

7 Border tiles

- When you're ready to cut your border tiles, loose lay a whole tile (**fig.7**), then place another tile over it with its edge butting up to the wall.
- Take a craft knife, and score the lower tile. By bending a vinyl tile it should break, or else use a safe blade to finish the cut. Piece 'A' should now perfectly fit.
- You can use the same principle to cut the corners, as seen in (**fig.8**).

8 Dealing with pipes and architrave

- When you're working with vinyl tiles, the best way to deal with architrave is not to shape your tile around it but to cut out a section at the bottom of the architrave itself. For carpet tiles simply make a cardboard template and cut the shape out of the tile.
- Then, use a hand saw and chisel to remove a section of architrave the same depth as your tile and slot it underneath (**fig.9**).
- If you're fitting vinyl or carpet tiles around pipes, you need to pierce a pipe-shaped hole in your tile that's a bit larger than the pipe itself. Make a cutter by taking a scrap of pipe and sharpening the inside edge of one end with a file.
- When you've done that, mark the pipe's position on your border tile, then line up the cutter and hit it with a hammer (**fig.10**). Then make one single, smooth cut from the hole to the edge of the tile and fit it around the pipe.

9 Doorways

- If your tiles finish in a doorway, use a metal threshold strip to give a water-resistant edge. These can suit surfaces meeting at either equal or differing heights, so make sure you pick the right one for you.
- Then, measure the width of your door opening and cut the metal strips using a junior hacksaw, smoothing the ends with a fine file after cutting. Simply screw the threshold strip into the floor.
- If you want to fix threshold strips into a solid floor, just mark the screw holes, use a masonry drill to bore holes that'll fit a suitable wall plug and screw the strips to the floor.

10 The direction of your carpet pile

- Getting the best overall effect from your carpet tiles is easy. Simply lay them at right angles to one another, creating a chequerboard effect (**fig.11**).
- You'll be able to see which way to lay tiles by the arrows on the reverse.
- If you would like a broadloom carpet appearance then just lay all your tiles pointing in the same direction.

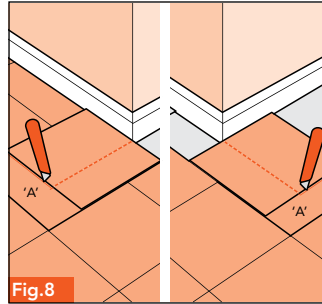


Fig.8 Cut corner tiles in the same way as border tiles.

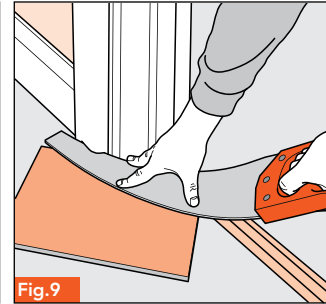


Fig.9 Remove a section of architrave the same depth as your tiles.

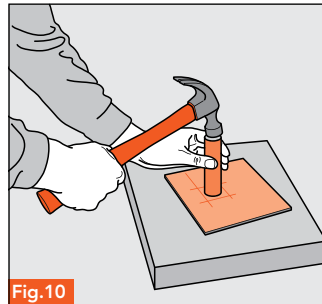


Fig.10 Line up the cutter and hit it with a hammer.

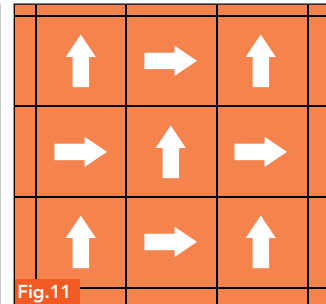


Fig.11 Lay carpet tiles at right angles to get the best overall effect.

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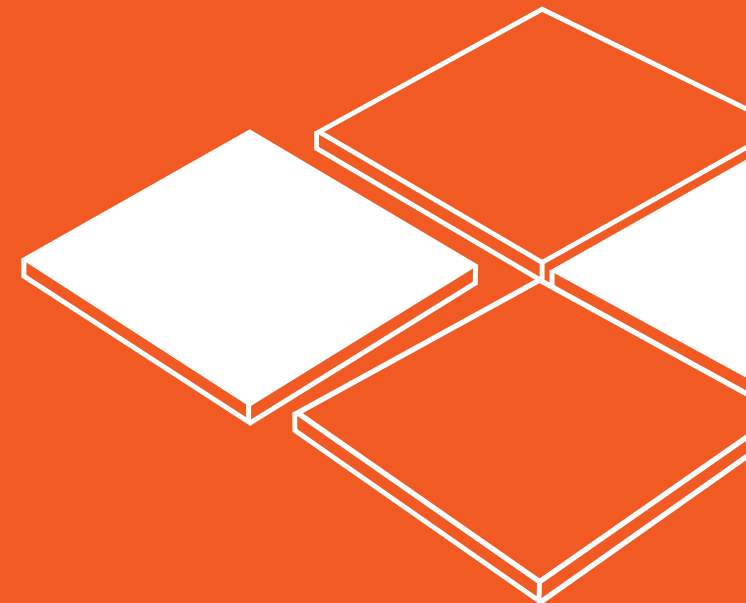
Any products not available in
store can be ordered via
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wilkinson

Your guide to...
**laying vinyl
or carpet
floor tiles**

Skill rating:
easy
Should take:
**one
afternoon**



HANDY ADVICE

Getting floors without flaws



Terry, the DIY genius

With a little know-how, fitting vinyl or carpet flooring tiles is a simple job that will get your place looking great in no time. This guide shows you how to do the job in simple stages.

Remember! When undertaking DIY tasks you must always take your own ability into account and you must also read and follow any packaging and manufacturers' instructions. This leaflet is intended to be a basic guide only and is not a substitute for any professional advice.

1 How to measure up

- First of all, start planning how many tiles you'll need by multiplying the width of your room by the length to find the main area. Then simply add or subtract the area of any bay windows, alcoves, chimney breasts or door thresholds.
- Then, divide the area of the room by the area of just one tile, rounding things up to the nearest whole number. Add 5% or 10% to this and you'll have the number of tiles you need to buy. Make sure that all your tiles have the same batch number and that they're suitable for the place you want to put them.

2 Picking your tiles

- Carpet tiles are just the job for bedrooms, while vinyl and carpet tiles are all suitable for living rooms, bathrooms and kitchens.
- It's best not to use flooring tiles in conservatories, as exposure to sunlight and temperature can cause them to fade and shrink.

3 Getting your sub-floor ready

- It's a good idea to remove all old floor coverings and any adhesives on old floors before you start. If you're laying tiles over floorboards, overlay them with hardboard, smooth side up. Any timber that's treated with wood preservatives isn't suitable as a sub-floor, even if you overlay it with hardboard.
- It's also important that if you're laying tiles over a concrete sub-floor it needs to be smooth, dry and have an integral damp-proof membrane.

- New concrete floors can take up to 6 months to dry, so remember to make sure it's totally dry before you lay any new tiles.
- Whether it's concrete, sand and cement screed, plywood, hardboard or chipboard, all porous surfaces need to be primed with a diluted solution of PVA.

4 Choosing adhesives

- A big thing to remember is that if your tiles aren't self-adhesive, use the manufacturer's recommended adhesive and follow the instructions.
- You can stick down carpet tiles with a low tack adhesive or double-sided tape so they can be lifted and replaced easily.

5 How to plan and mark your room

- The finished floor will look great if the tiles are centred in your doorway. Also, you ideally want the tiles around the edge of the room to be equal in width on both sides/ends (**fig.1**). You can do this by marking a chalk line down the centre of the room (**fig.2**), and then – starting in the middle – mark a second line at a 90-degree angle to the first line (**fig.3**).
- Then, loosely lay tiles along these lines to see how the borders appear (**fig.4**). If you end up with awkward narrow strips of tiles at the edge of the room, adjust the chalk lines.
- A top tip to remember here is not to cover up access to plumbing and electrical connections.

6 Laying your tiles

- Now you can start to lay tiles in rows along your chalk line, starting with the centre tiles. Just make sure you leave out the last full rows and the row of border tiles (**fig.5**).
- Hold off from applying the adhesive to the last full rows or borders until you've cut the border tiles and are ready to start laying them.
- Place each tile carefully, butting it firmly and squarely up to the ones next to it. Nice and straight lines should be created. Try not to slide the tiles around as you'll force adhesive into the joints and make a bad fit, and wipe away all the excess adhesive with a damp rag before it goes hard.
- Remember, with vinyl tiles, if the surfaces of adjacent tiles aren't level, you can usually even them out using a block of soft wood and a hammer (**fig.6**).

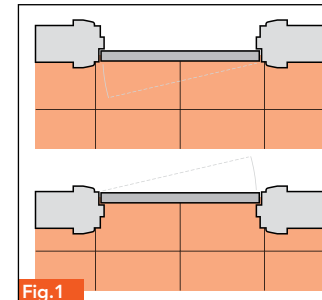


Fig.1

Tiles around the edge of the room should be equal in width.

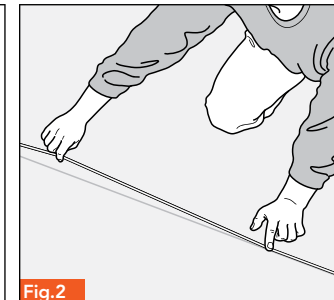


Fig.2

Mark a chalk line down the centre of your room. Using string as a guide to make the line straight.

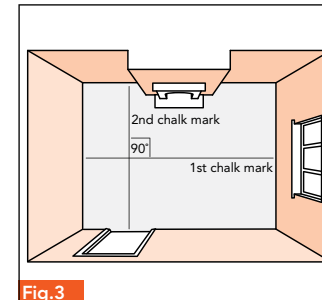


Fig.3

Mark a second line at a 90 degree angle to the first.

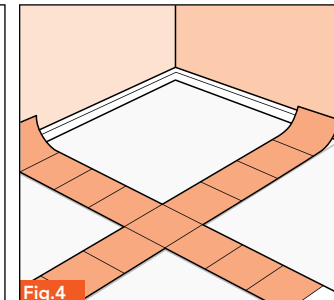


Fig.4

Lay tiles loosely to see how the borders look.

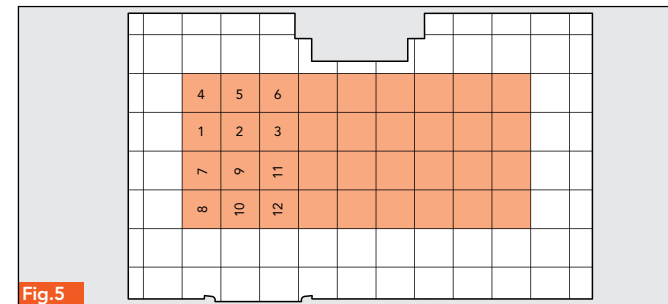


Fig.5

Start laying tiles along your chalk lines, starting with the centre tiles.



Fig.6

Use a block of soft wood and a hammer to level out vinyl tiles.



Fig.7

Cutting border tiles.