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When buying hardwood flooring for your home, you may think that all wood floors are created equal. However, you have several choices in considering which type of hardwood is right for you. Much of your decision will be based on pure aesthetics but there are also some practical considerations to keep in mind. This article will help you decide on the best type of wood floors for your particular project.

## Solid or Engineered Hardwood Floors?

The first choice you'll likely have to make when deciding between types of hardwood flooring is whether you want solid or engineered hardwood floors. As their name states, solid hardwood planks and strips are made from one piece of wood. The way the wood is sawn gives it different types of textures as well as greater stability. When properly maintained, solid wood flooring can last for decades. Engineered wood floors are another popular type of flooring choice. These floors are less expensive because their inner core is made of plywood with a sheet of hardwood veneer on top. Once you decide on the type of floors you want for your home, the next thing to consider is the hardwood species.

## Traditional Favorites or Exotic Designs?

Many homeowners adore the look of popular hardwood favorites such as oak, maple, and cherry. These types of hardwoods giving any floor the appearance of an instant classic and are less expensive than more exotic wood species. However, if you're looking for something that's not your typical run-of-the-mill floors, you're likely to be enchanted by the allure of exotic hardwoods like Brazilian cherry, mahogany, and teak. Exotic hardwood flooring also tends to be harder and less forgiving underfoot than traditional, North American hardwoods.

## Assessing Durability with the Janka Hardness Scale

The Janka Hardness Scale was devised to create the durability of various types of exotic and traditional hardwoods. Woods that are rated high on this scale are incredibly durable and tend to be exotic such as Brazilian cherry, Mesquite, and Brazilian teak. On the medium end of the scale are popular favorites like oak, maple and birch. The hardness of hardwood is a trade-off and durability and the innate "give" of the wood as you walk on it.

## Unfinished, Pre-Finished, and More

You'll also want to consider the color of your hardwood, although keep in mind that hardwood flooring can be stained to match a particular hue or shade. If you'd rather finish your hardwood floors on your own, you can buy the wood as unfinished. You can also have a professional wood stainer to stain your hardwoods after they are installed. If you'd rather avoid all the hassle and themes of staining your own hardwood, you can also buy prefinished hardwood floors which are coated with a special UV resistant coating to prevent them from fading in sunlight.

These are just a few of the many considerations to keep in mind once you've decided on hardwood flooring for your home. It's always a good idea to ask a professional flooring company if you have any questions regarding the installation and care of your new floors.

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[Charlie Dima](#) - About Author:

Charlie Dima writes out of Earth City, MO about home improvement tips and a [hardwood flooring](#) for home design Always looking for the most affordable prices and well-known brands, she finds a <http://www.carpetone.com> to be a good resource.

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