



warmboard[®]
RADIANT SUBFLOOR

IN THE PRESS



2009 Annual Buyer's Guide

Radiant-Floor Heating

BEFORE YOU BUY: There are two main types of radiant-floor heat systems: electric and hydronic. Electric systems are cheaper, but don't offer the flexibility of fuel choices that the hydronic systems offer. Hydronic systems are more popular and cost-effective since the heat is provided by hot water pumped through tubing beneath the floor, and there are no vents or baseboards that can make furniture placement tricky. When it comes to floor coverings, nearly any type of material will work with radiant heating, but ceramic tile is the best option since it's a great heat conductor. Wood flooring can be used, but some experts prefer laminated wood products that aren't as susceptible to warping or cracking from temperature fluctuations.

WHAT'S HOT: How about a radiant heat panel and a structural subfloor in one? That's Warmboard (warmboard.com), an all-in-one tongue-and-groove panel that's pre-cut with channels for radiant tubing. For over- and under-subfloor options, try RadiantMax (radiantmax.com).

GOOD TO KNOW: Installation can be pricey, but you need to factor in long-term energy savings. Some homeowners opt to install radiant heating in smaller areas (bathroom or an addition) that don't require costly expansion of the existing ductwork and furnace. Or try another under-foot warming alternative and heat up the space beneath an area rug with a "zone heating" option called RugBuddy (from Speedheat.com), a pseudo electric blanket for the floor!

COST: \$4 to \$8 per square foot for whole-house installation. (That's about 40 to 50 percent more than the installation for a conventional heating system, but it's also 20 percent more energy-efficient.)



>> New & Noteworthy:

Hot water runs through tubes beneath your floorboards to create radiant heat—arguably the most comfortable heat you can get because it won't dry out the air and blow around dust like forced-air systems will. And you can easily save 25 percent on heating costs with a radiant heating system. Radiantec's system doesn't require drilling into logs, and installation is easy enough for DIYers. 800-451-7593; radiantec.com