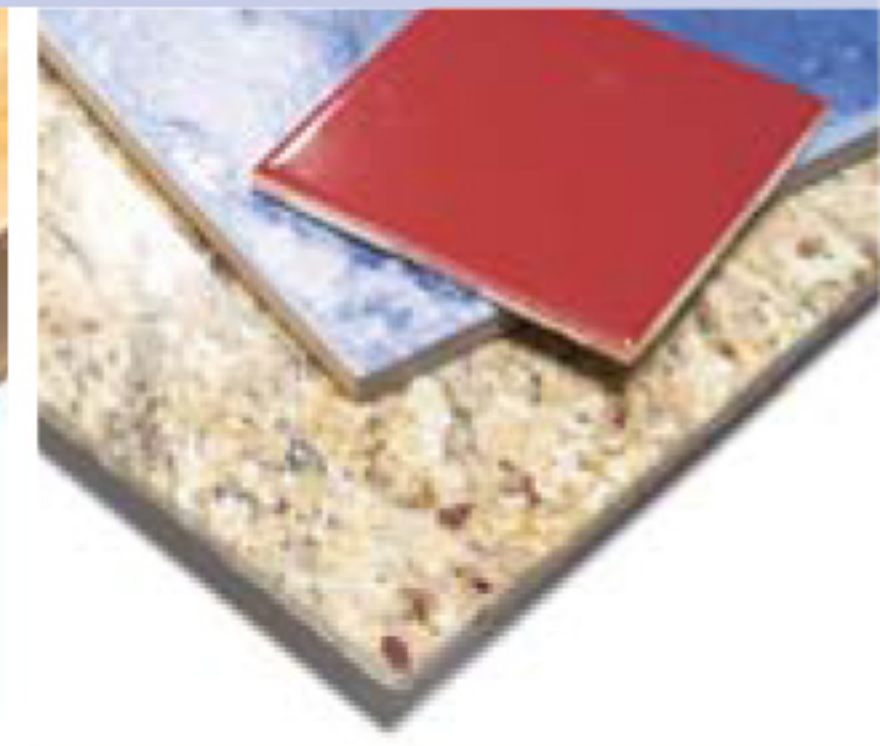
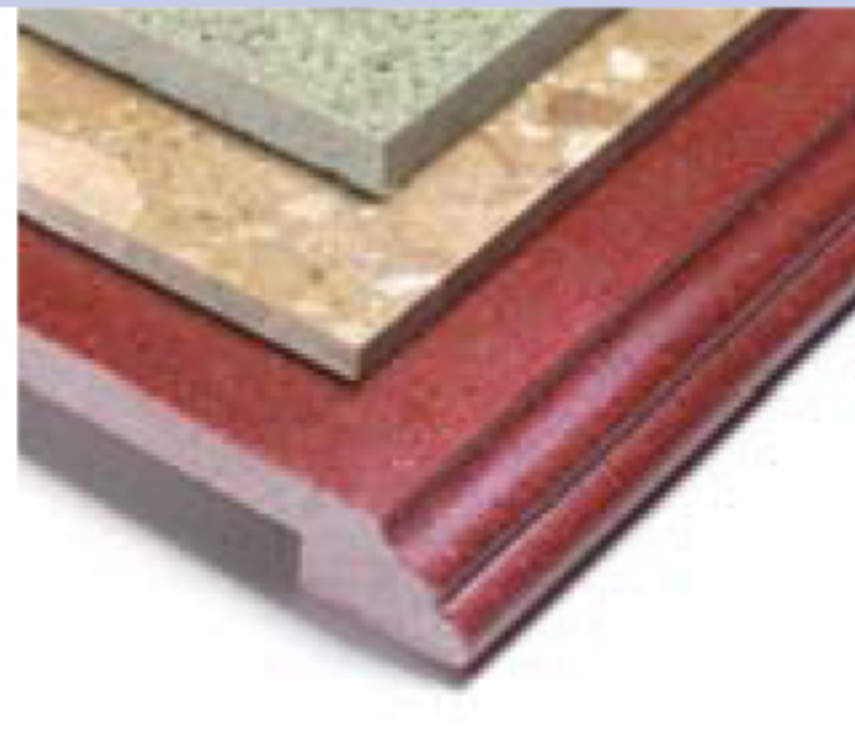


Wear and Maintenance



Laminate

Granite

Solid Surface

Wood

Tile

REPAIRABILITY

Edge repairs are simple; surface repairs are hard to blend

Difficult to repair in place

Damage can be sanded out or professionally patched

Damage can be sanded; wood must be resealed

Individual tiles can be replaced (buy/save extras)

EASIEST WAY TO INFLICT DAMAGE

Sharp knives; acidic or abrasive cleaners; hot pans; water in seams

Cutting; severe impact

Hot pans can pop seams and discolor surface

Cutting; letting water seep into end grain at sinks or seams

Staining grout with acidic foods; chips from cast-iron pans

LONG-TERM MAINTENANCE

Keep seams sealed

Apply penetrating sealer every 6 to 12 months

Can resand every 5-7 years for "new" look

Reseal tops with oil-based finishes every 4-6 weeks

Keep grout lines sealed

SEAMS

Mitered seams, visible

Square seams; visibility depends on pattern

Square seams; mostly hidden

Mitered or square; must be very well sealed

Larger tiles mean fewer grout lines

UNDERMOUNT SINK

Difficult, but possible, (see p. 60)

Yes

Yes

Not recommended

Difficult, but possible

THE "CLEANLINESS FACTOR"

Non-porous, easy to clean

Easy to clean; dark colors show water marks

Non-porous, easy to clean

Can absorb grime and liquids if severely neglected

The tile is easy to clean; grout is the bugger

TYPICAL WARRANTY

1 year

Usually provided by installer

10 years

1 year

Varies with installer