

FLOORS

Wood flooring provides warmth, better air quality

Style up your floor with wood

BY EVALINE NAMUWAYA

Wooden floors might seem costly, but there are more reasons to consider. Lewis Oketch, the head of the carpentry and joinery at Lugogo Vocational Training Institute, says most people do not know much about wooden floors.

What are the costs?

Asaad Tamale, an interior designer and landscape specialist with Smart Concepts (U) LTD, says many people hardly think of using hardwood floors because they are slightly costly as opposed to finishing materials such as stone, cement, tile and carpets. "For instance, a three bedroom house can cost sh50 to sh60m while as tiles that cover a house of the same size cost sh20m to sh50m.

Moses Mutebi, the director of Wooden Floor Masters and Woodworks Jinja Road, explains that a wooden floor costs between sh180,000 and sh500,000 per square metre.

Oketch says a wood floor comes in three types. There is one which uses only one set of floor joist and — board while double and triple, just like the name, uses double and triple joists and boards.

Wood floors can be refinished or re-coated several times, which adds to their appeal and durability

"This type of floor is quite costly due to the wood used to construct it. It costs between sh1.8m and sh2m per square metre, but if the floor is built from concrete and the finishing is wood, then the cost is lower," he says.

Advantages

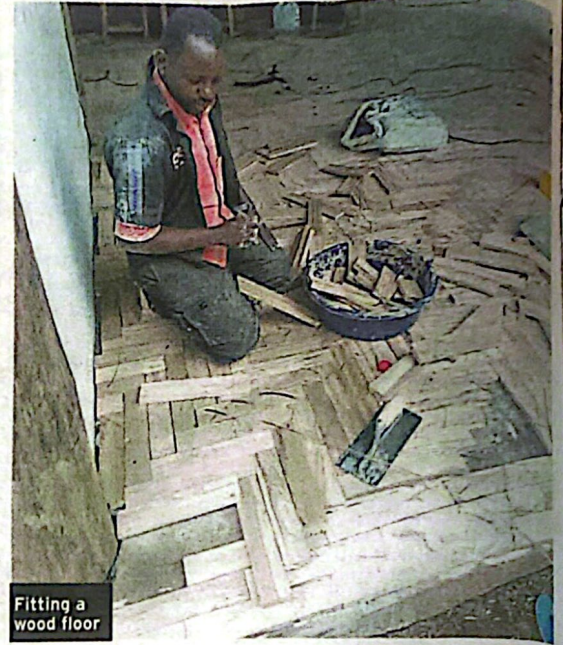
Oketch says wood floors are hard surfaces that can last for decades. "A floor can get damaged; dented or scraped, but all it takes is sanding, grinding or re-coating it. This saves you the cost of redoing the floor all over again," he says.

Wood on floors often improve style in your home and are also warm. As opposed to tiles, laminate and carpets, wooden floors keep the house warm in cold weather and also condense heat making the house remain warm.

Asaad Tamale, an interior designer, believes that wood floors are easy to maintain, durable and provide better air quality. "If wood floors get dirty or scratched, you



A concrete floor with a finishing of wood



Fitting a wood floor



Cost

Wood flooring is quite costly. It ranges between sh180,000 and sh300,000 per square metre



Wood floors are long lasting

quality," he says.

Styles, shapes and colours

Mutebi says wood gives a home attractive design. With tiles, one might fail to get some patterns in case one is to change the floor. "It is hard to get a factory pattern which is reproduced every so often. However, wood is unique because it has a range of stains and mixes that adds charm to one's house," he said.

Mutebi says as the wood gets older, it adds coating that makes it look more beautiful, whereas tiles and carpets fade with time.

Challenges

Tamale cautions that hardwood floors in places with unlimited movement will require refurbishing occasionally and this does not come cheap.

He adds that hardwood floors sometimes become noisy. However, one can eliminate the noise using area rugs or carpets.

"If one has pets, they will need to be careful because scratches cannot be removed or covered up," he adds.

Oketch says hardwood is not scratch-proof and cannot hide your pet's claw marks. "It easily gets broken down and will need to be refinished. If one is carrying heavy objects, it is advisable that they lift other than pulling on the floor so that you do not spoiling the wood," he warns.

He adds that hardwood is highly sensitive to moisture and it is best not to have it as a full bathroom floor.

can refinish them, but carpets, tiles or laminate have to be replaced. Besides hardwood floors are timeless, so you will not have to replace or change them because

they decorate the house," he says. Tamale says wood floors should be considered as a must for houses where people suffer from allergies. "While tile and laminate do not

have the threads that carpets have, they still have cement lines and a decoration. These lines and embroidery draw dust, but hardwood floors give the indoor air