


# How to Match Wall Colors With Wood Floors Like a Pro

By [SARAH LYON](#) | Published on 12/20/23



 Ashby Collective

Wondering what color to paint your walls so that it complements the [hardwood floors](#) in your home? The [paint color](#) you should choose depends on whether your wood floors are light, dark, or medium, as well as what type of look you wish to create in a given room.

Below, experts share the main factors to keep in mind when selecting a wall color that enhances your floors.

## MEET THE EXPERT

- **Deborah Sauri** is the co-owner of design and build firm [TriVista USA](#).
- **Maya Crowne** and **Price Latimer** are the co-founders and CEOs of [Alkemis Paint](#).
- **Anne Grandinetti** is the principal interior designer at [Ashby Collective](#).

# How to Determine the Undertones of Hardwood Floors

Keep in mind that generally, lighter woods have cooler undertones and darker woods have richer undertones, while medium woods have a range of warm, cool, and neutral undertones, explains Deborah Sauri, co-owner of design and build firm [TriVista USA](#).

"By placing paint swatches or fabric samples near your floors, it may help you determine the undertones within the flooring," she says.



# How to Pick Floors



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## Lighter vs. Darker Floors

When [choosing between lighter and darker floors](#), you will want to keep your desired aesthetic top of mind.

"There is no hard and fast rule about whether lighter or darker wood floors are best," Maya Crowne, co-founder and CEO of [Alkemis Paint](#), says. Rather, she notes that lighter floors tend to lean Scandinavian, mid-century, and coastal in style, whereas darker floors can look more elegant and formal but can also be styled to look cozy.

Keep in mind the functional pros and cons of each style, too. Crowne explains that while lighter floors can better camouflage dust and dirt, darker floors will be better at concealing scuff marks. For these reasons, principal interior designer Anne Grandinetti at [Ashby Collective](#), finds medium wood floors to be the best of both worlds.

Another factor you will want to keep top of mind when choosing between lighter versus darker wood floors is how much natural light a given room receives. If your room lacks sunlight, do not opt for a dark wood color, Sauri advises.

"A better option would be to go for a lighter stain color that will help to brighten the space and make it feel more open, even in times of low light," she says. Generally, light to medium woods are best for creating that open, airy feeling many people desire. That said, some people crave a space that is cozier in nature which is why dark wood color is their best bet, Sauri says.

You will also want to consider which furniture pieces you plan to weave into your room. Ideally, the finishes of your furniture will contrast with your floors, Sauri explains.

"Your furniture should be the star of the show, and your floor color should be the perfectly balanced backdrop on which the furniture is showcased," Sauri says.

## Best Wall Colors for Lighter Floors

Consider going for a monochromatic look when decorating around lighter floors, suggests Price Latimer, co-founder and CCO of [Alkemis Paint](#). She recommends using a warm neutral hue on the walls. That said, there's nothing wrong with introducing an element of contrast, either, Latimer notes.

"We adore pairing a light ash, oak, maple, or birch floor with a bold teal," she says.





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## Best Wall Colors for Darker Floors

Latimer is equally inclined to embrace contrast when designing around dark floors, suggesting a cool, bright white in this instance. However, she notes that those who are eager to go monochromatic cannot go wrong pairing their black oak or ebony floors with a deep black paint color on the walls. Grandinetti is also partial to a dramatic approach.

"Dark walls and dark floors are my favorite combination," Grandinetti says. Sauri likes going with a deep blue or green wall color when designing a room with dark wood floors.



 Gray Space Interiors

## Best Wall Colors for Cherry Hardwood Floors

Cherry wood is used a bit less often—Grandinetti only envisions using it in mid-century modern style homes—but if you do choose to go this route in your home, keep the warm, orange undertones top of mind.

Sauri likes the concept of pairing cherry wood floors with walls painted in cool grays, light blues, and cool whites. "It is important to avoid warm whites or colors with orange undertones," she says.



## Best Wall Colors for Gray Hardwood Floors

Gray wood floors are often seen in more contemporary spaces. If you select gray floors for your home, you can choose to paint the walls a neutral shade or go bright and bold.

## Best Wall Colors for Golden Oak Floors

Don't shy away from going either light or dark here, according to Grandinetti, who feels one can't go wrong with either choice.

"Gold tones work to complement colors or contrast for high impact," she says. Just once again, be mindful to steer clear of warm whites due to the presence of gold undertones here, too, Sauri notes. Brownish grays or gray greens are among Crowne's top picks.

# FAQ

## **Should wood floors be darker than walls?**

This depends on what type of aesthetic you wish to achieve in a given room. If you're going for a moody, monochromatic look, you may choose to paint your walls a color that is just as dark as that of the floors.

## **What wall color goes good with dark wood floors?**

When designing a room with dark wood floors, you can take two different routes. Some people will opt for a contrasting look and go with light or white walls, whereas others will go monochromatic and opt for dark walls to create a moody look.

## **What colored floors go with white walls?**

If you are set on painting your walls white, you can either opt for light wood floors, dark wood floors, or gray wood floors. If you plan to use a warm white, experts suggest steering clear of wood floors with orange undertones, such as cherry wood.