



## Getting Started

If you need a new building on your property—for storing equipment or tools, for growing seedlings for your garden, or just for enjoying the view—it may be difficult to know where to start. You aren't alone. Knowing the right questions to ask regarding what kind of building you need, where to erect it, how much of each material you should order, and how to get started isn't an intuitive process. There are multiple factors to consider that will affect your property and project, but also that affect your neighbors, the environment, and your municipality's rules and regulations.

This chapter will help you ask the right questions and get the answers you need to get started on your project. The tips from industry experts included here can help you with everything from choosing the right power tools to rent to figuring out where to place your new greenhouse so it receives the most sunlight year-round.

### **In this chapter:**

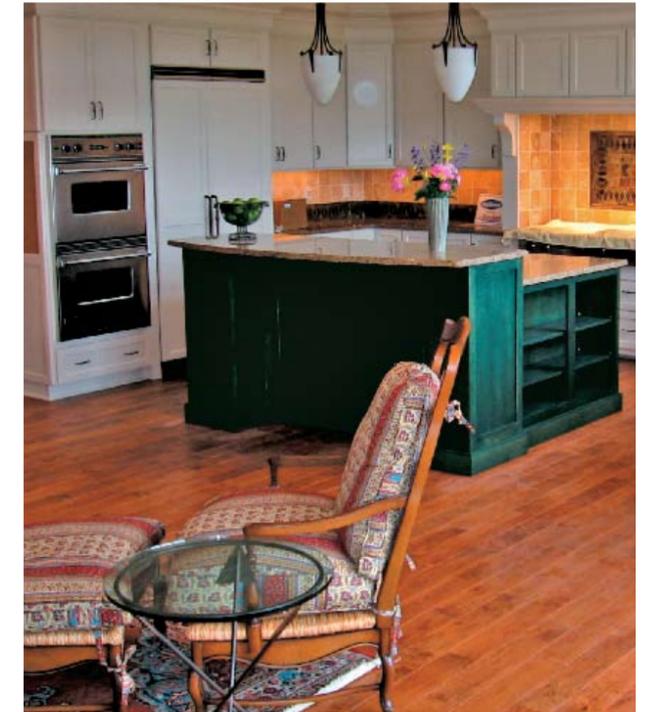
- Choosing a Site for Your Building
- Building Codes & Zoning Laws
- Working with Plans
- Power & Rental Tools
- Fasteners & Hardware
- Selecting Lumber
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**Linoleum floors with custom designs**, like this one, are especially sensitive to uneven surfaces or debris underneath. Even after it's in place, linoleum is not trouble-free. It can be cleaned with a variety of floor care products, but never with anything containing ammonia.



**Leather** may be the most fragile of all flooring materials. It's luxurious to a fault, but vulnerable to abrasion, tears, cuts, and damage from any sharp or rough object. The tile floor shown here has a faux leather appearance, but maintains the durability of ceramic tile.



**Hardwood floors** can last for decades with regular care. If a hardwood floor is used heavily, it may need repairing. Luckily, most hardwoods can be sanded down and refinished at least two or three times before they must be replaced.



**This luxury vinyl tile** offers the rugged beauty of cut stone, but with easy care. Its solid vinyl construction is more durable than traditional composition tile, and its top wear layer resists abrasion. Its greatest advantage over stone and ceramic tile is that vinyl never needs mortar or grout.

## Ceramic, Stone & Glass Tile

Hard flooring tiles include a wide variety of products made from molded clay or ceramics, quarried stone and glass. Although there are obviously significant differences between all these, they are all installed using cement-based mortar or epoxy as an adhesive and grout to fill the gaps between tiles.

To ensure a long-lasting hard tile floor, you'll need a smooth, stable, structurally sound and level subfloor (see page 00). In addition, the underlayment must be solid. Cementboard, or thinner fiber/cementboard, is the best underlayment for tile floors in kitchens and bathrooms, since it has excellent stability and is unaffected by moisture. Cementboard is manufactured exclusively for ceramic tile installation and will work well under any other type of tile (see page 00).

In rooms where moisture is not a factor, exterior-grade plywood is an adequate underlayment and it's also less expensive than cementboard. Another

option is isolation membrane, which is used to protect ceramic, stone and glass tile from movements in the subfloor—specifically, cracked concrete. Isolation membrane can be used just to cover individual cracks, or it can be used over an entire floor. Page 00 shows how to install isolation membrane.

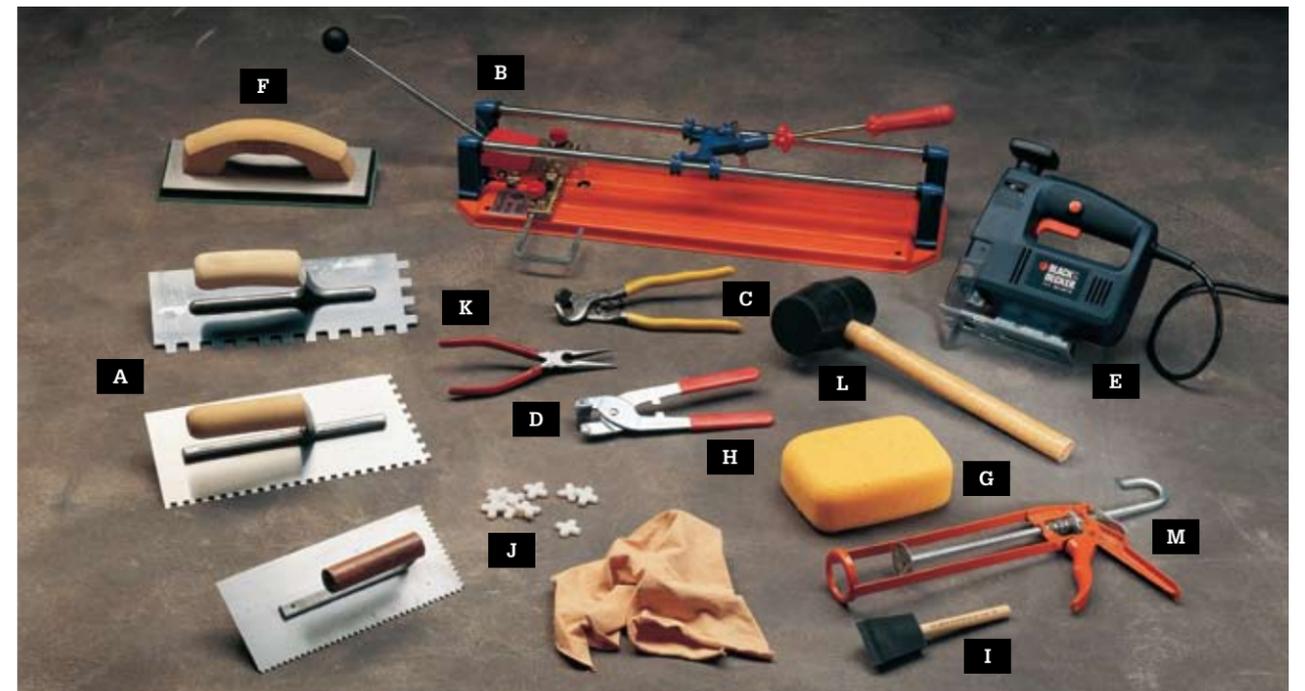
Different types of tiles feature different coatings and sealants. You'll need to take steps to protect the surface of porous tiles that are unglazed or left in their natural state, and others such as marble that need regular maintenance to look their best. Seal grout lines as well to prevent them from becoming stained by dirt.

If you want to install trim tiles, consider their placement as you plan the layout. Some types of base trim tile are set on the floor, with its finished edge flush with the field tile. Other types are installed on top of the field tile, after the field tile is laid and grouted.



Laying a hard tile floor is a great project for do-it-yourselfers because it is easy to take the work at your own speed and the results are very satisfying.

## Ceramic & Stone Tile Tools & Materials



**Tile tools include** adhesive-spreading tools, cutting tools, and grouting tools. Notched trowels (A) for spreading mortar come with notches of varying sizes and shapes. The size of the notch should be proportional to the size of the tile being installed. Cutting tools include a tile cutter (B), tile nippers (C), hand-held tile cutter (D), and jigsaw with carbide blade (E). Grouting tools include a grout float (F), grout sponge (G), buff rag (H), and foam brush (I) for applying grout sealer. Other tile tools include spacers (J), available in different sizes to create grout joints of varying widths; needle-nose pliers (K), for removing spacers; rubber mallet (L), for setting tiles into mortar; and caulk gun (M).



**Tile materials include** adhesives, grouts, and sealers. Thin-set mortar (A), the most common floor-tile adhesive, is often strengthened with latex mortar additive (B). Grout additive (C) can be added to floor grout (D) to make it more resilient and durable. Grout fills the spaces between tiles and is available in pre-tinted colors to match your tile. Silicone caulk (E) should be used in place of grout where tile meets another surface, like a bathtub. Use wall-tile adhesive (F) for installing base-trim tile. Grout sealer (G) and porous-tile sealer (H) ward off stains and make maintenance easier. (Inset) Trim and finishing materials include base-trim tiles (A), bullnose tiles (B), and doorway thresholds (C) in thicknesses ranging from 1/4" to 3/4" to match floor levels.

# Repairing Carpet

Burns and stains are the most common carpeting problems. You can clip away the burned fibers of superficial burns using small scissors. Deeper burns and indelible stains require patching by cutting away and replacing the damaged area.

Another common problem, addressed on the opposite page, is carpet seams or edges that have come loose. You can rent the tools necessary for fixing this problem.

## Tools & Materials ▶

Cookie-cutter tool	Replacement carpeting
Knee kicker	Double-face carpet tape
4" wallboard knife	Heat-activated seam tape
Utility knife	Weights
Seam iron	Boards
Seam adhesive	



## How to Repair Spot Damage



**1 Remove extensive damage** or stains with a "cookie-cutter" tool, available at carpeting stores. Press the cutter down over the damaged area and twist it to cut away the carpet.



**2 Using the cookie-cutter tool again,** cut a replacement patch from scrap carpeting. Insert double-face carpet tape under the cutout, positioning the tape so it overlaps the patch seams.



**3 Press the patch into place.** Make sure the direction of the nap or pattern matches the existing carpet. To seal the seam and prevent unraveling, apply seam adhesive to the edges of the patch.

## Installation Notes for No-glue Vinyl Flooring ▶



**Leave gaps.** To allow for the normal movement and expansion of the floor and wall surfaces, the flooring must be cut  $\frac{3}{16}$ " to  $\frac{1}{4}$ " away from all vertical surfaces such as walls, cabinets, or pipes. Use a jamb saw to undercut door trim—this will allow for expansion. Make sure vinyl is not contacting the wall surface behind the door trim. Check the fit of the no-glue flooring and then carefully remove the flooring.



**Place acrylic double-face tape** in areas that will be under heavy appliances such as stoves and refrigerators. Make an X with three pieces of tape—one long piece and two short pieces—so that the tape does not overlap. Place acrylic double-face tape at doorways and under seam lines. Leave the paper covering in place and press the tape down so it adheres well to the subfloor.



**Center the tape** under the two sides at seam lines. Press one side of the vinyl into place first. Place the second vinyl sheet and press it into place. Use a seam sealer kit to seal the seams.



**Drive nails into the wall surface**—not through the vinyl flooring—when installing the baseboard or base shoe. Anchoring the flooring with perimeter nails may result in buckling of the vinyl surface when the floor expands or contracts. Also, do not press the molding down into the vinyl. Leave a small gap between the molding and the floor surface so the vinyl is not constricted.