



# parkwithstyle

## garage flooring comes of age

A Lamborghini finds a yellow and black GarageTek floor the perfect place to park.

By Rebecca Jacoby

If you're like most homeowners, your garage merely provides a place to park your car and a sheltered access to the inside of your home. You also store sporting equipment, paint cans, car supplies and tools there because it is the expected catch-all for hard to store items and clutter.

### GIVE YOUR GARAGE A FACELIFT

Maybe it's time to think differently about the garage. You finish the interior of your home, so why not make the most of your garage—the space

that probably most needs a facelift?

With comparatively little expense and in less than 1 week, you could have new garage flooring installed. New flooring will provide a refined appeal so you will feel as good about your garage as you do about the rest of your home. New flooring will also improve the longevity of the base floor, upscale the look and enhance your home's value.

Choices in garage flooring products have increased recently because of homeowners' desires to have finished interior garages as supplementary living spaces or workspaces, showcases or efficiently-organized storage centers. Although modular tiles easily lead the trend in garage flooring products, you can also select from floor paints, mats, rolled products or epoxy or polymer coatings. There is a product to suit almost any homeowner's price range and design preference.

A do-it-yourself homeowner

could see results in 1 day by installing mats, rolled products or tiles. However, contacting a professional ensures that you will not only receive knowledgeable design ideas but also expert advice and installation. A professional will tell you about service guarantees and product warranties, details that ensure confidence in your purchase.

Mark Bear, owner, Garage Craft Interiors, provides custom garage flooring products and installations and also offers complete garage storage systems. Coordinating with flooring, his company offers solutions for garage clutter.

"We offer an installation package that provides a weapon to eliminate clutter with cabinetry, a wall system and accessories that include overhead storage," Bear says. "Homeowners like the finished custom appearance. Once installed, they don't have to do anything except enjoy the new space. For little

money in regard to lifestyle, homeowners can have a garage that reflects the care they put into the rest of their home."

Bear explains, "We put in a great flooring system in as little as 1 day. Entire garage storage solutions can be completed in 2 to 5 days. It's exciting to watch homeowners' faces when they see the difference in their garage and the difference is in the great feeling that shows as they look at the finished space. One customer said upon seeing her finished garage, 'Are you sure this is my garage?'"

### DIFFERENT NEEDS, DIFFERENT PRODUCTS

Commonalities exist with each product. Each shield your garage floor from contaminating leaks and spills, is waterproof or moisture resistant, keeps mold and mildew at bay and may come in a variety of colors. Because each choice has a different visual appeal and physical feel-



Garage Craft Interiors consults, designs and installs custom modular garage flooring, cabinetry, wall systems and lighting.

ing, it is important to review product features to find the one that provides your needs.

#### FLOOR PAINT

Painting the garage floor with a waterproofing paint seals and protects it. While the application of the seal may be done in 1 day, drying takes an additional day.

A pale hued paint will reflect light. A darker paint will show stains less but will make the space appear smaller. Maintaining a painted floor is easy with a soapy water wash. However, repeated washings may eventually cause the paint to crack or peel.

A painted floor does not provide a cushioned or anti-static surface. In fact, paint produces a smooth finish that can be slippery, especially when damp. Experts suggest adding an abrasive to the paint, such as sand, to give traction to the surface. Painting may appeal to a homeowner looking

for a less expensive solution than custom garage flooring.

#### PARKING PADS

A parking pad or mat comes in a standard size that is approximately 10 feet wide and is simple to install. Just position it and trim it to size

with a utility knife. No adhesives are necessary to secure it. Two or more pads can be butted against one another for a seamless appearance. To complete the installation, just snap on a beveled edging around the perimeter.

The ribbed surfaces of parking pads channel moisture and keep your feet dry from mud or debris as

you step in or out of your vehicle and home. Because they are made from PVC, pads are comfortably cushioned underfoot. Some are made to absorb oils and some have guides to help you know exactly where to stop as you pull in to park.

Parking mats are infused with a

**"Because the tiles are specifically designed for garage floors, they are mold and mildew resistant."**

*-Steve Flowers, owner, GarageTek*

light scent to ensure a fresh aroma in your garage. To clean them, just hose them off with soapy water. The scent stays and the dirt goes. They stand up to repeated cleanings without lifting or cracking.

If you want to protect your garage floor with minimal expense, choose parking pads. Accessory kits include wall guards, which protect vehicle

doors from dings, bangs or scratches. Kits may also include a garage door seal to protect against the weather. Additionally, parking mats are used to line truck beds, sport utility vehicles or kennels.

#### ROLLED PRODUCTS

Rolled flooring, like parking mats, is made from flexible PVC. In addition to being quite durable, it is also easy to install because no adhesives are required and it can be cut to size with a utility knife. As the product name indicates, simply roll the extra wide sections of flooring into place. You can overlap or butt the seams.

Textured patterns in the PVC channel moisture and liquids away from walkways. Rolled flooring also prevents foot fatigue, resists slips, sound insulates and thermal insulates the garage. Besides protecting the base floor from deterioration due to stains and contaminants, it is easily cleaned with soapy water and a

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## GARAGE FLOORING



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### COLORFUL TILES ARE A BEST SELLER

"Tiles are the leading garage flooring product and it is easy to see why," says Bear. Tiles come in a range of vivid colors and since they are quick to install, a new floor appears in an instant. Results are dramatic.

Steve Flowers, owner, GarageTek, provides modular garage floor tile as well as garage storage systems. "The tiles interlock, are easy to keep clean and make the garage an attractive room to come home to. A homeowner could have a complete room makeover in a very short time."

The modular flooring comes in light grey, dark grey, red, white, black, yellow and tan. "Because the tiles are specifically designed for garage floors, they are mold and mildew resistant," Flowers says. They come with a 10-year warranty and are easy to clean. A pressure wash just a few times per year is all that's needed to maintain the floor."

"Many of our customers had previously painted their garage floors. Then the paint peeled. They were tired of repainting the floor so they chose to have tiles installed," Flowers says.

"The primary decisions for every homeowner are pattern and color. We frequently add logos or family crests to the floor for a more upscale and custom look. We work with customers to develop a combination they like," Flowers says.

Flowers relays how he solved one

hose and maintains its shape and color for years.

Most rolled garage flooring comes in two thicknesses. There are multiple colors and a choice of patterns called treads. A diamond tread ensures better traction and reduces dirt tracked into your home, while a coin tread has wider appeal and

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-Mark Bear, owner, Garage Craft Interiors

cleans easier. Some garage flooring professionals offer a levant pattern which has a finely pebbled surface.

Rolled flooring products give a homeowner a mid-range cost solution. They are tested and warranted for durability, moisture and stain resistance. Rolled flooring products are frequently found on the floors of commercial buildings.

couple's problem with a recent flooring installation. "We had homeowners with a relatively tight two-car garage and two SUVs. The husband and wife argued about each other parking in his or her spot. We developed a pattern that clearly designated each parking spot and acted as a landing pad for each vehicle. They loved it."

Tile garage flooring products share many properties of rolled

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flooring. For example, the surface is nonskid, they are made of PVC, they come in a variety of colors and patterns, they are affordable and durable and adhesives aren't needed for installation. The tiles interlock so designing a dream garage floor seems like a snap, literally.

If you let your keen imagination roam, you'll discover that these tiles are great flooring solutions elsewhere. In addition to garage floors, these tiles work well in exercise or playrooms, patios, terraces or tennis courts.

#### RACY OR CONSERVATIVE?

Garage Craft Interiors partners with Race Deck® custom tile flooring which also offers extensive color and pattern choices. It has been Bear's experience that most people merely park their vehicles in the garage and use the space for storage, not as a media room or other living space. He says, "We recently installed a garage for a father whose son races go-carts. He gave his son a new garage as a gift. We have also installed numerous floors for a customer who collects cars."

Race Deck is an interlocking floor system engineered to withstand tough mechanical and chemical environments. It carries a 10-year limited warranty. The floors can be installed in just hours and the results are colorful and impressive. Bear explains, "Whether a customer wants something racy or something more conservative, we have consultants to help. Customers have fun creating their own unique look."

Other choices in tile include high performance metal tiles or fine finished tiles with the look of wood, stone or marble. Although more expensive, they are durable and interlock for easy installation.

Tiles come in thicknesses up to 5/8 inch. Tile is a more upscale choice, costing approximately \$4 to \$7 per square foot, with each tile covering approximately 1 square foot.

#### EPOXY AND POLYMER COATINGS

If you like a continuous uniform surface, you may prefer an epoxy or polymer floor coating. The benefits of these floorings are easy mainte-

nance, light reflection and slip resistance. Epoxy and polymer coatings come in a variety of colors and include granite or terrazzo finishes.

A professional will make sure the garage floor surface is prepared to receive the new coating. First, a base coat is applied. Then color chips, which are sold by the pound at additional cost, are cast across the surface. Chip colors vary in thickness and composition allowing numerous design options.

While you may notice a chemical odor during the installation, proper ventilation will diminish this. Epoxy and polymer surfaces require 24 hours to cure. Once installed, they are easy to maintain.

An epoxy floor is very durable, attractive and resistant to stains. Each installation is backed with a limited warranty.

H&H

#### resources

##### Closets by Builders Prime

Bridgeport, PA  
610-277-8050

##### Closet City

Montgomeryville, PA  
215-855-4400

##### Everything Garage

Philadelphia, PA  
267-679-0144  
[www.everythingplastic.com](http://www.everythingplastic.com)

##### Garage Craft Interiors

Warminster, PA  
800-997-9769  
[www.garagecraftinteriors.com](http://www.garagecraftinteriors.com)

##### GarageTek

Pottstown, PA  
866-427-2439  
[www.garagetek.com](http://www.garagetek.com)

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