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Buy Green: Bamboo Flooring

Green the floor beneath your feet with sustainably sourced bamboo from five green-driven companies.

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[Bamboo](#) can be an excellent, ecological flooring option, but not all bamboo is created equal. Since it caught on in the early 90s, this building material has been heralded as a green, sustainable, plentiful resource—it is fast-growing and can be harvested and replenished with virtually no impact to the environment, due to the fact that it regenerates in 3-5 years. It is also a high oxygen-producer. Yet there are a few [caveats](#): Some bamboo flooring contains glue with [formaldehyde](#); some producers raze existing forests to make way for their bamboo crop; and there is no [Fair Trade](#) certification to guarantee appropriate conditions and wages for workers.

The key is to be smart about your choices and look at a company's labor practices, materials, and overall ethos. We've made the job easier by picking five favorites based on eco factor, accessibility, and visual appeal. Each company uses sustainably harvested bamboo—that's a given. What makes these companies stand out is their commitment to going above-and-beyond, whether through [certification from the Forest Stewardship Council \(FSC\)](#), community involvement, or commitment to sustainable practices in all aspects of their business, from the bamboo factories to their home offices.

Bamboo Flooring From Teragren

Why We Like It: [Bamboo flooring, panels, and veneer manufacturer Teragren](#) founded 15 years ago by "avid environmentalists," follows the principles of [The Natural Step](#), an organization that spreads the gospel of sustainable business practices. The site has a great [glossary](#) of all the bamboo terms you could ever need to know, not to mention gorgeous wood.



Eco Factor: Teragren is a member of [Business for Social Responsibility](#) and the [U.S. Green Building Council \(USGBC\)](#), and for the last decade has partnered with a factory group in China that shares their commitment to sustainable business practices (including fair wages and safe working conditions). Although the adhesive in Teragren's products emits less formaldehyde than allowed by global standards, the firm is moving towards those that comply with the [USGBC's LEED](#) specifications. As an added bonus, unused portions of bamboo are recycled, shavings are used as fuel in the factories, and the firm's Bainbridge Island office is fully carbon-neutral. The co-founder is also on the board of the [Environmental Leadership Program](#).

Visual Appeal: The flooring is available in a vast range of colors and grain textures—the largest of the bunch.

Where: Widely available across the country: Try [Teragren's retailer locator](#).

How Much: Approximately \$6-\$10 per square foot, with installation running from \$3.50-\$5.50 per square foot.