

Bellingham Floor Pros

UPDATED 2026-08-04

Tile flooring in Bellingham

Costs, the structural specs that decide the outcome, and how to compare bids

WHAT IT RUNS HERE

Tile and stone flooring in Bellingham runs \$11 to \$27.50 per square foot installed, and \$3,100 to \$7,150 for a typical kitchen. Tile size, substrate build-up, and whether the framing needs stiffening account for most of the spread. Bellingham Floor Pros is insured, estimates are free, and most homeowners hear back within 15 minutes. Call (360) 873-5667.

Free estimate, written scope
<https://bellinghamfloorpros.com/guides/tile-flooring>

(360) 873-5667

START HERE

What matters most

- Installed tile in Bellingham runs \$11 to \$27.50 per square foot, and a typical kitchen floor lands between \$3,100 and \$7,150.
- Ceramic and porcelain need the floor structure held to L/360 deflection; natural stone needs L/720 and two layers of plywood.
- ANSI A108.02 allows 1/4 inch of substrate variation in 10 feet for tile under 15 inches, tightening to 1/8 inch in 10 feet for large format and stone.
- Mortar coverage has to reach 80 percent in dry interior areas and 95 percent in wet areas, with stone at 95 percent everywhere.
- Tile is exempt from a City of Bellingham building permit, but the structural repairs a tile job sometimes uncovers are not.

THE NUMBERS

Tile work and the structural repair it sometimes uncovers, Bellingham ranges

SCOPE	WHAT IT COVERS	BELLINGHAM RANGE
Tile and stone installed	Layout, setting materials, tile, grout, and labor	\$11 to \$27.50 per sq ft
Typical kitchen floor	A standard Bellingham kitchen from demo through sealed grout	\$3,100 to \$7,150
Subfloor and structural repair	Sheathing replacement, second plywood layer for stone, framing correction	\$5.50 to \$13.20 per sq ft
Slab moisture mitigation	Testing plus a mitigation system on a lower-level slab that fails its reading	\$880 to \$2,750
Repairing an existing tile floor	Cracked or hollow tile replaced without redoing the room	\$330 to \$1,650 per project
A resilient floor in the same room	LVP where tile is more floor than the room needs	\$4.40 to \$11 per sq ft

Tile size, substrate build-up, and the condition of the framing underneath move the number far more than the material you pick off the display.

The numbers

Installed tile and stone in Bellingham runs \$11 to \$27.50 per square foot, with a typical kitchen at \$3,100 to \$7,150. Structural repair underneath is separate at \$5.50 to \$13.20 per square foot.

- Tile size and format drive labor
- Substrate build-up drives material
- Porcelain, ceramic, and stone are three price tiers
- Layout complexity is a real line item

Structure comes first

Ceramic and porcelain need deflection held to $L/360$, meaning clear span in inches divided by 360. Natural stone doubles that to $L/720$. No membrane or mortar fixes a floor that flexes too much.

- 19/32 inch plywood minimum over joists at 16 inches on center
- Stone needs two plywood layers, grain perpendicular to joists
- Older Bellingham homes often have 1x diagonal board sheathing
- Sistering joists is engineering and permit work

Flatness, by tile size

ANSI A108.02 sets the substrate tolerance and it tightens as tile gets bigger. Allowable lippage with joints under 1/4 inch is 1/32 inch.

- Under 15 inch tile: 1/4 inch in 10 feet, 1/16 inch in 12 inches
- 15 inch and larger, and stone: 1/8 inch in 10 feet, 1/16 inch in 24 inches
- Large format over a wavy floor cannot meet lippage limits
- Self-leveling underlayment is the normal remedy

What goes between wood and tile

Tile cannot bond directly to plywood. Cement backer board is the traditional route. An uncoupling membrane is the low-profile modern route and meets ANSI A118.12 for crack isolation.

- Backer board adds height and weight
- Membranes add almost no height at doorways
- Waterproofing is a separate function, ANSI A118.10
- Heated floor mats install in the membrane layer

The four ratings on the box

Porcelain is defined by absorbing 0.5 percent of its weight in water or less. The rest of the decision is on the spec sheet.

- PEI Class 3 minimum for residential floors, Class 4 for busy entries
- DCOF of 0.42 or greater for floors walked on when wet
- Water absorption at or under 0.5 percent means porcelain
- Rectified edges allow tight joints, cushioned edges do not

Mortar, grout, and movement

Coverage is 80 percent minimum in dry interior areas and 95 percent in wet areas and for all natural stone, with corners and edges fully supported.

- Sanded grout for joints 1/8 inch and wider
- Epoxy grout seals in the chemistry, cement grout needs sealer
- Flexible sealant, not grout, where tile meets walls and cabinets
- Honor existing slab control joints straight through the tile

Timelines and aftercare

A kitchen floor takes 4 to 6 days from demo to sealed grout, a master bath 5 to 8, a mudroom 2 to 3. Most of that is cure time that cannot be compressed.

- Reseal cement grout every 2 to 3 years
- pH-neutral cleaner, never vinegar on stone
- Keep a labeled box of leftover tile with the lot number
- Free estimates, call (360) 873-5667

Before you sign a tile bid in Bellingham

- ☐ Ask what the floor's deflection is and how the bidder determined it, before anyone talks about tile.
- ☐ Confirm the substrate method by name, backer board or uncoupling membrane, and how it gets fastened.
- ☐ Get a stated leveling allowance rather than the words as needed.
- ☐ Check the tile's PEI class, and require Class 3 or higher for any floor you walk on.
- ☐ Check the DCOF and require 0.42 or greater for entries, mudrooms, and bathrooms.
- ☐ Confirm the grout joint width and whether the tile is rectified or cushioned edge.
- ☐ Ask where the movement joints go and what flexible sealant fills them.
- ☐ For natural stone, confirm two layers of plywood and the stiffer L/720 structure are accounted for.
- ☐ Confirm demo, toilet pull and reset, appliance moves, and haul-away are inside the number or excluded.
- ☐ Verify registration, bond, and insurance on Washington L&I's Verify a Contractor tool.
- ☐ If you are adding floor heat, get the electrician's scope priced at the same time as the tile.
- ☐ Ask for a labeled box of leftover tile with the lot number to be left with you.

Want a real number for your place?

We walk the job, measure it, and put the scope in writing. Free, and there is no pressure attached.

(360) 873-5667

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Full guide: <https://bellinghamfloorpros.com/guides/tile-flooring>

Prices shown are the ranges published on our website at the time of writing and are a starting point, not a quote. Every property is different. Figures update when the site does.