

CONCRETE

This is a great surface that, when polished, creates a cutting-edge architectural statement. It is also durable and versatile, so is the ideal solution for a contemporary floor in an ex-industrial space, log cabin-style retreat or barn conversion. Its simplicity also means it can be teamed with underfloor heating and used to link functional open-plan living spaces such as kitchens and dining areas, or provide continuity between an interior room and an exterior courtyard.

- Embrace the rough, natural patina of poured concrete or stain it for a rich, sophisticated feel.
- Concrete floors need to be level, sufficiently strong and stable, damp-proofed and thermally insulated to current regulations, so for best results always employ the services of a professional builder.

BELOW Concrete creates cool, modern floors for minimal interiors yet is warm to the touch – it works really well in new-builds or conversions in combination with underfloor heating and particularly suits an industrial style



STONE

Stone flooring is hardwearing, requires very little maintenance and never looks out of place in country homes. It comes in a range of attractive hues from dark granite, basalt or slate to pale marble, brick and limestone. Shop around for different finishes, too; the texture can be 'honed', 'river' or 'tumbled', or smooth and polished for a more contemporary look. Flagstone flooring naturally suits a country setting, so if you have an original one you should consider restoring it to its former glory. If you are planning on laying a flagstone floor from scratch, shop locally for stone in keeping with the style of your property or visit a salvage yard for reclaimed pavers with a characterful, time-worn surface.

- This type of material feels cool in summer but conducts heat well, so it works with underfloor heating and is a good choice for kitchens and bathrooms, combining practicality with the comfort of warmth underfoot.
- Stone can work both inside and out to create a seamless link between the living space and the garden. Add decorative interest by combining different-sized pavers together.

TOP LEFT Polished slate is easy to clean in a bathroom
TOP RIGHT AND ABOVE LEFT Fine bricks and terracotta tiles can be laid in various patterns from herringbone to honeycomb to create an interesting finish
ABOVE RIGHT Traditional flagstones add character to a period property

