

BY CHARLIE WARDELL



1. Flooring for Concrete Slabs

Matéflex modular flooring has added a strip-flooring option to its line of vinyl floor tiles. The 4-by-36-by-1/2 inch PlankFlex planks are designed to look like wood flooring and have interlocking modular bases that snap together. One big selling point is that the planks can be installed over concrete—whether in a finished basement or a slab-on-grade home—without a subfloor. They come in five colors—oak, ash, cherry, chestnut, and gray—and cost \$5.95 per plank. mateflex.com



2. Affordable Fiberglass Gutters

The Fiberglass Gutter Co.'s pultruded Fiberglass Gutters look just like traditional wood, but are easier to install and don't rot. And now, thanks to a new manufacturing process, the company has halved the product's cost, from \$30 to \$15 per lineal foot. The gutters are made to mimic 4x5 and 4x6 wood gutters in 27.5- and 40-foot lengths, and require almost no maintenance (aside from typical cleaning of leaves and debris). They're white but can be coated with any latex paint. fiberglassutter.com



3. Powerful Water Miser

Kohler's water-conserving single-flush Highline 1.0-gpf toilet combines the force of gravity with a precision-engineered tank, bowl, and trapway to create a powerful siphon during the flush while still conserving water. It exceeds the requirements for MaP Premium, the most stringent industry standard for high-performance toilets. Kohler says that the Highline will remove more than 2 pounds of waste per flush—four times that needed by the average person. List price for the model shown is \$390. kohler.com



4. Modular Fencing

BW Creative Railing Systems' new Cedar Privacy Fence Kit is an easy way to give clients a private outdoor area. For a cost of \$350 to \$400, you get a pair of powder-coated aluminum posts, the top and bottom rails, and a box of 4-inch-wide western red cedar slats. Each kit makes a 5 1/5-foot-high, 4-foot-long fence. Posts can be surface-mounted or embedded in concrete. Note that the fence is not rated as a guardrail; it's meant for use around patios or on decks that aren't high enough above grade to need a guardrail. bwcreativerailings.com

Products

5. A Better Box

DeWalt's ToughBox Job Site Chest works with the company's ToughSystem Totes to provide storage for smaller items near the top of the box, leaving the bottom part free for large tools. It has gas struts for controlled lid opening and closing and a rear rubber grommet for electrical pass-through so you can charge your cordless tools in the box. The box is built for security, with a 16-gauge-steel body, a 14-gauge-steel floor, 7-gauge-steel skids, 11-gauge vertical ribs, and a three-point locking system. It has a 2,500-pound weight capacity and comes in 36-, 42-, 48-, and 60-inch sizes. Expect to pay \$500 to \$700. dewalt.com

5



6. No-Squeak Floors

AdvanTech's Subfloor Adhesive is a foam-to-gel polyurethane adhesive that expands to fill minor gaps, reducing the likelihood of squeaks. When the adhesive is used with engineered joists and AdvanTech subfloor panels, the company offers a 10-year squeak-free guarantee on the panel-to-joist connection. The manufacturer also says that the adhesive is formulated to stick to wet and frozen lumber. The foam has a 20-minute open time. It retails for around \$20 per can. huberwood.com



6



7

7. Drainable Subfloor

TopNotch is LP's drainable subflooring line. It features a self-spacing tongue-and-groove profile for easy installation, as well as a notch system that helps protect against moisture absorption and edge swell by draining rainwater away during construction. The line includes one commodity grade and two higher grades; the latter two come with 100- and 200-day no-sand warranties. LP says that it sources wood for the OSB through programs certified under the Sustainable Forestry Initiative. Sheets are priced around \$31 apiece. lpcorp.com



8

8. Engineered Tile Decking

You won't need a tile setter with the Mbrico Tile Deck System for exterior decks. Aluminum tracks are screwed to the framing, and notched porcelain tiles slide into place between them. Fiberglass plates epoxied to the tiles' undersides raise their breaking strength to 4,000 psf. The company says that the tiles have non-slip surfaces, are harder than granite, have a moisture absorption rate of less than .05%, and won't freeze, thaw, or stain. They're also self-gapping, which creates drain slots where you would normally see grout. Costs range from \$25 to \$27 per square foot. mbricotiledecks.com

9



9. A More Efficient Mini

Mitsubishi has made serious upgrades to its M-series mini-split heating and cooling system. The company claims that its MFZ-KJ Indoor Floor Unit now uses 25% less power than similar models, with efficient SEER and HSPF ratings of 28.5 and 13, respectively. It's said to evenly distribute warm air through a room in just 10 minutes and can be set to direct warm air upward and downward, helping eliminate cool spots. It can be installed for a single zone or as part of a multi-zone system. The company said that the MFZ-KJ will cost more than a wall-mounted unit. mitsubishicomfort.com

10



10. Stronger Deck Frames

An Atlanta engineer has developed a line of heavy steel brackets to reinforce a wood deck frame and secure it to a house. The Steel Structural Deck Support System includes 12-gauge post and corner brackets, as well as ledger brackets that support more than 1,500 pounds with a 4- or 5-inch standoff—perfect for brick veneer siding. Brackets cost \$50 and \$75 apiece in galvanized, but can be ordered in stainless steel for an extra charge. The current line uses bolts, but the company will soon have a version for use with LedgerLoks. Testing is underway for a code report. higginbothamsteel.com

11



11. Dust Catcher

Skilsaw's new 7 1/4-inch Sidewinder Circular Saw for Fiber Cement directs silica dust away from the motor and operator for longer tool life and cleaner work spaces. The dust collection system's blade-guard extension and channel funnel dust to an included vacuum hose, where it can be collected by a jobsite vac. Sealed bearings and a sealed switch protect the saw's internal workings from dust; a no-mar sleeve protects the cord and hose from fiber cement's abrasive cut edges. Cost: \$200. skilsaw.com

12



12. Built-In Alarms

Optional Built-In Security Sensors can now be ordered for Pella's Designer Series windows and patio doors and Architect Series and Pella entry doors. Part of Pella's Insynctive security line, which includes a Status Indicator to tell homeowners whether windows and doors are locked or unlocked, sensors can be monitored via smartphone if the home has a compatible system (such as Nexia, Wink, or Savant). Sensors should add about \$50 to a door or window price; the Status Indicator and remote control, another \$200. pella.com/insynctive