

Solid vs. Engineered Hardwood: What Idaho Falls Homeowners Should Know

Hardwood flooring can completely change the way a home looks and feels. It brings natural warmth into the room, works with nearly any design style, and can provide lasting value when the right product is installed correctly.

One of the first decisions Idaho Falls homeowners face is whether to choose solid hardwood or engineered hardwood. Both are made with real wood, and both can create a beautiful finished floor. However, their construction, stability, installation requirements, and long-term options are different.

At Classic Flooring, we help homeowners compare these materials based on more than appearance. We consider the room, subfloor, moisture conditions, household needs, desired finish, and long-term plans for the home.

[Classic Flooring](#) offers professional product guidance and flooring installation for homes throughout Idaho Falls and Southeast Idaho. Our goal is to help you choose a hardwood floor that looks right, performs well, and fits the way you actually live.

What Is the Difference Between Solid and Engineered Hardwood?

The main difference is found beneath the surface. Solid hardwood is made from one continuous piece of wood, while engineered hardwood combines a real hardwood surface with several supporting layers underneath.

That construction affects how each floor responds to moisture, seasonal changes, installation conditions, and future refinishing. It doesn't mean one option is always better than the other. It means each product is suited to different homes and applications.

[solid hardwood](#) offers the traditional construction many homeowners associate with hardwood flooring. It can be a strong choice for main living areas, bedrooms, hallways, and other suitable above-grade rooms.

[engineered hardwood](#) provides a real wood appearance with a layered core designed for added dimensional stability. That added stability can be valuable in rooms where moisture, temperature changes, or installation conditions need more consideration.

The right choice depends on the home, not simply which sample looks best in the showroom.

How Solid Hardwood Is Constructed

Solid hardwood planks are milled from a single piece of timber. The wood species you see on top continues through the thickness of the plank.

Common solid hardwood choices include oak, maple, hickory, walnut, and other species. Each one has its own grain pattern, color variation, hardness, and overall character.

Because the plank is solid wood, it can often be sanded and refinished multiple times over its lifespan. That makes it appealing to homeowners who want a floor with the potential to last for generations.

Solid hardwood also offers many opportunities for customization. Homeowners may choose different plank widths, textures, stain colors, and sheen levels to complement the rest of the home.

How Engineered Hardwood Is Constructed

Engineered hardwood has a genuine hardwood veneer on top of a layered core. Those lower layers are arranged to help the plank resist some of the movement caused by changing environmental conditions.

The visible surface still provides the grain, color, and texture of real wood. Once installed, quality engineered hardwood can look very similar to solid hardwood.

The thickness of the top wood layer varies by product. A thicker wear layer may allow the floor to be professionally refinished in the future, while a thinner layer may offer fewer restoration options.

That is why we look beyond the general product category. We compare the actual construction, manufacturer requirements, finish, and expected performance of each flooring option.

Which Hardwood Handles Seasonal Changes Better?

Idaho Falls homes experience changing temperatures throughout the year, along with dry indoor air during the heating season. Because wood naturally reacts to its surroundings, those seasonal conditions matter.

Solid hardwood expands as it absorbs moisture and contracts as it dries. Proper acclimation, moisture evaluation, expansion spacing, and indoor climate control help manage that natural movement.

Engineered hardwood is generally more dimensionally stable because of its layered construction. The cross-layered core helps reduce some expansion and contraction across the width of the plank.

That can make engineered hardwood a practical choice for certain rooms or homes with more variable conditions. However, it is not immune to moisture problems. Both products require professional evaluation and installation to perform as intended.

Which Option Is Better for Idaho Falls Homes?

There is no single answer that applies to every Idaho Falls home. Solid and engineered hardwood can both perform well when the product matches the space and the installation is handled correctly.

Solid hardwood may be the better fit when:

- The floor is being installed in a suitable above-grade room
- Long-term refinishing potential is a priority

- The homeowner wants traditional hardwood construction
- The subfloor supports the required installation method
- Indoor conditions can be kept reasonably consistent

Engineered hardwood may be the better fit when:

- Greater dimensional stability is helpful
- The project involves particular subfloor conditions
- The room experiences more environmental variation
- The installation method requires added flexibility
- The homeowner wants real wood with a layered construction

Our [residential hardwood installation](#) service begins with evaluating the room and discussing how the flooring will be used. That allows us to recommend a product based on the actual project rather than relying on a broad rule.

Can Solid and Engineered Hardwood Be Installed in the Same Rooms?

In many cases, both products can be considered for living rooms, dining rooms, bedrooms, hallways, and home offices. The decision comes down to conditions beneath and around the flooring.

We evaluate the subfloor material, floor level, moisture readings, nearby rooms, transitions, heating system, and manufacturer instructions. We also consider whether the installation is above grade, at grade, or below grade.

A product that works beautifully in an upstairs bedroom may not be the right choice for a lower-level family room. Similarly, an engineered floor that is ideal for one subfloor may offer no meaningful advantage in another space.

Room-specific recommendations create better results than choosing one hardwood construction for the entire house without evaluating each area.

Which Type of Hardwood Lasts Longer?

Both solid and engineered hardwood can provide many years of service. Product quality, wear-layer thickness, installation, maintenance, household traffic, and moisture exposure all influence longevity.

Solid hardwood has an advantage when it comes to repeated restoration. Because the wood continues through the plank, it can often be professionally sanded and refinished several times.

Engineered hardwood longevity varies more by product. A high-quality engineered floor with a substantial hardwood wear layer may be refinished, while products with thin veneers have more limited sanding potential.

Neither option should be judged only by its initial appearance. We help homeowners consider how the floor will age, whether future color changes are important, and how long they expect to remain in the home.

Can Both Types Be Refinished?

Solid hardwood is generally the more flexible option for future sanding and refinishing. When scratches, worn finish, or outdated stain become noticeable, professional restoration can reveal a fresh wood surface.

Our [hardwood floor resanding](#) service addresses deeper wear, uneven areas, visible damage, and old surface coatings. Resanding can also prepare suitable wood floors for a new stain color.

Our [hardwood floor refinishing](#) service restores the appearance and protective finish of worn hardwood. Finish choices may include satin, semi-gloss, or high-gloss options.

Some engineered hardwood can also be refinished, but the number of times depends on the thickness of its real wood layer and the condition of the floor. We inspect the product before recommending any restoration work.

Does One Option Look More Authentic?

Both solid and engineered hardwood use genuine wood at the surface, so either can provide natural grain, knots, color variation, and texture.

The visual result depends more on the species, grade, plank dimensions, finish, texture, and installation pattern than on the core construction. A well-made engineered floor can be difficult to distinguish from solid hardwood after installation.

Solid hardwood may appeal to homeowners who value traditional construction and the knowledge that each plank is one piece of timber. Engineered hardwood may appeal to those who want the same natural appearance with additional structural stability.

The best way to compare them is to view full-size samples and consider how they work with your cabinets, trim, paint, lighting, and furniture.

How Do Cost and Long-Term Value Compare?

Hardwood flooring prices vary widely in both categories. Wood species, plank width, finish, manufacturing quality, wear-layer thickness, installation method, and subfloor preparation all affect the final cost.

Solid hardwood is not automatically more expensive than engineered hardwood. Premium engineered products can cost as much as or more than many solid options.

The lowest material price does not always produce the lowest long-term cost. A product that isn't appropriate for the room may require repairs or early replacement, while a well-chosen floor can serve the home for decades.

We provide detailed bids that identify the project areas, square footage, products, and scope of work. This gives homeowners a clearer view of the full investment rather than focusing only on the price per square foot.

Why Professional Installation Matters for Both Materials

Choosing the right hardwood is only half of the decision. Installation quality directly affects how the floor looks, feels, and performs.

Both solid and engineered wood require attention to acclimation, subfloor conditions, moisture, layout, expansion space, fastening or adhesive requirements, and transitions. Manufacturer instructions may differ significantly from one product to another.

At Classic Flooring, we prepare the subfloor for support and moisture control before installing the selected product with precision. This process helps reduce the risk of movement, gaps, uneven areas, and avoidable flooring failure.

Professional installation also protects the details that make the finished space feel complete. Board direction, transition placement, perimeter cuts, doorway alignment, and stair connections all shape the final appearance.

What If Hardwood Is Not the Best Fit for a Particular Room?

Sometimes the best flooring plan uses more than one material. A homeowner may choose hardwood for the main living area and a more water-resistant product for a mudroom, laundry room, or other demanding space.

[luxury vinyl plank \(LVP\)](#) can provide a wood-inspired appearance with strong moisture resistance and easier maintenance. It may be a better choice where spills, wet shoes, or frequent cleanup are major concerns.

We can also coordinate hardwood with carpet, tile, vinyl, or other materials so transitions look intentional. The goal is not to force one product into every room. It is to create a flooring plan that supports the home as a whole.

How Do We Help You Choose the Right Hardwood?

A useful hardwood consultation starts with questions. We want to know where the flooring will go, how the room is used, whether children or pets live in the home, and what type of maintenance feels realistic.

We also discuss:

- Desired wood species and color
- Plank width and texture
- Solid versus engineered construction
- Existing subfloor conditions
- Moisture and climate considerations
- Preferred sheen level
- Adjoining flooring materials
- Future refinishing expectations
- Project schedule and budget

From there, we can narrow the options and explain the practical differences between suitable products. You receive guidance based on your home rather than a one-size-fits-all recommendation.

Choose Hardwood That Fits Your Idaho Falls Home

The choice between solid and engineered hardwood doesn't have to feel complicated. Both can offer real wood beauty, lasting value, and a timeless foundation for your home.

Solid hardwood stands out for its traditional construction and long-term refinishing potential. Engineered hardwood offers added stability and greater flexibility for certain rooms and installation conditions.

What matters most is matching the flooring to the space and installing it according to the product's requirements. At Classic Flooring, we guide you through product selection, preparation, and professional installation so you can feel confident in the finished result.

[Contact us for a free quote](#) to schedule an assessment, explore hardwood samples, and find the right flooring for your Idaho Falls home.

Related Questions

Is engineered hardwood quieter than solid hardwood?

Sound depends on the subfloor, installation method, underlayment, and room construction. We evaluate the full flooring system when sound control is a priority.

Can hardwood flooring be installed around a fireplace?

Yes, but the layout must account for the hearth, required clearances, surrounding materials, and clean transitions. We plan these details before installation.

Do wide hardwood planks require special consideration?

Wide planks can create a spacious look, but product stability and moisture conditions become especially important. We recommend suitable products based on the room and environment.

Can new hardwood be matched to an existing staircase?

Often, yes. Wood species, stain, grain, age, and finish affect the match, so we compare the existing surfaces before recommending an approach.