

decorate your home can be a real challenge today, with so many flooring choices available. A good rule of thumb is, choose your décor, then your floor. Now... what if your perfect floor is one that appeals to your personal décor tastes, *and* is environmentally friendly?

You'll find the solution in hard-surface Uniclic floors that click together without glue or nails, using a patented tongue-and-groove joint system.

These floors — cork, hardwood, linoleum and premium laminates — are all made from natural, renewable raw materials. Plus, they are available in a wide range of colours, stains and natural patterns to complement any interior look and décor style; and they are reusable. If you decide to redecorate, you simply unclick and move the entire floor to another room. Uniclic floors use a patented tongue-and-groove joint system, and are designed to be reusable multiple times, under warranty. They're guaranteed to last 25 years — so you get both décor and environmental peace of mind for a long time!

These Uniclic hard-surface floors don't trap dust and allergens, so they can help improve indoor air quality in your home; they don't emit volatile organic compounds (VOCs) that hurt the ozone layer; they don't end up in landfill sites because they are reusable. They make optimum use of natural resources, and give you some great flooring design options at the same time. They're provided by a Canadian

TORLYS Inc. (www.torlys.com).

All of these floors have a high-density fibreboard core (HDF) made from managed-forest softwood lumber and recycled wood products. Uniclic Cork floors are made from the bark of the Cork Oak tree, but the bark is carefully harvested every nine years and no trees are ever felled in the process — in fact, they live up to 200 years. Linoleum floors are actually made from wood resins, linseed oil and flax seed. STEPS premium Laminates are also engineered from wood fibre, paper and resins. The Uniclic Hardwood engineered floating floors offered by TORLYS give you an elegant hardwood floor created with 5 to 25 times less treewood than is needed for a traditional 3/4" hardwood floor.

And talk about design options! You can easily create almost any floor for almost any interior look. A monochromatic TORLYS Cork floor in elegant deep, rich Merlot to complement dark hardwood in a traditional room; or get funky with Uniclic linoleum planks and tiles, mixing and matching colours such as Vanilla and Indigo to create vibrant patterns that add zest to any room.

With Uniclic floating floors, you really don't have to compromise on your décor tastes and design style to save the environment — they are beautiful, practical floors engineered with both of these things in mind.

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Hard-surface floating floors work well across décor styles

(NC)—Hard-surface flooring in unique colours and textures that work across well across changing décor styles is the rapidly growing trend in Canada these days.

Casual interiors are less "country" and cleaner and more casual but still feature a familiar and charming personality. Modern interiors are less cold, clean and functional, and are trending toward more warmth, emotion and sensitivity. And Traditional interiors, which once tended to be very feminine and floral, are now becoming more strong and masculine.

There are hard-surface floating floors using the Uniclic joint that work across all these styles, and these floors are easy to install over existing floors because they just click together. They are engineered for stability, durability (with a 25-year warranty) and reusability (planks can be unclicked and reinstalled in another room if you move or redecorate), and designed for high visual appeal in any room.

The four key floating-floor trends are Laminates, Hardwood, Cork and Linoleum, in that order, according to the flooring experts at TORLYS Inc. (www.torlys.com), a Mississauga, Ont., company that specializes in Uniclic floating floors.

Laminates. One of the most popular products today, they add texture. You can find everything from laminate floors that look like natural stone tiles, to rich oak hardwood. Premium laminates such as STEPS Elegance look outstanding and are easy to care for. This hard-wearing, no-nonsense flooring is a great choice for an active family. Multiple-length planks show off the wood look. One of the

newest laminates available, STEPS Elite, even lets you get funky with a laminate floating floor. You can create up to six different patterns including traditional herringbone and parquet, by clicking planks together different ways!

Hardwood. Nothing warms a room more than a rich, natural hardwood. Its grain works well in any interior design. Narrower, 4" planks with micro-bevelled edges are very popular. Engineered Uniclic Hardwood planks just click together and let homeowners create a rich, elegant hardwood floor without a lot of labour and finishing work that is required with traditional solid-strip hardwood. The micro-bevelled edges enhance the individual hardwood plank look.

Cork. Today's cork flooring works with any décor. Dark natural tones enhance more formal settings, lighter shades are great for a more casual look. Cork, the bark of the Cork Oak, is a natural product that is environmentally friendly, reduces noise, is comfortable under foot, and hypoallergenic. Cork is functional, durable and attractive in textures and colours.

Linoleum. Popular for over 100 years until cheaper vinyl became available after World War Two, Linoleum is making a comeback. It is another multidirectional flooring option that is seamless when it is laid. The effect is smooth and flowing, creating visual space. Vibrant colours are great for Modern décor, softer colours work well in Casual interiors, and classic "checkerboards" are best for Traditional rooms. Creating effects and patterns that add drama is very easy, just by clicking together Uniclic Linoleum tiles.

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important to find the perfect floor that's going to enhance your décor and give you peace of mind for years, not fall short of your expectations and cost you more in the long run — you don't want what you thought was the perfect floor to become your worst nightmare.

As a general rule of thumb, the more the investment, the better the glueless laminate floating floor. Generally, all floating laminate floors have a high-density fibreboard (HDF) core. It's the joint system and the surface detail finishing that combined, can make all the difference.

Some laminates look like laminates instead of being almost indistinguishable from real hardwood. A premium laminate floating floor simply gives you more value and visual appeal for your investment — once it's installed, only you'll know it's not real hardwood.

STEPS Elegance, for example, is a new floating floor engineered and designed to set the new benchmark in floating

Decisions, decisions — on Cork for adding charm

by Cheryl Grant

(NC)—Two years ago we sat in our 20-year-old, very tired suburban kitchen deciding whether to move or renovate. Our lifestyle had changed, our home was not working! We needed more space and our décor style needed to relax. After much discussion and many open houses the decision was made to renovate.

Our goal was more living space, so walls needed to come down and as a result the flooring needed to change. It had been 15 years since I had seriously shopped flooring — back then broadloom or ceramic was the fashion but we were just about to tear up broadloom and ceramic. Who wants to renovate and install the same floor again!

In the spirit of "extreme" makeover we wanted a whole new look but still be practical.

We have a busy household — lots of traffic (two- and four-legged!), several rooms had water hazards (taps and

toilets), and not all the rooms had the same décor and furniture wood type. Since a relaxed "country" in the city décor was what we were aiming for the either natural stone or wood was our first thought but after 20 years of chipped ceramic and cold feet in the morning natural stone was quickly ruled out.

Solid hardwood became our go-to but with our water hazards I worried about warping. The answer was an engineered floating hardwood floor — the surface is hardwood and the core is a tough, stable wood-products material called high-density fibreboard. The floor "floats" — planks simply click together using a unique patented joint called Uniclic. The Uniclic installation method is fast (you can install floors yourself) provides an ultra-tight fit, and requires no new subfloor!

We were coming closer to our goal but when it came time to selecting hardwood type the decision ground to a halt. We had too many different wood



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Cheryl Grant: The answer was a natural floor we had never even considered — Cork.