You can also use it in non-tile applications.

Q: If the wallboard in my basement was damaged during a flood, can I simply dry it out and keep it?

A: No. It needs to be replaced. Wallboard damaged by floodwater is a health hazard because there may be mud and contaminants dried up inside the board.

Q: How do I use drywall tape?

A: You attach it by first spreading a layer of mud on the joint, then embedding the tape with a 4" taping knife. After that has dried, continue covering the tape with more layers of drywall mud. You only want to use enough mud to cover the tape evenly. You'll later want to sand it so it is even with the wall around it.

Q: Does wallboard have an R value?

A: Yes. Generally, 3/8" board is 0.32, 1/2" board is 0.45 and 5/8" board is 0.56.

Q: Where do I need to use fire rated drywall?

A: Check your local codes. This type of drywall is usually used in commercial and residential buildings that require a fire rating. Usually it is installed in garages, near furnaces and utility rooms. This type of drywall will also have a fire resistance rating, which is the length of time a wall can withstand fire and serve as a barrier and keep it from spreading.

Upselling Skills

- Indoor air quality is a concern for many homeowners. Recommend drywall products that meet low-VOC standards.
- Some manufacturers sell lightweight drywall, which can be an average of 25 to 30% lighter than standard drywall. This product is easier to handle and installs like regular drywall.

Add-On Sales

- For cutting drywall, suggest a punch saw, a utility knife and extra utility knife blades.
- Suggest a tape measure, chalk line, a T-square and carpenter's pencil for measuring the drywall before cutting it.
- For attaching drywall to framing members, suggest drywall screws and a screw gun. Or, the customer might be using drywall nails and a drywall hammer.
- In addition to the drywall joint compound, drywall tape and corner bead we discussed earlier, customers finishing drywall will want a variety of taping knives.
- Also recommend a mud pan for holding drywall mud.
- Finally, recommend a hand sander and pole sander along with sanding screens for smoothing finished drywall.

Module 2: Finished Panels



Wood Panel

- Wood panels have a veneer of real wood on the top and a piece of real wood as the substrate.
- The wood gets no finish except stain and a protective topcoat if desired.
- This is usually a more expensive type of paneling and quality varies with how the veneer is matched.
- Another type is a paneled wall that uses molded stiles and rails to frame panels that can be raised or flat. It is highly decorative and usually made from solid wood pieces.



Wainscoting

- Wainscoting is paneling that covers the lower portion of the wall.
- This type of paneling is usually solid wood and includes a base and cap molding.
- Some manufacturers sell kits that include planks with tongue-and-groove joints for easy installation.
- One popular type is beadboard that has beaded grooves in the surface.
- Another popular type is paneled, which has molded stiles and rails. Panels can be raised or flat.



Printed Panel

- A printed panel is ordinary plywood or other substrate painted a solid color and then printed with an imitation wood grain.
- This is generally the least expensive type of paneling.



Overlaid Panel

- The overlaid panels consists of a base is made from ordinary plywood or other substrate.
- On top is a thin piece of paper printed with a photographic copy of a wood grain or other design.
- Another type of overlaid panel has a vinyl base, which is overlaid with a picture of wood grain or a design.
- Because it is tougher and thicker than paper, the vinyl may have a slight texture to more closely mimic the appearance of wood.



Embossed Panel

- An embossed panel is also known as simulated wood grain.
- It is manufactured by running an inexpensive plywood or hardboard under rollers to get the desired wood grain effect.
- It is then covered with a finish to match the wood grain.



Molded Panel

- A molded panel is a specialty wall panel made from a variety of substances such as polyurethane, fiberglass, ceramic granules or other composite material.
- It is molded to simulate other building products such as wood, stone and brick.
- Some types may be used indoors and outdoors.



Tile Board

- Tile board is also known as melamine.
- It is a durable, plastic finish baked on a moisture-resistant backboard.
- It is water and stain resistant.
- Ideal for use in bathrooms, kitchens, workrooms or playrooms.

Prefinished Wallboard

- Combines the qualities of drywall with the color and durability of a vinyl covering.
- Fasten directly to the studs or use as a finish layer over a drywall panel.
- Also suitable for demountable partition systems in industrial applications.
- Has an easy to clean and abrasion-resistant surface.
- May be nailed using color matching nails, glue or clips.



Pegboard Panel

- Contains holes for use with pegs or hooks.
- Used for storage and organizing.
- Usually constructed of hardboard.
- Some manufacturers offer colors other than the standard brown.
- Standard thicknesses are 1/8" and 1/4".



Planking

- Solid pieces of wood installed in planks.
- Tongue and groove edges for concealing fasteners.
- Some panels have V grooves in the design and on the edges to help hide the appearance of the joints.
- Other face patterns include beaded and channel groove.
- Available finished or unfinished.



Aromatic Cedar

- Generally installed in closets and laundry areas.
- Has the aromatic scent of cedar that keeps moths away from clothing.
- Available in 4'x8' sheets or planks.
- Do not use a finish or topcoat as this will seal in the scent.

Taking it to the Floor:

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: Can I install paneling over a brick or concrete surface?

A: First you will need to install furring strips over the masonry surface. Then, attach the paneling to the furring strips.

Q: How do I hide the seams between pieces of paneling?

A: Use a seam cover that snaps in between joints. Also use molding for trimming around windows, outside corners and along floors and ceilings.

Q: What kind of nails should I use to install paneling?

A: Use panel nails that are ringshank and are color matched to the paneling you are installing. Use 1" nails if you are attaching the paneling directly to the studs. Use 1-1/2" if you are attaching the paneling through a solid backing such as drywall.

Q: How do I attach tileboard?

A: Do not use nails. Use an adhesive specially designed for attaching paneling to a wall or furring strips.

Q: How do I estimate how much paneling I need?

A: Measure the distance around the room and divide by 4. This assumes you have 8' ceilings and are buying 4x8 sheets.

Upselling Skills

- Customer may be tempted to buy the cheapest paneling available when selecting products from this category. Ask customers enough questions to make sure they get the product that is appropriate for the location where they want to install it. Customers who buy the wrong product now to save a little money run the risk of the product failing in a short time.

Add-On Sales

- Suggest a fine-tooth panel saw for cutting wall panels.
- A tape measure and a chalk line will help in measuring the pieces to be cut.
- A stud finder will help customers installing wall panels over existing drywall.
- Colored nails are designed specifically for installing paneling, as they blend in with the color of the panel. Also suggest a hammer.
- Some panels are designed to be installed with adhesive, rather than nails.
- Suggest seam strips to cover the seams between panels.
- Ask customers if they've selected the molding to finish the room where they are installing the paneling.
- Anyone installing paneling over a masonry surface will need masonry anchors and furring strips.

Module 3: Ceiling Tiles

Product Knowledge:



About Acoustical Tile

- Acoustical tiles have a perforated, fissured or other type of irregular surface that reduces sound.
- Mineral, glass fiber and gypsum are materials commonly used. Some products use vinyl plastic.
- Many are fire resistant. This does not mean they are fire proof, but are rated to resist the spread of fire.
- They come in various styles and thicknesses.



Direct Mount Acoustical Tile

- Direct-mount acoustical tiles attach directly to the existing ceiling, which means there is virtually no loss in ceiling height.
- They attach by gluing or stapling directly to the ceiling. They may also attach to furring strips or a metal grid system.
- The surface of the tile may be smooth or have a decorative effect.
- Tiles are also available in a variety of edge treatments for effect, such as square edge, reveal edge and bevel edge.
- They are usually 12"x12".



Suspended Acoustical Tiles

- Suspended acoustical tiles are installed in a suspended ceiling system.
- Tiles are easy to replace, as they do not mechanically attach to the grid system.
- Most installations require a drop of 3" to 6" from the current ceiling.
- These tiles are widely used in commercial and institutional buildings. They can be used to hide plumbing, HVAC and electrical components of the building.
- Suspended ceilings may also be used to level an existing ceiling.
- Size is usually 2'x2' or 2'x4'.



Decorative Tile

- A decorative tile is a ceiling tile with no acoustical properties.
- It may attach directly to the old ceiling, with furring strips or may be part of a suspension system.
- Decorative tiles are available in a variety of materials, including tin and aluminum. Many can be painted or decorated.



Ceiling Plank

- A ceiling plank is generally used to mimic the appearance of a wood ceiling.
- The main purpose is decorative and available in a variety of styles and colors.
- A variety of materials are available, including laminates and real wood planks.
- Attaches directly to the ceiling without the need for a suspended grid system. Some types attach to furring strips.
- Many have tongue-and-groove edges for a seamless appearance after installation.
- Sizes are usually 6" x 48", 5" x 78" or 5" x 84".



Ceiling Beams

- Ceiling beams mimic the appearance of exposed ceiling beams to give a home a more rustic or country appearance.
- They are typically made from a lightweight material that is easy to install.
- While they can be installed on top of a finished surface, they must fasten to something solid and stable to support their weight.
- They can be painted or stained.
- Many are hollow to allow for electrical and plumbing lines.

Ceiling Tile Accessories



Edge Trim

- Used in a suspended ceiling system.
- Provides a clean, decorative edge where the ceiling tile meets the wall.
- Hides partial or irregular grids.
- Often referred to as 'wall angle'.

Suspension System

- A grid of long metal strips used to support acoustical ceiling panels.
- Pieces include wire hangers, wall angles, cross tees, main tees and ceiling panels.
- Different colors are available. The most common is white.



Furring Strips

- In ceiling tile applications, it is fastened to the ceiling surface as a grid for attaching ceiling tile.
- 1x2 or 1x3 pieces of lumber. Customers may appreciate the extra width a 1x3 offers when stapling the tile.
- Can be installed in strips, spaced the width of the tile.



Metal Track Kit

- In ceiling tile applications, it is fastened to the ceiling surface as a grid for attaching ceiling tile.
- It provides the same function as furring strips and may be easier to use.

Taking it to the Floor:

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: Can ceiling tile be installed in the bathroom?

A: Some kinds can. Some manufacturers have ceiling tile with a feature that protects against humidity.

Q: Can I install ceiling tile over any existing ceiling?

A: The existing ceiling must be in sound condition. Ceilings can be drywall, plaster, popcorn surfaces or open joists. A suspended ceiling may be installed anywhere there is a place to support the wire hangers.

Q: Can I glue new ceiling tile onto the old ceiling tile?

A: Do this only if the old tile is in good condition. Most often, old ceiling tile is deteriorating and will not provide an adequate surface for gluing.

Q: Can I paint acoustical tiles?

A: You can paint the tiles, but you may void the manufacturer's warranty and lose some of the sound absorption properties. To correctly paint acoustical tiles, you must be sure not to get the tiny holes on the surface of the tile clogged with paint.

Q: Can I use existing lighting over my ceiling tile?

A: Yes, but you will have to temporarily remove the fixture to install the tile. If you are installing suspended acoustical tiles, you may want to use a fluorescent light or a recessed light fixture.

Q: Can I install my ceiling tile the same day I purchase it?

A: Most manufacturers recommend you take the tile out of the package and let sit in the room where they will be installed for at least 24 hours so they can acclimate to the room's temperature and humidity.

Upselling

- Better acoustical tiles have better sound reducing ratings. Ceiling attenuation Class (CAC) measures how much sound the tile keeps from getting through. A good product will have a 40 to 44 rating. The noise reduction coefficient (NRC) tells what percentage of noise is absorbed when sound waves hit the tile. Better tiles have an 80 percent rating.
- Some suspended ceiling tiles are rated for use under sprinkler and lighting systems. The translucent properties allow the light to shine through. These drop-out, ceiling panels are designed to drop from the ceiling if there is a fire and the sprinkler system is activated.
- Better quality acoustical tiles hold their shape and resist sagging, even in high humidity areas. They may also have moisture and mold resistant properties.

Add-On Sales

Installing a drop ceiling is a project that's easy enough for most do-it-yourselfers to tackle. Here are some of the items needed for installation.

- Suggest a utility knife for cutting ceiling tile.
- If the customer is purchasing direct-mount tiles, suggest the appropriate glue, or staples and a staple gun for attaching the tiles to the ceiling.
- Customers installing a drop-ceiling might want a laser level, a chalk line and tape measure for establishing a line for installing the suspension system.
- Suggest metal snips for cutting the pieces of the suspension system to the correct size.
- Customers will also need wire and eye hooks for hanging the ceiling.
- They will also need a hammer for attaching the suspension system to the wall.
- Finally, suggest cornice molding that matches the style of the ceiling tile for a more upscale appearance.



Chapter 2: Floor Covering

Module 1: Carpet

Product Knowledge:



Carpet Construction

- Before you help a customer decide what carpet is best, it's helpful to know a little about a carpet's construction.
- The pile is the part of the carpet you see. It's made up of tufts of yarn or fibers in various configurations.
- In a cut-pile carpet, the tufts of yarn are cut. The face or surface of the carpet is comprised of the ends of the tufts of yarn.
- In a loop-pile carpet, the tufts of yarn loop back into the carpet base.

Fiber Construction

- Wool. Natural wool is the best carpet material available, as it is soft, durable, but highly resistant to staining, water and static electricity.
- Nylon. Nylon is one of the most popular choices for carpet fiber. Newer generations of the product are called Nylon 6 or Nylon 6/6. They are highly durable and resistant to wear and stains.
- Olefin. Olefin, or polypropylene, has good protection against moisture damage but is not as durable as nylon or wool. It also has good UV resistance. It is generally not recommended for high-traffic areas.
- Polyester. Polyester, or P.E.T., is a wool alternative made from recycled products. It is soft, resists stains and moisture, and can come in a wide variety of colors. It is an affordable alternative to nylon.
- Triexta. Triexta is related in composition to polyester. However, it is better suited for use as a carpet because it is more durable, softer and more resilient and has higher stain resistance than standard polyester.

Styles of Carpet

Here are the different styles of carpet.



Saxony Carpet

- Saxony carpet is a cut-pile carpet, also known as plush carpet.
- It is dense and soft, making it perfect for formal settings, such as a formal dining room.
- The disadvantage to this type of carpet is that it easily shows footprints and vacuum lines.



Frieze

- Frieze is also known as twist carpet.
- It is a cut-pile carpet with the pile yarns extremely twisted to make a curly textured surface.
- It has a more informal look that minimizes footprints and vacuum marks.



Berber Carpet

- Berber is a loop-pile carpet that is dense and good for high-traffic areas because it hides footprints and vacuum marks.
- It has a hand-crafted appearance for a personal, informal look. It is often used for commercial applications.
- Berber is available in different styles. In a level-loop pile, loops are at the same height. Some have flecks of a darker color on a lighter background.
- In a multi-level loop pile, loops are at two or three different heights for pattern effects. This creates a more casual look.



Cut/Loop Carpet

- A cut/loop carpet is sometimes referred to as a Berber cut-pile, and may sometimes be called pattern or sculptured carpets.
- It has a combination of cut and loop piled yarns.
- This style of carpet provides a variety of surface textures, such as squares or swirls.
- Some styles have also have variations in color, which help hide soil and wear.
- While not as durable as loop-pile carpet, cut-loop is softer and versatile for use in areas such as children's rooms.



Padding

- Padding provides a foundation for the carpet. It also increases the life of the carpet and adds comfort by absorbing impact, reducing noise and adding insulation.
- It is constructed of polyurethane foam, fiber or rubber.
- Some carpet may have the padding already attached.
- Select the cushion according to the carpet manufacturer's requirements of thickness and density.
- Choosing the wrong carpet pad may void the manufacturer warranty and cause wrinkling, buckling, separation of the carpet seams and accelerated wear.

Types of Carpet

Most carpet is sold in rolls and cut to length. Here are some other types you might sell.



Area Rugs

- Area rugs accent a room's décor by adding color or setting a mood.
- Construction is similar to carpet. Quality depends on density and twist. Rugs with a tighter yarn twist will also be more durable.
- Bound at the edges to prevent unraveling.
- Many different styles are available, including woven, tufted, sculptured, Oriental, Persian or Native American.
- Machine-woven and tufted rugs use modern machinery to simulate hand-made rugs.



Outdoor Carpet

- Also known as indoor/outdoor carpet.
- Made of materials not affected by water, sun or temperature.
- Typically made of polypropylene, or Olefin.
- Does not make a walkway less hazardous for winter walking, as snow and ice can build up in the fibers.
- Use on boats, beside pools, patios, utility rooms, etc.



Carpet Tiles

- Carpet tiles are easy to install, usually with glue or self-adhesive backs.
- They come in a variety of styles, and one advantage is that it is easy to replace a single square without re-carpeting the entire floor.
- They usually come in 18" x 18" or 20" x 20" squares.

Taking it to the Floor:

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: Isn't a thicker pad for the carpet always better?

A: Not necessarily. Bedrooms and other areas with less foot traffic can use a thicker pad. But heavy traffic areas require a thinner, firmer padding. Type and thickness will depend on the traffic expected over the carpet. Bedrooms with lighter traffic may have a thicker, softer cushion than a hallway or family room with heavier traffic, which may need a thinner, firmer cushion. For thicker carpets like Saxony, use a cushion 1/2" thick. For Berber or low-profile carpets, use a cushion 3/8" thick.

Q: What is the rating mean on the carpet?

A: A carpet's performance rating is a scale from 1 to 5 that represents the carpet's ability to withstand wear. A 5 is the highest rating, and anything above a 4 is recommended for heavy traffic areas. A 2.5 to 4 rating is for normal durability. Any rating below a 2.5 should only be used for light to moderate traffic areas.

Q: What are tack strips?

A: Tack strips are used to install carpet. They are thin and narrow strips of wood with rows of tacks sticking up. They are nailed around the perimeter of the room. Carpet is stretched over the top to help hold it in place.

Q: Does new carpet smell?

A: New carpet may give off a smell after it's installed. Give the area good ventilation and the smell should be gone within 48 to 72 hours. Look for the CRI (Carpet and Rug Institute) label on the back of the carpet. This means it has been tested for chemical emissions and emits low levels of chemicals.

Q: My carpet has started to buckle after it was installed.

A: Buckling can be caused by improper installation, high humidity, using the wrong cushion or by moving heavy furniture. To correct the problem, remove all furniture from the room and have the carpet power stretched.

Q: What is the purpose of a cushion under an area rug?

A: A rug cushion under the rug will extend its life. Cushions also absorb shock, noise and keep the rug from slipping. There are two different types of cushions: one for rugs over hardwood and another for rugs over carpet.

Upselling

- Carpet density is a key factor in determining its quality. Carpets are made by bundling fibers into tufts, then attaching them to the carpet backing. The more tufts there are per square inch, the denser the carpet and the better the quality.
- Dense carpets also have a high face weight, which is another indication of high quality. When comparing carpet weights, make sure you compare similar materials.
- Stain-resistance is a key quality in carpet quality. Better carpets will have long manufacturer warranties for stain and wear protection. Recommend carpets that are treated for stain-resistance, as part of the manufacturing process rather than applied later.
- Better quality carpets may also have features such as resistance to fading and static electricity.
- Besides thickness and weight, carpet pads may have additional qualities that make them long lasting. Since spills on a carpet can often seep into the pad below, recommend a pad with stain and odor protection. Better pads may also have an antimicrobial treatment to resist bacteria and mold.

Add-On Sales

Here are some of the items carpet installers will need.

- For customers buying an area rug, recommend a rug cushion to extend the rug's life.
- Anyone installing a carpet will need tack strips, which are narrow strips of wood with rows of tacks that hold down the carpet.
- Ask if the customer needs a hammer tacker or extra staples for fastening the carpet pad to the floor.
- Recommend a carpet knife, which is specially designed for cutting carpet.
- A carpet stretcher is a common tool used in carpet installation.
- Ask if the customer needs any carpet tape for fastening carpet seams.
- Suggest carpet edging trim for the edges where carpet meets another type of flooring.

Module 2: Ceramic Tile

Product Knowledge:



Tile Characteristics

- Hardness. The Porcelain Enamel Institute (PEI) has developed a rating system to rate the hardness of the tile. Some tiles will not stand up to wear and water as well as others. PEI tests tiles for hardness and ranks them. The manufacturer should list the rating with the tile. See the appendix for a listing of each rating.
- Slip-resistance. Some polished tiles like marble and granite are very slippery when wet. This should be considered when choosing tile for shower and bathroom floors.
- Porosity. How much water a tile is prone to absorb is critical when choosing a tile. Do not use porous tiles outdoors. Polished tiles such as marble are very resistant to water, although they are also slick when wet. Tile may be classified ranging from Impervious (least absorbent), Vitreous, Semi-Vitreous to Non-Vitreous (most absorbent).

- **Size.** Tiles are usually manufactured in squares ranging from 4" x 4" up to 24" x 24". There are also other shapes, such as rectangle and hexagonal shapes that are used for decorative applications. Some tile product are sold in planks, usually 6" x 24", to imitate the appearance of wood plank flooring.
- **Glazing.** Glazing is a glasslike surface bonded to the tile after firing in the kiln. Glazing adds stain resistance and easier maintenance. It also offers more color choices.



Glazed Ceramic

- Ceramic tile is made from clay or other minerals that have been extruded, shaped and heat-treated in a kiln.
- Color is be added after the firing.
- This tile is for use anywhere around the house, but is primarily recommended for use indoors.
- It can be used on floors and walls.



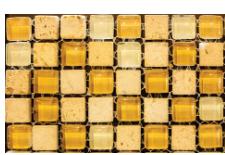
Unglazed Ceramic

- Unglazed ceramic tile is also known as quarry tile.
- It is created by extruding, shaping and firing clay or other minerals.
- The color of the tile is part of the clay and goes all the way through the tile.
- Most common colors are shades of dark red, brown and gray.
- This type of tile must be sealed for stain resistance.
- It can be used anywhere around the house, including floors and walls.



Porcelain

- Porcelain is a type of ceramic tile fired at a very high temperature.
- Method of manufacturing makes it a very dense and fine-grained tile.
- It is more resistant to moisture and durable than ceramic.
- Usually glazed, with a bright glossy or mat finish. Unglazed is also available.
- More difficult to cut than ceramic.
- For use anywhere around the house.
- Also popular in commercial applications.



Mosaic

- Consists of a series of porcelain or ceramic tiles 2" square or smaller.
- Clusters of these tiles are installed together to create a pattern or design.
- Designs may be prearranged and pre-mounted on a mesh backing that is easy to install on a floor or wall.
- Individual pieces may also be arranged and installed individually for a custom pattern.
- May be glazed or unglazed.



Terra Cotta

- Terra cotta tile is made from the same material as clay garden pots.
- It is available in various sizes and shapes.
- May be glazed or unglazed.
- Colors are usually earthtones, such as gray, brownish-yellow and shades of red.



Saltillo

- Saltillo, or Mexican tile, is air dried rather than kiln dried.
- Outdoor drying makes it softer and less durable than other tiles.
- Originally made for desert climates. When used elsewhere, requires a sealer to protect from weather.
- Best for use indoors.
- Has a casual and rugged appearance as the tile color is often not uniform.



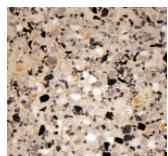
Paver

- A paver has the appearance of brick, but is thinner.
- Can be used indoors or outdoors, for patios or for floors.
- Must be sealed for moisture and stain protection.



Cement Tile

- Cement tile is manufactured by pouring cement into molds. Tiles are fired or allowed to dry naturally.
- It usually has an appearance similar to terra cotta tile.
- It requires a glazing finish to protect against stain and moisture.
- Best used indoors.



Terrazzo

- Terrazzo is one type of cement tile that consists of stone or marble chips embedded in cement.
- It has a glazed surface that makes a durable floor material.

Taking it to the Floor:

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: What's the difference between floor tile and wall tile?

A: Floor tile is 1/2" to 3/4" thick. Wall tile is thinner than floor tile and is not intended to be as heavy-duty as floor tile. You can, however, use floor tiles on walls.

Q: Can I repair broken tile?

A: Broken tile can be repaired, and making a repair to ceramic tile is far easier than replacing a wood plank or repairing a tear in vinyl.

Q: Will ceramic tiles resist acids?

A: Glazed ceramic tiles are highly resistant to acids (except hydrofluoric) and other corrosive substances.

Q: Can I use vinegar and water to clean tile?

A: Most tile experts don't recommend this combination, as it may permanently damage the color of the grout and damage the tile. Instead, use a cleaner formulated for cleaning tile.

Upselling

- Customers shopping for tile in your store may also be looking at vinyl flooring and trying to decide which is the best option. Ceramic tile has several benefits over vinyl you can mention to help them make a decision. First, point out that ceramic tile is easier to maintain and more durable than vinyl. It will also last longer, which means it is more cost effective over the long run. Also, it is more likely to increase the value of a home.
- Some customers may ask if ceramic floors will be cold in the winter. You can tell them that while stone tends to hold the room temperature, they can buy floor-warming systems. These install underneath the tile and keep the floor warm.

Add-On Sales

- Customers planning on installing tile themselves will need several products to complete the project.
- To create a firm backing for the tile floor, customers will need tile backer board and roofing nails for attaching the board to the floor. Suggest a utility knife for cutting the board.
- For laying the tile, customers will need thin-set mastic and a notched trowel to spread the mastic. Ask what size of tile spacers the customer wants for making grout lines.
- Suggest a tile cutter or a tile saw for cutting the tile. Remind the customer to use safety glasses and gloves when cutting tile.
- Customers will also need grout, along with a grout sponge and grout float.
- Finally, remind the customer to use a sealer for sealing grout lines and unsealed tile or stone floors.

Module 3: Stone Tile

Product Knowledge:



Marble

- Available in various colors, but every tile will have slight variation in veining and color.
- For an elegant appearance on floors, fireplaces and tub/shower surrounds.
- Has a highly polished surface, but needs to be sealed with a penetrative sealer.
- Very slippery when wet.
- Not recommended for use in places where the tile may come into contact with substances with acid, for example in food preparation areas or beneath toilets.
- Requires a penetrating sealer; (could require additional applications over time).



Granite

- Granite is available in various colors.
- It is typically used on any surface throughout the home, including countertops, floors, fireplaces and tub/shower enclosures.
- It is very slippery when wet.
- Requires a penetrating sealer and could require additional applications over time.



Slate

- Available in different colors and may have light variations within the same color group.
- Commonly used as flooring, around fireplaces, vanities and in tub/shower surrounds.
- Due to its consistency, it is prone to chipping, flaking and peeling.
- More difficult to clean and disinfect than other types.
- Requires a penetrating sealer.



Limestone

- Sensitive to acid.
- Commonly used on floors and around fireplaces.
- Requires a penetrating sealer.



Travertine

- Similar to limestone and available in a variety of colors.
- Available in polished, matte, brushed and tumbled (textured) surfaces.
- Used in a variety of areas around the home, including floors, fireplaces and vanity tops.
- Not recommended for use in places where the tile may come into contact with substances with acid, for example in food preparation areas or beneath toilets.
- Very slippery when wet.
- Requires a penetrating sealer.

Taking it to the Floor:

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: How do I clean slate?

A: Frequent sweeping is always the first defense. For best results, use cleaners specifically made for slate and similar tiles. Never use abrasive cleaners or scouring pads.

Q: Does stone come in different finishes?

A: Stone tile such as marble, granite and slate are usually available in either polished or honed finishes. Polished stone is shiny and slippery when wet. Honed stone has a dull texture and is less slippery than polished surfaces when wet. Sometimes you can get stone in an unfinished, or natural finish.

Q: How do I cut stone tiles?

A: For cutting stone, you will need to use a wetsaw with a diamond blade. If you need to cut a hole, use a diamond drill bit and diamond hole saw.

Q: Should I seal the stone before grouting?

A: Yes, you should seal the stone before grouting so that the grout will not stain the tile.

Add-On Sales

- Each of the types of stone above requires the use of a penetrating sealer. Always recommend this along with an applicator brush and gloves for sealing the stone.
- Refer to the previous module, ceramic tile, for the other products needed to install tile.

Module 4: Tile Accessories

Product Knowledge:



Tile Backer Board

- Tile backer board provides a flat base for laying tile, thin stone and brick.
- It can be a fiber board or a cement board. Apply it to wood or steel framing members spaced 16" on center.
- Since it is mold and moisture resistant, it is used in areas where there will be direct contact with water, such as showers and kitchen floors.
- Typical panel sizes include 3'x5' or 4'x4'.
- Thickness may be 1/4", 5/16" or 3/8" (nominal) for floor applications or 1/2" for wall applications.



Floor Leveler

- Floor leveler, also called a self-leveling compound, is a cement-based product. Generally a powder compound mixed with water on the job site.
- Use it when preparing the subfloor for tile installation, as it fills in low areas or dips in the floor.
- Only apply floor leveler over a sturdy subfloor.
- Most types have quick drying times.



Thin-Set Mortar

- Thin-set mortar is a blend of cement and finely blended sand, along with a water retention compound.
- Its purpose is to bind tile to the subfloor.
- Typically, it comes in the form of a powder compound that is mixed on site during installation of tile.
- Thin-set mortar is available in gray and white colors. Generally, use a gray mortar if the grout will be dark, and use a white mortar if the grout will be light.



Grout

- Grout resists water and fills the spaces between the tiles.
- It is available as sanded and non-sanded. Sanded grout should be used when the gap between the tiles, or joint, is 1/8" or larger. Non-sanded grout should be used when the joint is 1/8" or smaller.
- Three major classifications are available: Portland cement based grouts, epoxy-based grouts and furan resin grouts. The easiest to use and most common in residential installations is the Portland cement variety.



Spacer

- A spacer is a cross-shaped or "T" shaped piece of plastic used to create uniform joints between tiles.
- Common sizes are 1/16", 1/8", 3/16" and 1/4".
- Size of the spacer will depend on the type of tile used and the desired size of the joint.
- Spacers are usually removed after tiles are set.



Sealer

- Sealer is brushed on unglazed tile and grout to seal out moisture and protect against staining.
- Two or more coats are usually needed for a proper seal.
- Sealer may stain glazed ceramic tile. Suggest that customers use a thin brush or special sealer applicator when applying sealer to grout joints between glazed ceramic tiles.



Bullnose

- Also called surface trim or surface bullnose.
- Small pieces of tile that act as a finished edge to a field of tile.
- Protects the edge of the square tiles from chipping or cracking.
- Available in a variety of profiles and designs.
- Most often used on countertop edges, splashguards and steps.



Decorative Accent

- Tiles with printed or painted patterns, pictures or designs.
- Often used sparingly throughout an installation to create a custom appearance and enhance the décor.



Shower Accessories

- Constructed of ceramic or porcelain.
- Attached to wall tile to provide extra function to a space.
- Some types may be inset in the wall and will require extra planning when laying out the project.
- Include soap holders, towel racks and hooks.

Taking it to the Floor:

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: What do I use to install tile backer board?

A: There are screws made especially for that purpose. You can use galvanized roofing nails, rust-resistant drywall screws or bugle-head deck screws.

Q: What color should the grout be?

A: Choose grout color based on your design preference. For a uniform, blended look, use a color that complements the tile color. For a more dramatic, grid effect, chose a different color.

Q: Will grout get dirty quickly?

A: Not if you properly seal it during installation and regularly maintain it by cleaning up spills quickly.

Q: How do I apply thin-set mortar?

A: Spread the mortar on the floor in an even, thin layer using a notched trowel. It also may be spread on each individual tile, as an alternative to spreading it on the floor first.

Q: I just need a small amount of grout for a repair. Do I have to buy a whole new bag of grout?

A: Grout is also available pre-mixed in a caulking-type tube. Manufacturers have colors that are very close to the standard grout colors.

Q: Why is there a haze on the tile after I've set the grout?

A: The haze over the tile is grout residue. You can remove it with a scouring pad and water.

Upselling

- Higher quality thin-set mortar has latex added. The latex adds strength and water resistance to the mortar. It's the best choice for customers installing a shower stall.
- Recommend your customer buy either a penetrating or impregnating sealer. These types of sealers sink into the pores of the tile and provide the best protection against stains. Each of these types of sealers will last longer than topical sealers, which is a type of sealer that only sits on the surface of the tile.

Add-On Sales

- These are the items customers will need for grouting tile.
- Suggest a 5-gallon bucket for mixing grout and a mixer attachment for the power drill.
- Ask customers if they have a grout float tools for applying the grout. Suggest they purchase a couple of grout sponges as well.
- For the final cleanup and to remove any remaining grout haze, suggest a mop, scouring pad and tile cleaner.
- When applying sealer, suggest either an applicator bottle or a thin brush.

Module 5: Hardwood

Product Knowledge:



Hardwood Qualities

Your customers will have many different types of wood to consider when choosing what hardwood to put in their homes. To help them to make the best decision, here are some qualities of wood you should know.

Hardwood Grades

Customers may choose the wood they want based on the wood's finished appearance, or grade. Here are common grades of wood flooring.

- Clear. Free of defects with only minor imperfections
- Select. Almost clear, with natural characteristics such as knots and color variations.
- Common No. 1. Has natural characteristics such as knots and color variations and light and dark colors. Usually chosen because of the character it brings to the room.
- Common No. 2. More rustic in appearance and emphasizes all of the wood characteristics.

Hardness Ratings

Your customer will also want to consider the hardness of the wood before buying. Hardness and durability varies from species to species of wood. Wood flooring is ranked according to the Janka Hardness Test. The higher the number, the harder the piece of wood. Softer wood may dent more easily.

For example, pine is one of the softest woods, with a Janka rating of 690. Brazilian walnut is one of the hardest woods, with a Janka rating of 3,680.

Hardwood Finishes

Solid hardwood floor may be available with or without a finish.

Unfinished floors do not have stain or topcoat on them, so they must be finished after installation. The advantage is that it allows the installer to choose from a wide variety of stains and to sand out any imperfections in the wood. The disadvantage is that the sanding process creates a lot of dust.

Finished floors come from the factory with topcoat already on them so there is no dust and fumes from sanding and finishing after installation. Factory finishes generally last longer than finished applied at the site and some manufacturers warranty their finishes. Most manufacturers also offer a wide range of stain colors.

Solid Hardwood



- Hardwood floors come in linear strips or planks of solid hardwood.
- Available in a variety of species. The most popular is oak. Other popular species of domestic hardwoods include cherry, birch, ash, fir and maple.
- Some manufacturers may offer decorative accents, borders and medallions to be installed with the floor for a custom appearance.
- They typically come in random lengths. Strip flooring is usually narrow, with widths as narrow as 1-1/2". Plank flooring is wider, with planks as wide as 6".
- Common thicknesses are 3/4", while some thinner profiles are available.



Block Hardwood

- Block hardwood is a series of wood pieces arranged together in a geometric design.
- Common designs are a parquet and herringbone, but many other designs are available.
- Can be used as a border around a strip floor, or used to cover the entire floor.
- They are usually sold in blocks of 12" square and 3/8" or 1/2" thick.



Engineered Wood

- Engineered wood flooring consists of three or more layers of wood pressed together with the grains of each layer running in different directions.
- The opposing layers of wood make this type more dimensionally stable than solid wood.
- Since it is more stable, it is less subject to shrinking and expanding due to changes in temperature and humidity.
- As a result, it can be installed directly over concrete with a moisture barrier and in basements below ground level.
- Some types may also consist of a layer of hardwood adhered to layers of medium density fiberboard (MDF).
- Some types may be refinished. How many times they can be refinished depends on the thickness of the top layer.
- Thicknesses range from 1/4" to 3/4".



Laminate

- Unlike engineered wood, laminate flooring does not contain real wood. Rather, it consists of composites of materials bonded together under high pressure.
- It usually has a moisture-resistant layer bonded to fiberboard and topped with a film that gives the product a hardwood appearance.
- It has a clear coat to protect against wear and tear.
- It is available in a range of stains, but because of its thin top layer, this type of flooring may not be sanded and refinished.
- Can be installed over most existing subfloors.



Underlayment

- Underlayment is installed on top of the subfloor and underneath finished floors, including solid wood floors, engineered floor and laminates.
- Some types may also act as a sound barrier and can provide insulation.
- Different types may be designed for different areas of the home.
- Some types of underlayment protect against moisture mold and mildew.
- Packed in easy-to-install rolls.

Types of Wood Used for Floors



Bamboo

- A popular alternative to hardwood floors.
- A long hollow grass that undergoes a manufacturing process that makes it tough and rigid like wood.
- May be used in any area of the home.
- Install and maintained like wood.
- Available in solid and engineered varieties.
- Naturally mildew and moisture resistant.



Exotic Wood

- Available in a variety of grades, sizes, colors and species.
- Most woods originate from South America, Australia, the far East and Africa.
- Adds a distinctive design to a customer's home.
- Available finished or unfinished, solid or engineered.
- Each may have unique characteristics that affect stability, appearance, hardness and maintenance.



Antique Wood

- A specialty floor that may be desired because of its old-fashioned look.
- Antique (also known as salvaged or reclaimed) wood is created from lumber salvaged and recycled from barns, old houses, old warehouses, etc. It appeals to customers because of its vintage and nostalgic appearance.



Handscraped Wood

- Handscraped or distressed wood has the appearance of antique wood and includes character markings that mimic the effect of wood that was planed using hand tools.
- Includes many imperfections expected from an antique or handplaned floor. The imperfections may be created by a machine, although some manufacturers may plane them manually.

Wood Floor Installation

The types of flooring we've discussed may be installed in several different ways.

Nail or Staple. Hardwood flooring has tongue and groove edges and ends. It installs by fitting the pieces together and toenailing using a specially designed angled nailer. They can also be stapled to the floor using a similar method. The fastener is hidden by the groove of the next board.

Glue. Some flooring can be glued to the floor. This is typically true of block hardwood squares. The glue is spread over the floor with a trowel and the flooring is laid on top.

Self-stick. Some types of hardwood squares may have self-stick adhesive on the back for easy installation.

Locking. This type is usually used with laminate flooring. It is often called a floating floor, because pieces are snapped together but do not attach mechanically to the subfloor. This type is popular with many do-it-yourselfers because of its low price point and easy and quick installation.

Taking it to the Floor:

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: Can I have my hardwood floor installed the same day it is delivered?

A: No. A solid hardwood floor should sit in the room where it will be installed at least four days before it is installed. This allows the wood to adjust to the temperature and relative humidity of the room. Engineered wood takes less time to acclimate.

Q: Can I install hardwood anywhere in the home?

A: Always check the manufacturer recommendations for where you can install the particular hardwood floor you've chosen. Always consider the moisture that the floor will be subjected to when deciding to install hardwood. Changes in temperature and humidity will cause the wood to expand and contract. Generally, never install solid hardwood in a below-ground level room. Instead, use engineered flooring because it is less subject to changes in temperature and humidity. You can also install them in kitchens.

Q: Can I install a hardwood floor in the kitchen?

A: Kitchens are a popular place for hardwoods, and they require minimal maintenance. In fact, they can be installed anywhere in the house. However, do not install in rooms below ground level.

Q: How do I maintain my wood floor?

A: Most manufacturers recommend you dust mop regularly and use special wood care products. Do not damp mop.

Q: What kind of floor can I install over a concrete slab?

A: You can install an engineered wood floor directly over concrete with a moisture barrier. You can also install this type of floor in basements below ground level. Generally, you should not install a solid wood floor over a concrete slab. Always follow the manufacturer's instructions. If you want to install one over a slab, you first need to install a vapor barrier and a wooden subfloor on top of the slab.

Upselling Skills

- Customers buying laminate flooring need to consider the floor's AC rating. This rating indicates how well the floor will resist abrasion, impact, stains and cigarette burns. An AC rating of 1 is for use only in light-traffic areas. The highest rating is AC 5, which is for the commercial market.
- Better prefinished hardwood floors have an acrylic impregnated finish where the finish is injected into the wood. This creates a very tough and durable floor. It is most often used in commercial installations such as shopping malls and restaurants.
- If customers are trying to decide whether to install carpet or hardwood in their home, tell them that wood maintains its value longer than carpet and is easier to maintain.

Add-On Sales

Here are some add-on products you can suggest when buying a hardwood floor.

- Explain to customers that the best way to care for a hardwood floor is by regular cleaning with a dry microfiber dust mop. Also suggest floor protector pads for placing under furniture legs to protect the floor from scuffing.
- Customers installing a floor themselves will need a miter saw for cutting boards to length. Other products that will be handy for the installation include a tape measure, chalk line and carpenter's pencil. Also remind them to pick up the appropriate underlayment for the floor they are installing.
- Suggest a dovetail saw for installing flooring under door jambs.
- Customers installing a hardwood floor will need a flooring nailer. If your store has a rental department with this item in stock, be sure to let your customer know, as most will want to rent instead of buy this tool.
- Make sure the customer has plenty of flooring nails or staples for installing the flooring.
- Suggest quarter-round molding to cover the space where the floor meets the wall. A threshold will help make the transition between the new floor and the next room.

Module 4: Tile Accessories

Product Knowledge:



Vinyl Sheeting

- Vinyl sheeting is constructed with a felt or fiberglass backing. The backing material will determine how it is installed.
- In addition to the backing, construction includes protective coatings and a design layer where the pattern is printed.
- Available in a wide range of patterns and colors.
- Easy to maintain and can be installed anywhere and over most subfloors.
- Sheet vinyl is more difficult to install than tiles. Installs with glue.
- Sold in rolls. 12' or 6' width is standard.



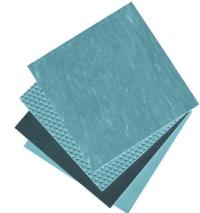
Vinyl Tile

- Vinyl tile has characteristics similar to vinyl sheeting.
- Available in a wide range of patterns and colors.
- It is the easiest resilient flooring to install and can be installed anywhere but if installed over concrete, concrete needs to be sealed with a primer.
- One disadvantage is that seams between tiles can accumulate moisture and dirt, which can require more maintenance than sheet flooring.
- Vinyl tile installs with glue, while some types have a self-adhesive backing.
- An advantage is that individual tiles can be replaced easily.
- Tiles usually come in 12" x 12" squares. They may also come in planks, usually in sizes 4" or 6" wide and 3' or 4' long.



Luxury Vinyl Tile

- Luxury vinyl tile is a high end-flooring option that offers the durability of vinyl flooring while mimicking the look of wood or stone.
- Tile may be made of 100% vinyl or with a base layer of limestone and a top layer of vinyl.
- The vinyl construction is similar to standard vinyl tile, however, it is usually thicker than standard tile.
- Some types install by gluing to the floor. These tiles can be installed with the edges flush, or they have the option of being installed with a grout line.
- Another type has a tongue-and-groove construction on the edges. This type is a floating floor. It does not adhere to the floor, but snaps and adheres to surrounding tile.
- Luxury vinyl tile may come in square or plank shapes.



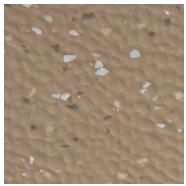
Vinyl Composition Tile

- Vinyl composition tile, also known as VCT, is a mix of thermoplastic binder, fillers and pigments.
- It has high wear and durability, and resists scuffs, burns, dents and grease.
- Can be produced in a variety of colors, patterns and textures.
- Suitable for high-traffic areas and can be used in a wide variety of commercial and industrial applications. Some are also suitable for home use.
- Often sold in 12" x 12" square pieces. This makes it easy to replace individual squares instead of replacing the entire floor.



Cork

- Cork flooring is made from a natural product.
- It helps to insulate against temperature and noise. It is soft to walk on but durable under heavy traffic.
- It also resists mold and mildew.
- Cork may be sold unfinished or finished with a vinyl topcoat to make it easier to clean.
- It can be used in residential and commercial applications.
- Cork is sold as planks or tiles with tongue and groove edges for easier installation.
- Install it with glue or as a floating floor with a glueless, interlocking system that has no mechanical fasteners to the subfloor.



Rubber

- Rubber flooring is often made from recycled tires or other recycled products.
- Its features include slip-resistance, high durability, burn resistance and water resistance. It can also increase comfort by reducing leg and foot fatigue. One common use is on stair treads.
- Rubber is most often used in commercial and industrial applications, although some manufacturers produce it for residential use.
- Rubber flooring is sold in squares and glued to an appropriate sub-floor.
- Always refer to manufacturer for specific application and installation instructions.



Linoleum

- Linoleum is made from all-natural ingredients, including linseed oil, rosin, cork dust, wood flour, limestone and pigments pressed onto a jute backing.
- It is often confused with vinyl, but is a distinctly different kind of floor. Historically, it was used in homes until the 1950s when it was displaced by vinyl. However, it is making a comeback in popularity.
- It is durable, good for high-traffic areas and requires minimal maintenance.
- It is also moisture resistant and good for kitchens, baths and laundry rooms.
- Linoleum is available in tile or rolls.

Taking it to the Floor:

Q: How long should I wait to clean my new vinyl floor?

A: Wait one week after installation before washing your new floor.

Q: Should I remove the old vinyl floor before installing a new one?

A: No. It will be easier to leave the old floor if you can. You will need to completely clean the old floor and fill in any low spots or embossed areas of the old floor. You can also cover the existing floor with a wood underlayment.

Q: How long before I can walk on my new vinyl floor?

A: Wait at least 24 hours before heavy traffic.

Q: What's the best way to cut vinyl?

A: You can use a standard utility knife, but a vinyl tile cutter you can rent is easier. Also, if you are cutting with a knife, change blades frequently to keep them sharp. A dull blade can tear the vinyl.

Q: How do I cut the vinyl to fit around doorjambs?

A: Use a backsaw to trim off the bottom of the doorframe. Cut off just enough so that the tile will slide underneath.

Q: Won't cork be damaged by heavy furniture?

A: After it's been compressed, cork will return to its original shape. It's also dense enough to withstand heavy foot traffic. A protective finish further protects it and makes it easy to maintain. We still recommend placing protective pads under furniture.

Upselling

Show your customers the benefits of purchasing higher-quality vinyl flooring product by pointing out these characteristics.

- The wearlayer of the vinyl is one of the best indicators of the quality of the floor. Thicker wearlayers mean a better quality of floor. Thickness is measured in mils, and better vinyl products have a wearlayer of 15 mils or more. This will be a higher quality and better for high traffic areas, whereas thinner vinyl is more susceptible to tears.
- Better wearlayers are also constructed of urethane or enhanced urethane, which will hold up to heavy traffic and will hold its shine longer.
- Better vinyl flooring may include a variety of special features, such as stain or scratch resistance and antimicrobial coatings.
- The way the manufacturer prints the pattern on the vinyl also is an indicator of quality. With inlaid vinyl, the color or pattern goes through to the backing, giving the design more depth. Lesser quality vinyl, called rotogravure, has the pattern printed on the flooring.
- Also recommend flooring that is low VOC. This means the floor and glue used to install it will not give off irritating fumes.

Add-On Sales

- Customers may want a utility knife and extra blades for cutting vinyl. Or, you can recommend a vinyl tile cutter, which a customer can usually rent.
- Suggest a dovetail saw for installing flooring under door jambs.
- For glue-down installations, make sure customers have the proper flooring adhesive and notched trowel for spreading the adhesive.
- A tape measure and chalk line will be useful for establishing the pattern laying the tiles on the floor.
- Ask if the customer needs to install underlayment before laying the new floor. Don't forget to suggest nails for that project, too.
- Suggest quarter-round molding for covering the edges of the floor and thresholds for doorways.
- Remind customers to have floor protector pads for using on the bottoms of chair legs to protect the new floor.