

Floor Tile Creates Handsome New Space On Budget

By MR. FIX
Written for

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If you never go any further than tiling the floor of your basement you'll have done much to make it comfortable, warm and clean. With modern basements of poured concrete or cement blocks, a tile job and a coat of paint will give you extra space on a budget.

Doing the job is simple enough; it's picking the right floor cover that may cause some concern.

Until a few years ago there was no problem. There was no choice either. If you wanted to put tile on a concrete floor that was at or below grade you were limited to asphalt tile.

And the asphalt tile was pretty limited in color and design.

Enter, Vinyl

Moisture in the soil mixes with the alkaline salts in concrete and destroys many floor coverings. But added to the list of tile types

that are alkaline resistant in addition to asphalt are vinyl-asbestos, some vinyl tiles, and lately even some rubber tiles.

In addition asphalt tiles are available in a wider range of colors and patterns than before. At slightly higher cost (asphalt is the cheapest of the tiles) you can purchase greaseproof asphalt tile. Some asphalt tile can be ruined by grease and oil.

Tough, Bright

Vinyl, though higher priced, has become quite popular. It's tough, bright and shiny and is available in more patterns than the others. There are some that even simulate wood, granite or terrazzo.

But if you are planning a basement installation make certain that the vinyl tiles you pick are alkaline resistant. Most vinyl tile is solid vinyl all the way through and can be used anywhere.

In sheet form the vinyl is often merely on the surface with another material backing it up.

Vinyl-asbestos tile has a coating of clear plastic, has a hard

surface that wears well. It's a compromise between asphalt and vinyl.

Adhesive

Whatever tile you pick, be sure to buy the adhesive recommended for that tile. This, too, has changed.

While the trowel-applied adhesive is still around, there are others that can be painted on with a brush. This adhesive is allowed to dry until it is tacky, then the tile is applied.

Patch First

If the concrete floor is smooth no underlay of felt material is necessary. This is generally used on wood floors before tile is applied. If there are any cracks or holes in the floor they should be patched and leveled.

THREE STEPS TO CELLAR COMFORT



1
PATCH FLOOR

2
BRUSH ON ADHESIVE

3
APPLY TILE



By Andy Long

The problem of excessive humidity in modern homes gets plenty of public attention. And with good reason. The condensation which occurs when warm air is too heavily laden with moisture is an enemy.

Getting far less attention, but equally destructive to the home and considered by many to be far more dangerous to health, is the problem of too little humidity.

This is a condition prevalent in winter-heated homes, where the relative humidity often drops to 10 per cent or less.

When the air in a house becomes too dry, it pulls moisture from anything and everything available. Since wood always contains a certain amount of moisture, wood is a primary target of dry air's continual struggle to replace its lack of humidity. That's why, in a house where the air is too dry, floors begin to creak, doors begin to rattle and furniture joints begin to come apart. Just as wood swells when humidity is too high, so it shrinks when humidity is too low.

Medical authorities say that a too-dry environment has a somewhat similar effect on the human body, robbing it of moisture essential for protective purposes. The lack of moisture in the nasal passages, for instance, is said to permit inhaled bacteria to incubate, causing a variety of infections loosely grouped into the "cold" category. Air that is too dry also is blamed for the dry skin condition known as "winter itch."

To correct the conditions caused by very low humidity, it is necessary to add more moisture to the air. The simplest way to do this probably is by placing a pan of water on a radiator or installing a pan-type unit in the main duct of a hot air furnace. This is the principle of surface evaporation, stimulated by the use of heat to warm water. There are many commercial variations of this, this type of humidifier being low to medium both in initial cost and the cost of operation, but having certain limitations.

The atomizing type of humidifier is higher in initial cost but operates at a low cost. This very effective unit has the effect of shattering water into particles of vapor size and throwing the vapor into the air where it remains in suspension. It uses no heat and is the kind generally used in hospital and commercial buildings.

Another humidifying unit is somewhat like the vaporizer, boil-

ing off water in the form of hot steam. Low in initial cost and effective in small confined areas, its operating cost is very high if an attempt is made to use it for an entire house, since the heating element has a high wattage.

Q—We are remodeling our kitchen, using metal wall tiles over the painted plaster. The last time the walls were painted, about three years ago, we used rubber-based paint. Can the tile mastic be applied right over the paint?

A—If the wall had been enameled, the mastic would adhere properly. But, where rubber-based paint has been used, it is necessary to give the walls a coat of shellac before applying the mastic. However, we are assuming that you are using regular tile mastic. If you have not yet purchased it, you might see whether you can get a special type of mastic which eliminates the need for shellacking.



Q—I'll be using a paint roller on walls for the first time soon. Any tips you can give me?

A—Here are some don'ts. Don't overload the roller, which causes dripping. Don't start rolling with a downward stroke. Don't make the common mistake of rolling too fast, which produces a spray. Don't spin the roller at the end of a stroke. Don't resume painting in a freshly-painted portion, it being necessary to start on a nearby dry portion and rolling into the painted area.

Questions of general interest will be answered in this column. However, Mr. Lang cannot undertake individual correspondence.

Check Possible 'Living' Areas

Most families would answer with a hearty "yes" if asked whether they would like more living space in their homes. However, many wouldn't know where to find it. The answer might well be in the basement, attic, or an all-but-forgotten porch.

A house may lack any of these possibilities because of its construction or, because of present use, one or more of these areas may be out of the question. However, the Western Pine Association suggests that thoughtful planning or reorganization might release basement space, a hard-hearted tossing out of junk might free some of the attic, and the sacrificing of a little-used porch could produce that much-needed room.

Bulletin Shows Ways To Better Kitchen Storage

Better use of "inner space" — waste space in kitchen storage areas — has many down-to-earth solutions. A new Oregon State College extension bulletin shows 30 improvements that can be made in drawers, shelves, doors and walls to ease cooking and cleaning.

Author Bernice Strawn, OSC extension home management specialist, says that one of the main complaints voiced by homemakers is that they don't have enough kitchen storage area. Yet, she notes, in many kitchens it's more a matter of making better use of available space.

Apartment and trailer house dwellers, new homeowners, or families who are remodeling share a common challenge — how to organize space efficiently. In the bulletin, Miss Strawn offers simple ways to overcome jammed drawers, reduce cupboard clutter, and provide more accessible accommodations for frequently used kitchen items.

The bulletin also includes ideas for using pegboard, making drawer dividers and simple step shelves. Many cupboard accessories can be fashioned by a home handyman or teenager, the specialist notes. Other portable storage conveniences — plate racks, spice racks, step shelves — are available at most local hardware and department stores.

Title of the new bulletin is "Improve Kitchen Storage." County extension offices invite phone or mail requests for it.

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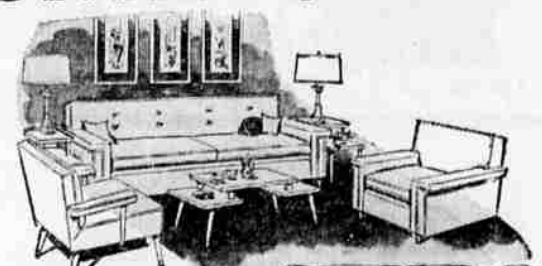
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