

CARLISLE

For those who
live *beautifully*.



Dana Hoff Photography

Solid vs. Engineered Floors

Same extraordinary wood, built for different environments.

Engineered or Solid? A True Carlisle Floor, Either Way

At Carlisle, engineered and solid aren't different tiers of quality, they're two paths to the same breathtaking result. Both are crafted from the top 0.1% of American hardwoods, hand-selected for beauty and stability, then milled, cut, and finished by our master artisans. Once installed, they are visually indistinguishable: the same generous widths, the same long lengths, the same quiet luxury that defines a Carlisle floor.

Choosing for Your Environment

The difference comes down to where your floor will live. Solid construction is perfect for stable, above-grade spaces. Engineered construction offers the same look and longevity, but with added strength for challenging conditions—like radiant heat, basements, concrete slabs, or oceanfront environments. Either way, you're choosing a floor made to endure beautifully for generations.

Engineered, Redefined

Dispelling the myths with craftsmanship and clarity

- **Full-Depth Beauty** - Built with a 4mm sawn wear layer, the same thickness of premium hardwood above the tongue-and-groove as our solid planks, engineered floors can be refinished up to three times over their life.
- **Individually Crafted** - Each board is pressed up to five times for superior adhesion, rather than mass-laminated in bulk, ensuring uncompromising stability and quality.
- **Premium Materials** - Crafted from the same top 0.1% of American hardwoods as our solid planks—center-cut for strength and beauty, never rotary-peeled veneers.
- **Indistinguishable Design** - Engineered planks are visually identical to our solids once installed, offering the same wide widths, long lengths, and handcrafted finish.
- **Versatility Without Compromise** - Engineered construction thrives in conditions where solid may not—like radiant heat, basements, slabs, or oceanfront homes—without sacrificing beauty or longevity.



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Location, Location

At Carlisle, choosing between solid and engineered flooring isn’t about quality, it’s about where your floor will live. Solid construction is ideal for stable, above-grade spaces, while engineered adds strength and stability for more challenging conditions like radiant heat, basements, slabs, or oceanfront environments. Either way, you’ll get the same breathtaking beauty - crafted from the finest American hardwoods, built to last for generations.

| FEATURE | SOLID | ENGINEERED |
|------------|----------------------------------|--|
| STRUCTURE | Single piece of premium hardwood | Premium hardwood over marine-grade Baltic birch core |
| WEAR LAYER | 4mm, refinished up to 3× | 4mm, refinished up to 3× |
| STABILITY | Traditional construction | Superior stability, even in high-moisture settings |
| BEST USE | Heritage choice, above-grade | Radiant heat, basements, oceanfront, slabs |
| APPEARANCE | Same premium beauty | Indistinguishable from solid once installed |

We offer both structures because every project is unique. Whatever your space demands, you’ll get the same uncompromising Carlisle craftsmanship — no shortcuts, no compromises — and a floor designed to endure beautifully for generations.

Engineered Floors: Industry Comparison Chart

| Feature | Carlisle Standard | Industry Standard | Benefit |
|------------------------------|--|---|--|
| Overall Thickness | 3/4" thick | 1/4" – 1/2" | Thicker flooring boards have a longer lifespan, reducing replacement costs. |
| Wear Layer Thickness | 3/16" thick | 1/12" – 1/8" | A thicker wear layer extends the life of the product and allows for multiple sandings/refinishing if desired. |
| Backing Material | Baltic Birch | Varies (plywood, fiberboard) | Marine-grade Baltic Birch is highly resistant to moisture and humidity, creating a more stable engineered floor. |
| Backing Thickness | 11-ply, 9-ply | 3-ply, 5-ply | More plies = more dimensional stability. |
| Widths | Up to 12" wide | ~3" wide | Wider, longer boards reduce seams by up to 500%, enhancing overall beauty. |
| Lengths | Up to 12' long | ~3' long | Longer boards create more visual flow and fewer seams. |
| Color | Center-cut boards maximize heartwood for richer, more consistent color | No color grading; not made from center-cut wood | Richer, more even color throughout the floor. |
| Dimensional Stability | Backing thicker than wear layer | Varies | Boards with thicker backing than wear layer are more dimensionally stable. |
| Environmental | Formaldehyde-free phenolic glue; meets CARB2 | Regulations voluntary | Stricter standards = healthier environment and indoor air quality. |
| Origins | Sourced and made in the USA | Often imported | U.S. production reduces ecological footprint; supports American manufacturing. |
| Production Methods | Handcrafted | Mass-produced | Craftsman oversight ensures consistent quality and precision; avoids lot variation. |
| Longevity | Lasts as long as solid wood (thicker wear layer) | Varies by thickness | Longer lifespan reduces total cost of ownership. |
| Maintenance | Can be sanded/refinished up to 3 times | Varies | Multiple refinishes extend life and beauty. |
| Fill / Putty in Knots | No fill or putty used | Frequently used | No fillers = more natural, stable appearance. |
| Aesthetics | Center-cut material (same as solid floors) | Rotary-sawn or peeled veneers | Consistent grain, color, and character across floor structures. |

Engineered Flooring FAQ's

1. Will the engineered floor look different than the solid floor?

At Carlisle, there is no difference in visual appearance between our solid and engineered floors. We use the exact same center-cut, hand-selected hardwood to craft both structures. The engineered version simply features a thinner wear layer bonded to a stable base. Because we start with the highest quality wood—not rotary-peeled or commodity veneer—you can expect the same expressive grain, wide widths, and long lengths as our solid planks.

2. Will I be able to tell if it's an engineered floor?

Not at all. Our engineered floors are intentionally designed to mirror the beauty of solid wood. This flexibility allows you to mix both structures seamlessly throughout the home, for instance, solid in living spaces complemented by engineered wood in basements or radiant-heated rooms—without compromising on look or feel. Carlisle's attention to raw material quality and exacting construction deliver a seamless look across all environments—no shortcuts, no visual tells.

3. Can I get an engineered floor over 6" wide?

Yes. Carlisle offers engineered flooring up to 12" wide in most species—and even wider in select cases. This is exceptionally rare in the industry, and only possible because of our:

- Superior wood stability (center-cut timber from the strongest-growing regions)
- Marine-grade Birch core
- Precision manufacturing process that reinforces long-term performance

Wide boards don't just happen—they require the right material, the right structure, and the right craftsmanship.

4. Is it all one width, or multiple widths?

At Carlisle, each floor is made to order. That means you can choose a single width for a modern, uniform look—or a random width layout for a more traditional, organic feel. Work with your Carlisle Design Consultant to select the configuration that best supports your design intent.

5. How long are the planks?

Most Carlisle engineered floors feature planks ranging from 2' to 12', with an average board length of 6-7'. This exceeds industry norms and creates a more continuous, flowing appearance—fewer seams, more visual impact.

6. Will my boards all be the same length?

No. Carlisle floors are supplied in random lengths, typically ranging from 2' to 12'. This allows us to maximize the visual beauty and yield of each log, and creates a more natural, varied floor pattern. Fixed-length flooring is often a manufacturing shortcut. We prioritize the character of the timber, not container logistics.

7. What will my average board length be?

Most Carlisle floors average 6-7' in board length (with slight variation depending on species). That's often longer than the maximum board length offered by other engineered products.

8. Will I get a lot of short boards because they're engineered?

No. We monitor and control length distribution with precision. Depending on species, you can expect:

- 30% of boards between 2–5'
- 50% between 5–9'
- 20% between 9–12'

This breakdown delivers a balanced, flowing floor—not one chopped into small, distracting segments.

9. Can I remove all boards shorter than 2'?

Yes. We can exclude boards under 2' upon request. Because each Carlisle floor is made to order, we can customize your length specification. Note: An upcharge applies for this level of sorting—your Design Consultant can walk you through the options.

10. Is the wood made from center cut or rotary sawn material?

Carlisle engineered flooring is made exclusively from center-cut planks—not rotary-peeled or sliced veneers. Why this matters:

- Center-cut wood reveals the true grain and character of the tree, not just a surface layer.
- It supports a thicker, more stable wear layer.
- Rotary-peeled veneers are typically lower grade and visually inconsistent—we never use them.

Every Carlisle plank begins with heirloom-quality hardwood, not a shortcut.

11. What is the wear layer?

The wear layer is the top layer of hardwood in an engineered plank—the part you see, walk on, and live with. It determines how often the floor can be refinished and affects its appearance over time. Carlisle uses a 4mm wear layer—the same premium wood used in our solid floors—crafted to be refinished up to three times.



12. Is the overall flooring thickness at least 3/4" thick?

Yes, our standard option is 3/4" although we also offer 5/8" thick flooring up to 8" wide.

13. How many times can I sand and refinish the floor?

Up to 3 times. We don't skimp on the wear layer—it's one of the thickest in the industry and always made from the same high-quality wood as our solid planks. Many competitors use thin veneers that cannot be sanded at all.

14. What makes Carlisle engineered flooring more stable than others?

It starts with better materials – center-cut hardwood bonded to a Marine-grade Birch core (11 ply for 3/4” and 9 ply for 5/8”) Then comes our pressing process:

- Each board is pressed individually, up to five times, not mass-laminated in a batch.
- Moisture content is tightly controlled throughout to prevent internal stress.
- Grain orientation is perfectly balanced to reduce cupping, bowing, or separation.

Engineered flooring is only as good as its weakest step. That’s why we control them all.

15. Does the glue holding the engineered layer together contain formaldehyde?

All our adhesive products and substructures are formaldehyde free and CARB 2 compliant, which is currently the strictest indoor air quality standard.

16. Is the floor made in the USA?

Yes. Every Carlisle floor is crafted in the USA—at our own mill in New Hampshire. This gives us complete control over quality and craftsmanship, from raw timber to finished plank. If you're ever in New England, we'd love to have you visit and meet the craftsmen behind your floor.



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To Learn More or Request Samples:

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