

RUSTIC SLATE

'Slate is known for its rusty copper colours, combined with deep shades of charcoal and silver, all of which can work together to create a rustic look, perfect for period properties and quaint cottages,' says Harriet Goodacre, tile consultant at Topps Tiles. It is important that slate is polished and properly sealed to prevent any chips or staining. 'When sealing, you can add a colour intensifier to enhance the look, giving a glossy sheen for an even more eye-catching appearance,' adds Harriet.



Autunno Blend
60x30cm slate
tile, £49.94sq m,
Topps Tiles

TAKE TO
THE FLOOR

ACHIEVE A TRULY RUSTIC LOOK WITH AUTHENTIC
STONE, TILE AND CONCRETE FLOORING THAT
WILL LAST FOR YEARS TO COME



Maximo large format
slab porcelain tiles,
£96sq m, Stone &
Ceramic Warehouse



Genuine Antique
English reclaimed
sandstone,
£234sq m, Lapidica



Polished concrete in a
kitchen setting, Main
Kitchen Company



Classic travertine tiles,
from £16.50sq m,
Floors of Stone

POLISHED CONCRETE

While polished concrete requires specialist installation, it can last a lifetime and requires minimal maintenance. It is wise to install a heating system as your concrete flooring goes in, otherwise it can feel quite cold underfoot - and retro-fitting can be a costly and disruptive task. You may also want to add a large cosy rug to soften up the space and help absorb sound, preventing unwanted echoing throughout your property.

PRETTY PORCELAIN

There are many benefits to using porcelain tiles, as Jo Oliver, director

of The Stone & Ceramic Warehouse, explains: 'Porcelain is easy to keep hygienically clean. A non-porous material, it is hardwearing, lightweight, scratch and stain-proof,' says Jo. Opting for large-format slabs with fewer grout lines not only helps with cleaning, but can create the illusion of space in a smaller area. Just be sure to choose a non-slip finish.

SOPHISTICATED SANDSTONE

Naturally beautiful, each slab of sandstone comes in varying hues. It will weather with age, which is part of its charm, but will require sealing. 'All natural stone is porous, so it

needs to be sealed,' says Jason Cherrington, director of Lapidica. 'Fortunately, hi-tech sealants offer as much as 15 years' guarantee.'

TEXTURED TRAVERTINE

Travertine is one of the more affordable stone options, though it does have a porous surface. It can be bought already honed and filled from some suppliers, otherwise you would need to fill it with a specific epoxy filler once it has been laid as flooring. The filled holes are visible, creating an interesting mottled look. Travertine tiles are more varied in colour, ranging from milky coffee tones to dark tan with cream.

“I THINK OF STONE AS A LIFE LONG MATERIAL, ONE THAT’S AN INVESTMENT AND PART OF THE FABRIC OF THE BUILDING, SO IT’S IMPORTANT TO GET IT RIGHT.”

HAMISH SMITH, CREATIVE DIRECTOR AT ARTISANS OF DEVIZES

Jaipur brushed limestone, £34.78sq m, Mandarin Stone

CLASSIC LIMESTONE

As one of the most popular choices of stone flooring, limestone comes in many variations of colour, cuts and finishes. It works well both indoors and outdoors, making it a great option for entranceways and open-plan spaces. Limestone tends to come in lighter, honey tones - and while it is not as porous as the likes of sandstone, it will require a strong sealant and will need to be maintained regularly to avoid premature staining and scratches.

TRENDY TERRACOTTA

By their very nature, most authentic stone floors are only available in neutral colours. However, terracotta offers richer, reddish tones underfoot and can also be glazed if a more shiny finish is desired. It’s remarkably long-lasting, so you will be able to find reclaimed tiles easily, though it is always best to go through a reputable supplier so they can source quality pieces on your behalf. As with all stone flooring, terracotta tiles work well with underfloor heating.



Antique Burgundy terracotta tiles, £154sq m, Artisans of Devizes.

NEED TO KNOW... BUYING STONE FLOORING

THINK ABOUT LIFESTYLE

Consider how you use your home. ‘A lighter coloured stone works if you’re after a crisp, clean look,’ says Hamish Smith. ‘But a stone that looks a little more lived-in and is therefore more forgiving might be better for a busy household with children and pets.’

CHECK OUT THE QUARRY

Ask to see samples in person before buying, and if possible, visit the stone yard to pick out your own slabs. ‘With natural stone, no two tiles will be the same, which provides stylish and unique individuality in the home,’ says Harriet Goodacre.

MANAGE MAINTENANCE

‘Bear in mind the level of care required to keep your floor looking fantastic, including sealing and treating at least once a year,’ says Leigh Price, co-director of Real Stone & Tile. ‘Cleaning with warm soapy water is usually safer than an abrasive cleaner.’

FIND AN INSTALLER

John Forde of Beswick Stone advises: ‘Employ someone who will not be fazed by the installation challenges that a natural material has over a man-made tile. This is by far the biggest mistake people make when getting a stone floor.’

FEATURE YVETTE MURRELL

Warm rugs

ADD A COMFORTING TOUCH TO STONE FLOORS WITH
A FEEL-GOOD COVERING



Take a traditional pattern

Silvanus rug in Blue,
£1,695, Soho Home



Add texture and character

Hem rope rug,
£683, Nest



Include a stylish scalloped edge

Rug with Navy border, from
£395, Tate & Darby



Be dark and dramatic

Ferm Living Eternal oval jute rug,
£519, Someday Designs



Switch up the shapes

Natural jute circular rug,
£250, Joe Browns



Make it a motif

Sulamani cotton rug,
£150, Oka



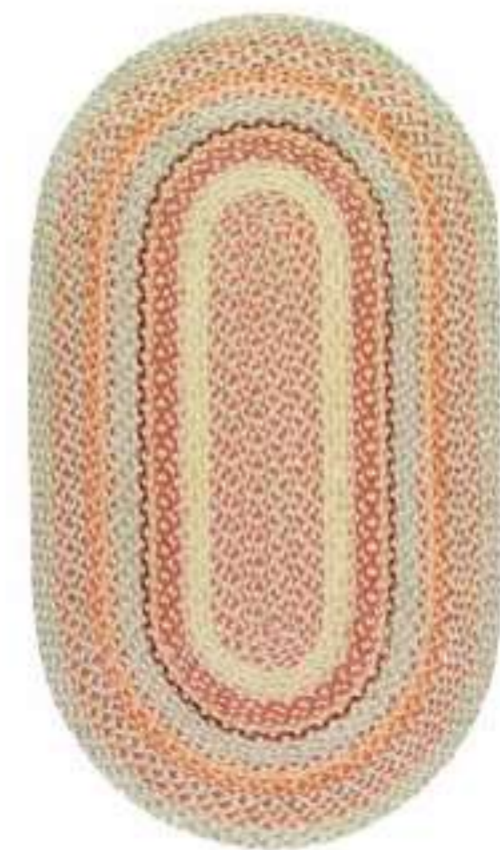
Choose an eco-friendly option

Andalucia Zahara rug, from
£130, Weaver Green



Get cosy with natural fibres

Gibbins flatweave wool rug,
£350, Habitat



Go for a reversible design

Pampas organic jute rug, from £32,
Braided Rug Company