



Couples

Tom Kingsley and Ingrid Hylkema are a pair of in-demand physical therapists who own and run their own business. They live in a good-size custom ranch with vista views of upstate New York. And they have two children, a boy and girl age 11 and 10 respectively.



You might think that the last thing a couple who works together would want to do is to take on a project together at home, but nothing could be further from the truth for this very active couple.

They agreed they wanted to make better use of about 1,000 square feet in the basement of their home which had been left essentially a basement. They wanted a place for the children to bring friends and to be as active as they wished — to include the family dog, of course. Tom and Ingrid also wanted a workout room of their own and a place to relax.

The key, according to Ingrid, was to utilize the basement level, yet to have it feel like part of the house. Because the floor in the main living area is cherry, they wanted a wood feel, yet a bit relaxed. At one point they considered a concrete stain, but, in the end, they felt a laminate would give the look they wanted and the durability they needed.

As soon as the old shelving and other basement decors were removed, they spent the next two and a half days installing an antique pine laminate together, first putting down a vapor barrier, then beginning the piece by piece, click-together installation.

That CLICK.

“It was slow going at first,” Tom says, “but we got pretty fast once we got into it. We actually got a great suggestion from one of our physical therapy customers, another couple, in fact, who had installed laminate themselves. The directions say to click one piece at a time. That means trying to achieve a complicated long and short end “click” at the same time. The suggestion — and it works! — was to click the short ends together until you have one long piece to run the length of the room, then click that long, joined piece in place. It takes two people, but the job goes a lot faster,” Tom says. “All you have to do is follow the directions. It’s pretty easy. You get faster and more proficient as you go, and you develop techniques together that make the job faster and more enjoyable.”

Details took more time than expected, like the molding and a floor divider they figured out themselves to separate the play area from the workout area. They had to learn ways to limit breakage and to speed cuts to fit around doors, but when the job was done, Ingrid says all the effort was worth it. “I’d do it again with Tom — maybe in a couple of years, though.” FABULOUS FLOORS was there during part of the installation and spent as much time laughing together as they did.

“We’ve added another 30 to 40 percent to our living space,” Ingrid says. “We’ve cut down on the wear and tear on the main house. And it’s more like we’ve added a second floor for the house. The kids can go crazy, and I don’t have to worry about the floor. They can slip and slide with the dog and play ball and nothing happens to the floor. It really pays off. I don’t have to tell them not to do this or that,” she said as she climbed on the exercycle for the day’s morning workout. 🐾

