

Three Things to Consider Before Installing a Bathroom Floor

Though a bathroom is often the smallest room within a home, it is also typically one of the most frequently utilized spaces by household occupants. Because of this, it is highly important that the construction of a bathroom subfloor is never overlooked or treated with any less care than other areas of the house. It can be tempting for contractors to rush through these areas with little consideration, however, it is in the best interest of the homeowner, the reputation of the contractor, and the reputation of your business that the proper materials are used and that enough time is taken to carefully and properly install the subflooring of each household bathroom.

It may seem like an easy enough undertaking, but due to the fact that bathrooms may undergo very specified conditions (ie: high levels of humidity, excess water on the floors, etc.), there are special considerations regarding the materials used for the laying of the subfloor of these spaces. The structural quality of the materials used to install the floor, potential for squeaking and creaking, and the finish materials must all be factored into the equation. Here we will take a closer look at how each of these items should play a role in the construction phase of laying a bathroom subfloor.

1. Quality of Material

From a strictly financial standpoint, many contractors are in a rush to get things done. The less money that is spent on overhead costs and materials, the higher profit they will be able to turn over. Because of this, some contractors will elect to purchase the cheapest plywood and materials to install a bathroom subfloor. In reality, however, contractors should be strongly encouraged to invest in higher quality materials. Though a higher cost may be involved in the purchase of these materials, the end result is a subfloor that will leave household occupants satisfied, reflecting on the superior services of contractors and the materials they utilized.

Obviously, the quality of lumber should be a consideration here. Low quality wood will be far more likely to warp under the conditions it will be subjected to in a bathroom. Leaks, flooding, and high humidity levels can cause sagging in the floors and rotting over the passage of time. It is critical that during new construction, high-grade materials are selected for subflooring and that during renovations, the quality of the current materials is evaluated and replaced as needed.

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In addition to the lumber, the quality of fastening materials should also be a big consideration when installing a bathroom floor. Contractors will have varying preferences when it comes to the fasteners that they elect to use when laying a subfloor. The usage of nails and nail-guns is extremely low cost and drastically lowers overhead costs as it is the fastest method of putting together a floor. Other builders prefer the increased strength of screws. Making the recommendation for the usage of hybrid materials is the best way to reach a happy medium with all contractors while encouraging the highest quality materials for installing a bathroom floor. Hybrids like SubLoc SCRAIL® fasteners combine the speed of installation of nails (lowering costs to both the contractor and the buyer) with the strength and quality of screws, meaning that the floor will be able to endure almost anything.

2. Potential for Noise

When laying a bathroom floor, it is important to keep in mind that someone will be living in this house and will need to use that bathroom every day. Imagine being awakened each night by the sounds of family members squeaking and creaking across the bathroom floor. It really doesn't matter if the subfloor was installed per building code because squeaking floors can easily develop in spite of this due to incorrect or inadequate fastening materials.

So what is it that makes bathroom floors squeak? A subfloor is not just a simple slab of wood, but rather, is an intricate system of floor joists, subflooring material, and interior finished flooring. All of these parts must be attached together to work as a system, and the type of fastening materials used plays a major role in keeping them together without causing irritating sounds. This is because once the house begins to settle and the lumber used during flooring has dried out, it will tend to shrink. When this happens, it will pull away from the nails (most commonly used as fasteners) and other pieces of flooring. The more traffic that crosses these areas of the floor, the more the fasteners will loosen, causing that annoying squeaky noise.

Though it is possible to remedy these noises post-construction, the process can be costly and tedious. The best way to solve a squeaky bathroom floor is to stop the problem before it has a chance to start. This can easily be accomplished through the usage of high quality hybrid fasteners like SCRAIL® fasteners. These Innovative fasteners are the most effective way to eliminate squeaks and creaks due to the fact that they are able to create a solid and secure bond between both flooring and joists. On top of this, SubLoc® SCRAIL® fasteners allow for easy adjustments in the off-chance

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that a noise should develop. These fasteners are ideal as they were specifically designed for subflooring and are coated with a special adhesive designed to eliminate noises in flooring applications. As an added bonus, this coating also serves the dual purpose of dramatically boosting the fastener's holding power.

3. Finish Material

Lastly it is critical to consider the type of flooring that the owner has requested for the bathroom (ie: rubber, linoleum, vinyl, tile, etc.). The structural integrity of a bathroom subfloor over the long run will rely heavily upon the way in which finished flooring has been laid. Though many homeowners prefer the look of laminate or wood floors, it should be noted that these types of materials are not generally equipped to withstand the high moisture conditions of a bathroom. Utilizing these types of materials could result in premature failure or damage to the space's subfloor.

First and foremost, finish flooring materials should be chosen which will be water resistant. Regardless of how careful homeowners try to be, there will always be the high potential for standing water to accumulate on the floor after bathing or due to flooding. In addition, the humidity and steam generated by a shower can cause significant problems for a subfloor that is not protected by water retardant materials. Stone flooring is attractive and water resistant, but will likely need to be sealed due to its porous nature. Porcelain and ceramic tiles will mimic the appearance of stone for a lower cost and without the pores. Rubber and vinyl flooring are ideal for bathroom floors as they will seal out moisture and are easy to maintain, however, vinyl is by far the more attractive of the two options.

Once a finish material has been selected, it is important to consider how the finish will interact and work with the subflooring which has already been laid. While vinyl and rubber can be affixed to the lumber used for the subfloor itself, additional steps must be taken for ceramic or stone tiles. The heavier nature of these materials will require the strengthening of the subfloor via the usage of a cement board such as Hardiback, DuraRock, Permabase, etc. These boards are best when affixed to the joists and subflooring with high quality hybrid fasteners like SCRAIL® fasteners to ensure integrity that will last through heavy usage.

Regardless of which decisions are made with regard to the lumber used for the subfloor or the materials decided upon for a bathroom floor finish, it is critical that each piece is securely attached for structural integrity and quality. Speed, precision, and strength can

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all be achieved without compromise when the correct fasteners are utilized to affix joists, subfloor materials, and interior floor finish.

Hybrid materials like SCRAIL[®] fasteners are highly versatile and will serve the functioning purpose of securing the integrity of bathroom floors, resisting rust and corrosion (in spite of high moisture content conditions), and reducing noise. These innovative SCRAIL[®] fasteners can be used nearly anywhere a screw would normally be used and will simplify a wide variety of construction projects by reducing costs, saving time, and boosting quality.

For more than 75 years, the BECK Fastener Group[®] has been manufacturing and distributing innovative and versatile construction fasteners. As the exclusive North American distributor for the BECK Fastener Group[®] and the family of SCRAIL[®] Fasteners, Fasco America[®] offers a wide range of SCRAIL[®] fasteners, including SubLoc[®] SCRAIL[®] fasteners to make your building projects faster and easier, culminating in a high-quality end result.

To learn more about SCRAIL[®] construction fasteners, [contact our main office](#) or the Regional Manager serving your area. Additional information is also available on the [Scrail[®] Facebook page](#) and [videos are on YouTube](#) and on the website at [Scrail[®] Videos](#).

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