

# from the ground up

PUTTING FLOORING AT THE TOP OF THE RENOVATION LIST CAN MAKE A LOT OF SENSE, WRITES KYLIE WALKER.

PHOTOGRAPHY CRAIG WALL STYLING GERALDINE MUÑOZ

**F**looring is often the last thing people think of when decorating a room — but putting it first on the decision list could make decorating magic.

“It can be the forgotten part of design,” says James Fisher of timber-finishing specialists Feast Watson. “But it’s important to keep it in mind because floors really set the mood in a room.”

In 2014, flooring trends include both a move to patterns and vivid colours — think parquet in vibrant bright hues, or a clever mix of different ceramic tiles — and, conversely, a continuing interest in simple black and white.

One reason for the popularity of the two basic colours is how much easier they are to use. For instance, Black Japan is an exciting floorboard finish, but in the past the traditional application method, which involved a clear top coat, could result in blistering and flaking. New formulations avoid that problem.

Lime finishes are also more successful these days. “Unfortunately, the old system could result in yellowing over time,” James says. “However, our formula, being water-based, is a lot easier to use and it doesn’t yellow.”

For those who like the way liming allows floorboard grain to shine through but who want more options, Feast Watson has just released five new shades in its Liming White finish, ranging from a dark ash-grey to light golden-grey tones.

Colour isn’t the only way to make a statement. Natural woven coverings, such as banana fibre or resin-coated paper, offer unusual options. “And sisal has inherent properties within the fibre that repels dust mites and is therefore an ideal floor covering for allergy sufferers,” says David Crook of International Floor Coverings.

And to be right on trend for this year, if you love floorboards, consider using them as a feature wall, not just on the floor. \*

1 Hexagonal tiles, \$64 a square metre, from Tile Mega Mart. 2, 3, 4 Hycraft ‘Caribbean’ carpet in San Juan, \$58; Choices Flooring ‘Eclipse’ carpet in Sapphire Sky, \$82; Hycraft ‘Santorini’ carpet in Silver Cloud, \$67.50; all prices a square metre installed, from Godfrey Hirst. 5 Tunisian ‘Flower’ hand-cut marble mosaic tiles, POA, from Aeria Country Floors. 6, 7, 8 Encaustic cement tile in Teal, \$93 a square metre; Italian ‘Ceilo’ terracotta tile in Light Blue, \$760 a square metre; ‘Chrysanthemum’ ceramic tile, 150 x 150mm, \$58 a tile; all from Aeria Country Floors. 9, 10 Belgian ‘Pearl Lattice’ wool/sisal carpet, \$160, and ‘Tiger Grey’ sisal carpet, \$65, both prices a square metre, from The Natural Flooring Covering Centres. 11, 12, 13 Hakwood oak floorboards in Chiaro, Fossil and Mineral, POA, all from Salvage Resources. 14 Tunisian ‘Doga’ hand-cut marble mosaic tiles, POA, from Aeria Country Floors. Background, French oak floorboards in Driftwood Oil, \$85 a square metre, from Nash Timbers. For stockist details, see page 134.

