

Best Timber Flooring Upgrades for Melbourne Investment Properties

Modern Melbourne kitchen featuring light oak timber flooring. Upgrading floors can instantly refresh a property's look and value.

Investing in new flooring can be one of the smartest upgrades for Melbourne property investors, landlords, and house flippers. A fresh timber-look floor not only makes a great first impression on buyers and tenants, but it also stands up better to wear and tear than old carpets. Melbourne's competitive property market and variable climate make it important to choose flooring that is durable, cost-effective, and suited to local expectations ¹ ². In this friendly guide, we'll compare three popular timber flooring options – **lamin****ate**, **engineered timber**, and **solid hardwood** – and see how each stacks up in key areas like durability, cost, visual appeal, maintenance, installation, and return on investment (ROI). By the end, you'll know which flooring upgrade could be the **best fit for your Melbourne investment property**, whether you're sprucing up a rental or preparing a flip for resale.

Laminate Flooring: Budget-Friendly and Durable

Laminate flooring is a synthetic multi-layer product designed to **imitate real wood** at a fraction of the price. It has a photographic wood-look surface coated with a tough wear layer, usually over an HDF (High-Density Fibreboard) core. This construction makes laminate **highly cost-effective and surprisingly durable**, which is why *laminate floors are extremely popular for Australian rental properties* ³. Let's break down how laminate performs on our key criteria:

- **Durability & Wear:** Laminate floors have **excellent scratch and dent resistance** thanks to their hard melamine wear layer. In fact, quality brands like Quick-Step use a patented *Scratch Guard* coating that makes their laminate up to *ten times more scratch-resistant* than standard floors ⁴. This is ideal for high-traffic rentals – dragging furniture or pet claws are less likely to leave marks. Laminate is also UV-fade resistant, so it can handle sun exposure without losing color ³. However, laminate typically has a **10–20 year lifespan** ⁵. You cannot sand or refinish it once worn, so deep scratches or gouges mean the affected planks (or the whole floor) may need replacing eventually. Overall, for the **day-to-day wear** of tenants, laminate's tough surface is a winner in durability for the price.
- **Cost (Supply & Install):** Laminate is the **budget option** among timber-look floors. Material prices range roughly from **\$20 to \$50 per square meter** ⁶, much cheaper than real wood. Fully installed (including underlay and labor), laminate might come to about \$50–\$80 per m² in many cases ⁷ – still very affordable compared to other floors. Its click-lock floating installation can even be a DIY project, saving on labor costs. This low upfront cost means you can **upgrade flooring throughout an entire unit at minimal expense**, a big plus for ROI in lower-end investments. Just keep in mind that cheaper laminates might have repetitive patterns or less realistic texture, so it pays to choose a good quality product for a better look and longevity.

- **Visual Appeal & Value:** Thanks to modern printing and embossing technology, laminate floors can look *shockingly realistic*. Products like **Preference Floors' Oakleaf HD Plus** laminate boast “*décor visuals so natural you'd think it's real timber*” ⁸. You can get a wide range of styles – from classic Australian species to trendy European oak designs – all without the cost of real wood. Visually, a well-chosen laminate will **immediately modernize a space** and make it more attractive to tenants or buyers. It may not have the exact feel or prestige of genuine timber (discerning eyes can tell it's a photo layer ⁹), but in a mid-range rental or flip, *new laminate flooring is far more appealing than old, stained carpet* ⁷. It gives a clean, timber-look finish that today's renters appreciate, and it can make a property feel updated and low-maintenance, adding perceived value even in budget-conscious markets ⁷. Just opt for neutral wood tones that suit many decor styles, which in Melbourne's design-savvy market will have broad appeal.
- **Ease of Maintenance: Low-maintenance** is where laminate shines. The hard laminated surface is **highly stain-resistant and easy to clean**, so between tenants you typically just need a vacuum and damp mop to get it looking like new ¹⁰. Unlike carpets, laminate doesn't hold onto dirt or odors – a big benefit for rentals. Minor scuffs can be cleaned or hidden easily because the wear layer is so tough. Do note that while many laminates have moisture-resistant coatings, they are **not fully waterproof** – spills should be wiped promptly to prevent swelling at the seams ¹¹. It's wise to avoid laminate in wet areas (bathrooms, laundries) for that reason. But overall, landlords love that laminate flooring doesn't require special treatment: no polishing, no re-sanding – just straightforward cleaning. This **makes turnovers faster** and maintenance costs lower. Tenants also like how easy it is to keep clean day-to-day.
- **Installation Time & Disruption:** Laminate is a **floating floor** system with click-together planks, meaning installation is quick and minimally intrusive. A professional installer (or a skilled DIYer) can often lay an entire apartment's laminate floor in a single day or weekend. There's no nailing, no glue curing time, and no sanding/finishing on site – you can literally walk on it as soon as it's laid. This is great for rental turnovers or fast flip timelines, as you minimize vacancy time. Laminate can sometimes even be laid **over existing floors** (like over old tiles or plywood subfloors) as long as it's flat, which saves demolition mess. The process is quiet and clean compared to timber floors (no loud sawing or sanding dust). In short, laminate offers **maximum upgrade speed with minimum downtime**, so your investment property can be back on the market ASAP.
- **ROI (Rentability & Resale Value):** Because laminate is inexpensive, it tends to deliver a **strong return on investment** – you're not over-capitalizing, and the improved look can attract higher rent or quicker sales in entry- to mid-level properties. While laminate doesn't add the same prestige as genuine timber, a fresh laminate floor definitely *boosts rentability*: it makes the property feel modern, easy to maintain, and “move-in ready”. Many Melbourne tenants (especially young professionals and families) prefer hard floors over old carpet for cleanliness and style, so you cast a wider net. In terms of resale, new laminate can modestly increase a home's appeal to budget-conscious buyers (it “beats grotty carpet any day” in buyers' eyes ⁷). Just temper expectations: laminate won't command the price premium of solid hardwood. It's a smart cosmetic upgrade to make a property present well without overspending. The key ROI benefit is **quick payback** – low cost outlay, but potentially higher rent and less vacancy due to a more attractive interior.

Engineered Timber Flooring: Authentic Wood Made Stable

Engineered timber flooring gives you a **real wood surface** layer backed by a plywood or composite core. In other words, it's genuine timber on top, with a stable base underneath to reduce expansion and contraction. This flooring type is a **happy medium** between laminate and solid hardwood – you get the natural beauty of wood and a good lifespan, without the full cost or install hassle of solid timber. It's a popular choice in Melbourne renovations and new builds, from modern apartments to updated period homes. Let's see how engineered timber fares:

- **Durability & Wear:** Engineered wood floors are quite durable, engineered (as the name suggests) to overcome some of solid timber's weaknesses. The plywood core makes them **more dimensionally stable** – they're *less prone to warping or gapping with humidity and temperature changes* ² ¹², an advantage in Melbourne's climate where you can get cold wet winters and dry summers. The top layer is real hardwood (often 3–6 mm thick), finished with tough polyurethane or aluminum oxide coatings for scratch and abrasion resistance ¹³. This gives engineered boards a wear surface similar to solid wood. However, *wood is wood* – engineered floors *will* scratch or dent a bit easier than a laminate's super-hard surface ¹⁴. For context, a dropped heavy object or pet claws can leave marks in the timber veneer, whereas they might not on laminate. That said, everyday foot traffic is not a problem – good engineered flooring can easily handle busy households and rentals for many years. Many products come with 20+ year warranties. One big plus: if the surface does get tired or moderately scratched over time, **engineered timber can be refinished (sanded and recoated) at least once or twice** (depending on veneer thickness) ¹⁵. This ability to **renew the surface** gives it a longer potential life (often **25–30 years** or more ⁵) – a clear durability benefit over laminate, which cannot be refinished. In short, engineered timber offers *solid durability with a touch of forgiveness*: it has real wood warmth and can be spruced up down the line if needed, which is great for long-term investments.
- **Cost (Supply & Install):** In price, engineered timber is a **mid-range option** – more expensive than laminate, but still usually cheaper than solid hardwood. Typical material costs range from around **\$70 up to \$120 per square meter** for popular engineered products ⁶, depending on the wood species and brand. Installation is also a bit more involved than laminate, so labor might cost slightly more (though still often a floating click system). All up, you might expect perhaps \$100–\$160 per m² installed for engineered timber in Melbourne (varies by product). This is roughly *double the cost of laminate*, but still significantly less than a new solid timber floor would cost. For many investors, engineered wood hits a sweet spot: you're **adding real timber value** to the property without paying top dollar for materials or weeks of labor. And since it's pre-finished, you won't have the added costs of sanding and polishing on site that solid timber requires. Keep in mind there's a range of products – e.g. **engineered oak** (often imported European oak veneers) versus **engineered Australian hardwood** (like spotted gum or blackbutt veneers) – prices vary with these. But across the board, this option lets you achieve a **premium look at a moderate cost**. Also, because it can increase a property's value, many see it as a worthwhile investment.
- **Visual Appeal & Perceived Value:** With engineered timber, it's almost impossible to tell the difference from solid hardwood once it's installed – *because the top is genuine timber*. You get the **authentic grain, texture, and feel** underfoot that comes with real wood. This is a big draw for both renters and buyers. In an upscale Melbourne rental or flip, engineered timber floors can lend a *high-end, luxury feel* that laminate might not. The planks often come in wider and longer dimensions than

traditional solid boards, which is on-trend and can make spaces feel larger and more modern. From a buyer's perspective, **timber floors are seen as a premium feature** – real estate experts note that homes with wood floors tend to sell faster and for more, because many buyers simply prefer them ¹⁶ ¹⁷. Engineered timber delivers on that expectation. Brands like **Preference Floors** offer engineered ranges (e.g. **Prestige Oak, Select Australian Timber**) that showcase beautiful real oak or Aussie species surfaces, giving that wow factor in a renovation ¹⁸ ¹⁹. In Melbourne's market, where style and quality matter, an engineered wood floor can significantly **boost perceived value**. It tells prospective tenants or buyers that the property has quality finishes. While a casual observer might not distinguish engineered from solid hardwood, savvy investors appreciate that engineered provides the look of luxury at a lower cost. It's a win-win for visual appeal and value perception.

- **Ease of Maintenance:** Day-to-day maintenance of engineered timber is similar to any hardwood floor: **easy sweeping or vacuuming and occasional damp mopping** (with a wood-friendly cleaner) will keep it looking great. It doesn't trap dust or allergens, and spills can be wiped up (though like any wood, puddles should not sit too long). The factory-applied finishes on these floors are durable, so you typically won't need to recoat for many years. Between tenancies, you might just do a gentle cleaning or at most a *buff and recoat* if the finish is a bit dull, which is quicker and cheaper than a full sand. The **big maintenance advantage** is that if after many years the floor gets worn, you have the *option* to refinish it rather than replace it ¹⁵. For example, you could lightly sand and re-lacquer the floor to remove scratches and restore shine – something you simply can't do with laminate. This can save money in the long run and keep the property looking fresh for future tenants or for resale. One caution: engineered wood is **not waterproof**, so it's still not suited for wet areas unless you use a specialized product. Excess moisture can cause the veneer to swell or delaminate. However, some innovative lines (like *HydroPro Timber*) now offer waterproof cores for engineered flooring ²⁰ – a potential consideration if you want wood in a kitchen. In general, keeping an engineered floor in good shape is straightforward: protect it from heavy scratches (use furniture pads, etc.), wipe spills promptly, and it will age gracefully. Many Melbourne landlords find this a reasonable trade-off for getting that real timber presence.
- **Installation Time & Disruption:** Engineered timber floors come either as **floating click-lock planks** or as tongue-and-groove boards that can be floated or glued down. The floating varieties install almost as easily as laminate – they click together over an underlay – thus are relatively quick to put in and don't require nailing. This means you can often avoid the noise and mess of traditional hardwood installation ²¹. A team of installers can lay a floating engineered floor in a couple of days for an average home. If you opt to glue them down (sometimes done for a more solid feel or in wet areas), installation is slower and a bit more costly, but still easier than dealing with raw timber planks. Crucially, **engineered boards are pre-finished at the factory**, so you skip the sanding, staining, and coating stage entirely. Once the boards are in, the job is done – no waiting for polish to dry. This is a *huge time saver* compared to solid hardwood. It minimizes the downtime where a property is out of commission. For landlords, that means fewer days of lost rent. For flippers, it means you can move on to staging and selling faster. Overall, engineered timber strikes a balance: it's *more involved to install than laminate* (the planks are heavier, and cutting them may require a professional's touch), but it's *far quicker and less disruptive than solid hardwood*. You won't have the strong fumes or fine dust from on-site finishing, which your neighbors (or existing tenants in other units) will appreciate as well. In short, installation is **efficient and renter-friendly**, especially if floating.

- **ROI (Rentability & Resale Value):** Upgrading to engineered timber can yield an **excellent ROI**, particularly in Melbourne's market where timber floors are highly sought after. For rentals, you're offering a premium feature that can justify higher rent and attract quality tenants who value a stylish home. Tenants often treat properties with nice timber floors with more care (versus old carpet), potentially reducing damage and turnover costs. From a resale perspective, wood floors add tangible value – one study noted that homes with hardwood (or engineered hardwood) floors can sell for **several percentage points more** than those without ¹⁷. While exact figures vary, one source suggests you might recover *70–80% of the installation cost* of wood floors in added home value upon resale ¹⁷, and another notes that solid or engineered timber flooring can increase a property's value by a noticeable margin ²². In other words, a lot of the money you put into an engineered floor comes back to you, either through boosted sale price or rent. Moreover, the intangible ROI is the marketability – a unit with gleaming timber floors stands out in listings and appeals to the lifestyle that many Melbourne buyers/renters want (modern, clean, and a bit luxurious). Engineered timber is often described as having the *highest return on investment among flooring options* because it elevates property value significantly without the full expense of solid hardwood ²³. Overall, if your budget allows, choosing engineered timber for an investment property can be a savvy move to maximize both immediate appeal and long-term value.

Solid Hardwood Flooring: Premium Tradition and Longevity

Solid hardwood flooring consists of **planks of real solid timber** – typically 18–20mm thick boards of species like oak, blackbutt, spotted gum, or oak. This is the classic, time-honored flooring that adds richness and character to a home. For high-end renovations or heritage homes in Melbourne, solid hardwood is often seen as the *gold standard*. It's the most expensive and labor-intensive option, but it offers unparalleled longevity and a certain prestige. Here's how solid timber measures up on key considerations:

- **Durability & Wear:** Solid hardwood floors are incredibly **durable in the long run**. They are literally thick wood all the way through, which means they can withstand decades of use and still be restored. A quality hardwood floor might last **50+ years (even a lifetime)** with proper care ²⁴ ²⁵. They do scratch and dent (all wood does), but the big advantage is that **any wear can be sanded away multiple times** over the floor's life ²⁶ ²⁵. Deep gouge from moving furniture? Pet scratched up a high-traffic area? With solid wood, you can refinishing the surface – even *five or more full sandings* over its life – and each time it will come out looking like new wood ²⁷ ²⁵. This reparability makes solid timber unmatched for longevity. In daily use, hardwood is strong but not indestructible: different species have different hardness (Janka ratings), so something like oak or spotted gum will resist wear better than a softer pine. In a rental scenario, you might see more patina (minor scratches, etc.) accumulate, but many people appreciate that as “character.” Importantly, **solid timber handles heavy foot traffic** and can even be resealed to refresh high-traffic zones between tenancies if needed. Another plus: *solid wood has slightly better water resistance on its surface than engineered wood* (there's no layered core to swell) ²⁸, though standing water is still a threat. Overall, for pure durability measured in decades, **solid hardwood is king** – no other floor type can be renewed over and over like this.
- **Cost (Supply & Install):** There's no way around it – solid hardwood is the **most expensive flooring option** to buy and install. The timber itself can range from about **\$50 up to \$150+ per square meter** for material depending on species and grade ²⁹ ³⁰. Australian species like Blackbutt or Tasmanian Oak might be on the lower end; premium imported or select-grade timbers on the high end. Then

comes installation: solid timber is usually **nailed or glued down plank by plank**, which is labor-intensive. Installation labor typically runs **\$40–\$80 per m²** ³¹ ³⁰. If you use raw (unprefinished) boards, add another **\$40–\$60 per m²** for sanding and polishing on site ³¹. Staining to a specific color, if desired, is another cost. All told, a solid hardwood floor can cost **anywhere from ~\$130 to \$250+ per square meter fully installed and finished** ³² ³³. For a whole house, that adds up fast. Because of this, solid timber floors make the most sense in higher-end investment properties or when aiming for maximum resale value. The good news is that they genuinely *increase property value* (more on that below), but you need the upfront capital and a project timeline that can accommodate the work. For many Melbourne investors, solid hardwood is an aspirational upgrade – used selectively in flagship projects or luxury rentals where the budget allows. If you love the idea of authentic hardwood and plan to hold the property long-term, the cost can be justified by the floor's **lifespan and prestige**.

- **Visual Appeal & Perceived Value:** It's hard to beat the **natural beauty of a solid hardwood floor**. Each plank has unique grain and warmth that give a space character and a sense of luxury. Homebuyers often walk into a room with timber floors and go “wow”. In Melbourne, where many homes (Victorian terraces, Edwardian houses, etc.) originally had hardwood floors, installing new hardwood can restore that classic appeal and significantly boost buyer interest ³⁴ ¹. Solid wood also *ages gracefully* – the color can deepen over time, and well-kept older wood floors have a charm that newer floors try to replicate ³⁵. In terms of **perceived value**, real hardwood is usually top of the list. Buyers know it's expensive and long-lasting, so it's considered a premium amenity. Real estate data backs this up: having hardwood floors can increase a home's sale price by a few percent or more ¹⁷, and provide a high return on the investment made. One source noted that well-maintained hardwood flooring can return around *70–80% of its cost in resale value* on average ¹⁷. Another Australian source pointed out that solid timber flooring *increases property resale value the most out of all flooring types* ³⁶. For rentals, a solid hardwood floor may allow you to target the upper end of the market – e.g. executive rentals or heritage luxury rentals – as it signals quality throughout. In terms of looks, solid and engineered wood are virtually the same on the surface. But solid wood **carries a certain cachet**; some buyers specifically ask “is it solid timber?” as a mark of quality. So from a marketing standpoint, being able to say a property has genuine hardwood floors can be a selling point. Visually, whether you choose a contemporary oak or a rich spotted gum, a solid wood floor will make the home *feel* more valuable.

- **Ease of Maintenance:** Maintaining a solid hardwood floor is similar to engineered wood in the short term – regular sweeping/vacuuming and gentle damp mopping will handle day-to-day cleaning. Between tenants, a hardwood floor can be quickly cleaned or given a refresh coat of polish if it's polyurethane-finished. The major difference is in long-term maintenance: solid hardwood **allows multiple refurbishments**. This means if over a number of tenancies the floor gets scratched or dulled, you can *sand it down and refinish it entirely* rather than replacing it ²⁶ ²⁵. That process will remove all surface scratches and effectively give you a brand-new looking floor again. It's an expense, but much cheaper than new flooring, and can be done repeatedly (typically a 19mm hardwood floor can handle 4–6 full sandings in its life ²⁷). Also, individual boards can be replaced if severely damaged, without affecting the whole floor. Landlords appreciate that even if a tenant is rough on a hardwood floor, it's *fixable*. That said, to protect your investment, you might enforce that felt pads be used under furniture and perhaps provide rugs for high-traffic areas. One thing to note: because hardwood is a natural product, it can shrink or swell with extreme changes in humidity – keeping indoor humidity steady (between about 45–60%) will help avoid gaps or cupping.

Melbourne's climate is fairly timber-friendly (not as humid as tropical areas), but seasonal expansion gaps can occur; using rugs in winter or maintaining heating can mitigate this. In summary, solid hardwood requires a bit of care (no puddles, no harsh cleaners, possibly the occasional re-coat), but it rewards you by **lasting generations**. From a turnover perspective, you might occasionally hire a floor sander for a day to rejuvenate the floors instead of replacing them – a sustainable and long-term approach to maintenance.

- **Installation Time & Disruption:** Here's where solid hardwood is less investor-friendly: installation and finishing is the **most time-consuming and disruptive** of the flooring options. If you use *raw timber boards*, they usually must acclimate on-site for several days, then be installed (nailed/glued), then sanded, then coated with multiple layers of finish with drying time in between ³⁷ ³⁸ . This whole process can take **several days to over a week** for an average home, during which the site is a construction zone. There will be noise (power sanders, nail guns) and dust from sanding. The varnish or polyurethane coatings can have strong odors while curing. In an occupied rental property, this is almost impossible – you'd usually only do this work during a vacancy or as part of a major reno. It means more downtime where you can't have tenants in. If you choose *pre-finished hardwood boards*, you eliminate the on-site sanding and coating step, which helps a lot – the boards come already sealed, so installers just nail them in and you're done (aside from some trim work). Prefinished solid timber floors still require careful installation, but you avoid days of drying time ³⁷ ³⁹ . Even so, laying solid wood is slower than floating a floor; the installers have to fix each board and often cut and fit them precisely around features. You might be looking at a **multi-day installation** instead of one day. Additionally, if the subfloor isn't perfectly level, there's prep work needed, and after installation you might need to wait a bit before heavy furniture is moved back (especially for raw floors that were just sealed). All in all, upgrading to solid hardwood is a more involved renovation – something to plan for in your project timeline. It's worth it for the end result in the right property, but do factor in the **longer turnaround time and temporary disruption**. Many investors opt to have solid floors installed by professionals while a property is between occupants or being otherwise remodeled, to minimize the impact.

- **ROI (Rentability & Resale Value):** Solid hardwood flooring can deliver a **strong ROI**, particularly on the resale front. It's often cited that hardwood floors substantially increase a home's value and marketability ³⁴ ¹⁷ . Buyers in Melbourne generally view hardwood floors as a mark of quality and are willing to pay a premium for homes that have them. For example, industry surveys have found that **homes with hardwood flooring can sell for 2-5% more** on average, and that a large portion (up to ~70-80%) of the installation cost is recouped in the sale ¹⁷ . Additionally, a solid timber floor can differentiate your listing – it's a feature that can be highlighted in marketing ("original hardwood floors" or "new solid timber flooring") to attract interest. For rental properties, the ROI calculation is a bit trickier: you will spend more upfront, and the rent increase compared to an engineered floor might not be proportionally higher. High-end rentals (luxury homes, executive furnished rentals, etc.) could command top dollar with hardwood floors as part of the package. Also, if your investment horizon is very long, solid timber's longevity means you *never have to replace the flooring* – just refinish it – which over, say, 30 years could actually be cost-effective versus replacing cheaper floors multiple times. Another angle: if you are flipping a property in a premium suburb, installing solid hardwood might elevate the perceived level of the whole renovation, potentially raising the selling price beyond just the floor's cost. In summary, solid hardwood offers **the greatest boost to resale value** ³⁶ and appeals to the most discerning buyers. For rental yield, it may be overkill in an average property, but in the *right market segment* it can help justify a premium rent. You should align

the decision with your target tenant/buyer – in a million-dollar Melbourne townhouse reno, solid hardwood could be a show-stopper that maximizes resale ROI, whereas in a basic rental unit, the cost might not be fully realized in rent. Choose solid timber when your investment strategy prioritizes **long-term value and top-tier market appeal**.

Local Considerations: Melbourne's Climate and Market Demands

Choosing the best flooring also means factoring in **Melbourne's local conditions and preferences**. Melbourne has a temperate climate with cold, sometimes damp winters and hot summers. The good news is all the timber flooring options above can work well here, but there are a few points to consider:

- **Climate & Stability:** Melbourne's weather can swing from dry heat to humid rain, which can cause natural wood to expand and contract. **Engineered timber copes best with these fluctuations** – its layered construction resists movement, reducing the risk of gaps or cupping during humidity changes ². Solid hardwood can also perform well (especially if properly acclimated and installed), but you might notice small seasonal gaps between boards – normal for wood floors. Using rugs in winter or maintaining consistent indoor humidity (via heating or cooling) can help. Laminate is largely unaffected by seasonal climate once installed, but remember it shouldn't be exposed to moisture from things like wet shoes or leaks. Importantly, if your property is in an area prone to moisture (ground-floor apartment, etc.), ensure good subfloor moisture barriers for any timber flooring. In Melbourne's moist winters, *ventilation is key* – all these floors need a dry subfloor to prevent issues like warping or mold.
- **Insulation & Comfort:** Hard floors can feel cooler underfoot than carpet, which is actually a perk in summer and less so in winter. Melbourne winters get chilly, but timber (and laminate) floors pair nicely with area rugs for warmth and still are more comfortable than tiles in living areas. Solid hardwood, being thick wood, has a bit of natural insulating property and "give" (softer underfoot than tile). Engineered and laminate are installed over underlay which can provide thermal insulation and sound reduction – useful in Melbourne apartments or multi-story homes to dampen noise between floors. Also, timber floors don't get as frigid as tile on a cold morning, which local residents appreciate. If needed, you can consider underfloor heating – many engineered and laminate products are compatible with radiant heat systems ⁴⁰, which is a nice luxury for high-end renovations in Melbourne's winter climate.
- **Termite Awareness:** Victoria (including Melbourne) does have termites in some areas. All the flooring options discussed are wood-based (laminate's core is wood fiber, engineered and solid are wood) and could be susceptible to termites if there's an infestation. This isn't usually a deciding factor, but ensure your property has proper termite protection in place if it's a known risk area. Using timber species that are naturally termite-resistant (some hardwoods) can add peace of mind. Regular inspections are wise regardless of flooring type.
- **Buyer & Renter Expectations:** Tastes in Melbourne tend to favor **quality and style**. Many buyers expect hard flooring in main living areas these days – it's become a standard in modern developments and renovations. In fact, opting for timber or timber-look flooring over carpet in living spaces is usually advisable, as hard surfaces are *more universally appealing to buyers* ¹. Carpets are still common in bedrooms for comfort, but in lounges, dining, and kitchen areas, timber floors are seen as a mark of a contemporary, clean home. For rentals, offering a low-maintenance floor is a

plus – landlords often find that a well-kept floating floor can attract tenants who have allergies (timber floors don't trap dust like carpet) or who just prefer the look. Also, consider the property's level: a ground-floor unit might handle solid timber or any option; a high-rise apartment might be better with engineered or laminate to comply with strata acoustic requirements (usually a sound-rated underlay is needed). Melbourne's design scene means tenants and buyers might recognize brand names too – **Quick-Step laminate or a Prestige Oak engineered floor** can be selling points if mentioned in listings, as they signal quality materials. Overall, matching the flooring choice to your target market is key: for a high-end flip in Toorak, solid hardwood or top-tier engineered oak could wow sophisticated buyers, whereas for a Brunswick rental unit, a durable laminate or engineered floor that can handle share-house traffic might be the smarter play. Fortunately, with brands like Quick-Step, Preference Floors, and our own Forma collections, there are options at every price point that still deliver on style.

- **Sustainability & Regulations:** Melbourne residents are increasingly eco-conscious. Choosing timber flooring from sustainable sources (e.g. **PEFC or FSC-certified** hardwood, or products by companies with green practices) can be a selling point. Engineered floors are often considered more environmentally friendly since they use less slow-growth hardwood per plank ⁴¹. Also be aware of any body corporate rules if the property is an apartment – many strata require permission for hard floor installations to ensure proper acoustic underlay is used. All the floating floors (laminate, hybrid, engineered) can meet these requirements when installed with the right underlay. Always use qualified installers for timber floors in apartments to avoid sound transmission complaints later.

In summary, Melbourne's environment and market favor timber flooring upgrades, as long as you pick the right type for the situation. Keep the local climate in mind for stability, cater to local style expectations, and you'll end up with a floor that both you and your future tenants or buyers will love.

Trusted Brands and Getting Professional Help

When investing in flooring, it pays to **choose reputable brands and suppliers**. High-quality products not only look better but often come with better warranties and technologies (like scratch-resistant coatings or water-repellent features) that are perfect for investment properties. Some popular brands and options to consider include:

- **Quick-Step** – Known for their premium laminate and engineered floors, Quick-Step offers AC4/AC5 rated laminates with Scratch Guard and water-resistant coatings ideal for busy rentals ⁴ ¹⁰. Their range of styles is extensive, allowing you to get an upscale look in laminate or genuine timber with their engineered line. Quick-Step's easy *Uniclic* installation system also ensures a quality fit ⁴².
- **Preference Floors** – An Australian company and one of the largest flooring distributors, Preference Floors provides a wide selection of **engineered timber and laminate flooring** ⁴³. From the elegant **Prestige Oak** collection to durable **Oakleaf Laminate**, they have products tailored to Aussie conditions and trends. Many Melbourne suppliers stock Preference Floors due to their reliability and great value in the mid-to-high range flooring market.
- **Forma Flooring Collections** – At **Forma Flooring**, we've curated our own collections of timber flooring to suit local tastes and investment needs. These include a variety of **laminate options**, **engineered European oak designs**, and **Australian hardwood floorboards** that are exclusive to

our store. Our collections are selected for their quality, style, and affordability – giving Melbourne investors plenty of choice when upgrading floors. By sourcing from top manufacturers, Forma's in-house range delivers performance you can trust in a rental or flip project.

Working with a dedicated flooring supplier like Forma Flooring means you'll get **expert product advice** to choose the right material and style for your property goals. While we **supply the flooring materials** (we're specialists in supply, not installation), we can connect you with our **trusted network of professional installers** to handle the fitting. This way you get the best of both worlds – competitive pricing on quality floors, and peace of mind that installation will be done right by experienced tradespeople who know our products. Many of our partner installers are Melbourne-based and familiar with local building requirements, apartment acoustic rules, and other nuances, so your project will go smoothly from start to finish.

Ready to Upgrade? – Contact Forma Flooring Today!

Upgrading the flooring in your investment property can truly *transform* its appeal, and the right choice will set you up for years of easy ownership and improved returns. Whether you're leaning toward a cost-effective laminate to refresh a rental unit or eyeing a beautiful engineered oak for a high-impact flip, **Forma Flooring is here to help you make it happen**. We invite you to take the next step:

- **Request Free Samples:** Not sure which wood tone or style will suit your property? Get in touch with us to **request samples** of laminate, engineered, or hardwood flooring. Seeing and feeling the product in your space is the best way to decide – and we're happy to provide samples at no charge, so you can choose with confidence.
- **Visit Our Melbourne Showroom:** Come visit our showroom to explore the **full range of flooring options** in person. You can compare different brands like Quick-Step and Preference Floors side by side, check out the textures and finishes of our Forma collection products, and get personalized guidance from our friendly flooring experts. We'll help you find the perfect floor that fits your budget and vision.
- **Get Expert Advice & Quotes:** Our team at Forma Flooring is always ready to answer your questions. Contact us by phone or email for **expert advice on which flooring will maximize your ROI** for a rental or sale. We can provide detailed quotes for supply, discuss installation planning, and even refer you to one of our vetted installer partners for a full service solution. We pride ourselves on honest advice – our goal is to ensure you get the *best timber flooring upgrade* for your particular project.

Elevate your Melbourne investment property with stunning new floors today. With Forma Flooring's quality products and expertise by your side, you'll achieve a result that delights tenants, impresses buyers, and adds lasting value to your asset. **Reach out to us now to get started on your flooring upgrade – we're here to help make your investment property the best it can be!**

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