

## Laminate or Luxury Vinyl Tile: Which Is Right for You?

Have you wondered how laminate flooring and luxury vinyl tile (LVT) compare as flooring solutions? Laminate flooring, such as American Concepts laminate flooring manufactured by Kronotex USA, and LVT are highly popular with homeowners. Let's compare LVT and laminate flooring so you can decide which is right for you. How laminate flooring and LVT are similar. Both have cost and durability advantages over such other solid-surface flooring choices as hardwood, ceramic or stone. Both laminate flooring and LVT have become master imitators of natural surfaces like wood or stone. Both are easier to maintain than wood or tile. For example, hardwood floors may need refinishing, and some tile types may need resealing or re-grouting. Both can allow for repair by replacement of a damaged plank or tile. Both have wear layers. Kronotex USA's laminate flooring has an extremely hard aluminum-oxide wear layer that resists scratches and UV protection to prevent fading from prolonged exposure to sunlight. LVT may have a clear-vinyl and urethane coating to protect it. How Laminate Flooring and LVT are different. They're made out of different materials. Laminate flooring is made of layers. The primary layer (the core) is made of high-density fiberboard (HDF). This gives laminate flooring its rigidity and strength. LVT is made in layers as well; its primary component is PVC vinyl, which makes LVT dimensionally stable and flexible.

Laminate flooring is a floating-floor system that should never be nailed or glued to the subfloor. Some LVT products now offer a floating-floor approach to installation, but this has yet to be proven out. LVT installs traditionally as a glue-down system by the application of a separate adhesive or the use of peel-and-stick tiles or planks. They feel different. Because laminate flooring is made primarily from wood, it feels like wood. LVT is made out of vinyl and it feels like plastic. They handle stains and flame differently. Laminate flooring is highly stain-resistant and will not be damaged by limited flame exposure, like a hot ember tossed through a fireplace screen. Some LVT is very susceptible to staining and will be damaged by limited flame exposure. So which one is right for you? Let's explore four issues or questions that come up when considering laminate flooring and LVT as flooring choices.

Which is the "greener" flooring choice, laminate or LVT? Laminate flooring is greener by far because the materials that go into them make the difference. Laminate flooring is primarily made from wood byproducts – a natural, renewable resource. LVT is made primarily from petrochemicals and chlorides, some of the most toxic substances around, not to mention the adhesives. Kronotex USA, which manufactures American Concepts, earned the GREENGUARD Indoor Air Quality Certification issued by the GREENGUARD Environmental Institute.

Which is better in a wet environment, laminate flooring or LVT? Well, both. Here's an important fact: All flooring can and will be damaged by water to some extent. Laminate flooring can be used in areas that may, from time to time, receive topical moisture when you follow our advice. Which is more forgiving regarding installation over a less-than-perfect subfloor, laminate flooring or LVT?

Laminate flooring. It's important that any subflooring be as smooth and level as you can make it. But because of laminate flooring's rigid construction, LVT does. This advantage is especially true with thicker

laminates. You should always correct any subfloor deviance of 3/16 of inch when installing laminate flooring.

Which stands up to everyday accidents, scratches and dropped objects better?

In our opinion, laminate flooring. It's made harder and tougher. Laminate flooring and LVT flooring are both good flooring solutions and, if made to the same high standards as Kronotex USA laminate flooring, are of the highest quality. We happen to believe that laminate flooring has many more advantages than LVT for today's home.