



DIY Spotlight

Porcelain Floors

Part 1 of 2



Dynamic DIY duo, Steven & Carmen, are renovating their farmhouse on Bainbridge Island, WA. They started a few years ago with smaller home projects. Now, in the midst of the pandemic, they're dedicating more time to home improvement. With several successful projects complete, they're now tackling their floors.

They researched flooring options at Home Depot, Lowes, and Lumber Liquidators. They found Lumber Liquidators in Tacoma, WA, had exactly the flooring and grout combination they were looking for.

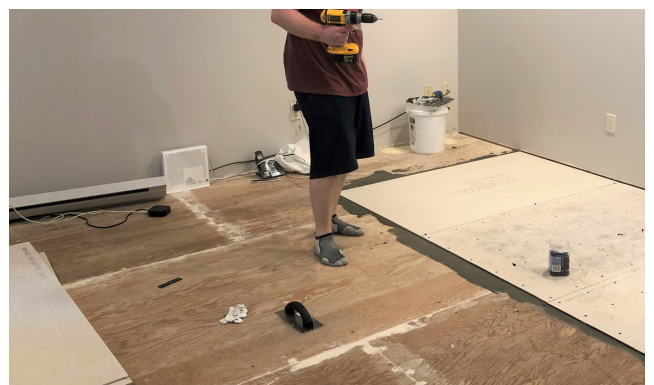
They selected 36" x 6" Avella Ultra porcelain tiles, in the color Golden Lake Oak, and are grouting them with a Sand Beige grout made by Bostik.

Their PROCESS includes:

- 1.** For each room, the first step is removal of the old flooring and baseboards. They are replacing a variety of different flooring options, which consist of carpet, ceramic tile, and wood floors, and repairing and leveling the subfloor where needed.
- 2.** For added stability before installing the porcelain tiles, they install 3' x 5' sheets of USG FIBEROCK underlayment on top of the subfloors. The underlayment is installed using a bed of mortar, and then further screwed down to the subfloor, with only 6" between screws. This requires a lot of additional work and screws (approximately 54 screws per sheet!), but is very helpful in preventing a sagging subfloor, which leads to loose and/or broken tiles.
- 3.** After the FIBEROCK underlayment is installed, the seams must be taped. Then, mortar must be applied to the screwheads and the taped seams to create a smooth, strong foundation.
- 4.** Once the mortar for the FIBEROCK is dry, they then lay the porcelain tiles in a subway tile pattern with 1/3 offset. In addition to creating a proper mortar bed, each tile is back-buttered before being laid.
- 5.** After the mortar under the tiles has dried, the floor is grouted.
- 6.** Once the grout is dry, it is sealed, and new baseboards are cut, painted, and installed.
- 7.** High fives and celebration!



Replace rotten subflooring



Lay fiberock

Their TOOLS include:

- Utility knife (for removing carpet)
- Pry bar (for removing carpet stripping, wood flooring, and baseboards)
- Hammer
- Handheld circular saw and jigsaw (for replacing subfloor)
- ¼" trowel (for spreading mortar)
- Joint knife (for cleaning up mortar and back-buttering tiles)
- Perfect Level Master leveling system
- 7" wet tile saw with stand
- Grout Float
- Mortar mixing paddle
- Drill
- Scoring knife (for cutting FIBEROCK underlayment)
- 5-gallon bucket and mud pan (for holding mortar)
- 1/8" spacers (for going between porcelain tiles)



Install new baseboards

With the master bedroom floor complete, they've moved on to the next room! Check back with us soon as Steven shares successes, challenges, and recommendations for tackling your own flooring project. Can't wait to see the finished floors!