

# 12 Eco-Friendly Materials for your Custom Home Design

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In recent years, we have seen a shift in Custom Home Design, with many of our clients wanting to make their homes more eco-friendly.

One of the best ways to do this is through the materials used to build a new home. Look for materials that minimize your environmental impact, such as recycled products.

Not sure which materials fall into this category? We are featuring 12 here to help inspire your green custom home design.

## 1. Recycled cork panels and flooring

Every year, a lot of wine corks are dumped into landfills. Natural cork, however, can be recycled into many things, including panels and flooring. If you are a wine fan and want your home to capture that, you can save your own corks, having a company turn them into your panels or flooring for your home. If you want a more stylized look where corks themselves are not as identifiable, these products are also readily available. Cork flooring has the added benefit of being a soft surface that is easier on feet and joints. It has excellent insulating properties as well. However, it can damage easily. Get a full list of the pros and cons of cork flooring [here](#).

## 2. Bamboo

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Bamboo has long been a staple of eco-friendly builds. While many of the materials we are discussing are recycled, bamboo is actually a sustainable product. On top of that, it is strong while still having some give, making it an ideal material choice for your flooring!

### 3. Recycled steel

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Most steel incorporates some level of recycled content. The difference is that recycled steel has a much higher percentage. Companies making recycled steel also make sure that their products are 100% recyclable. That means that, if your home is ever torn down, the steel will create no waste. This is a great way to make sure you do not leave construction waste behind for future generations.

### 4. Bark siding

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Bark siding is a beautiful addition to any home. In most wood production, bark is sent for disposal. Now, though, that bark is being remade into siding for homes. See a great example [here](#). It is a sustainable and durable option – and all natural, with a rustic look that works great with a West Coast style! What a great way to give new life to this incredible material.

### 5. Newspaperwood

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We know that newspaper is made of wood. Now, there are companies returning newspaper to a form of wood. Using newspaper and glue, these companies create wood grain texture. It can still be challenging to get Newspaperwood, as its production rate is limited. If you like the look, work with your Designer to include Newspaperwood in your Custom Home Design. See how it looks [here](#).

### 6. Precast concrete

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Precast concrete is pre-made instead of being poured on site. This allows it to be mixed by a master computer that uses as little energy and water as possible. When precast concrete is taken out to the site, it is not generally packaged, preventing additional waste.

### 7. Recycled plastic

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We love this material as it takes the plastic clogging up our lakes and oceans and compresses it into blocks. These blocks do more than just clean the water, they can be very cost-effective. On top of that, some companies are claiming the recycled plastic manufacturing process produces 95% less greenhouse gas emissions than concrete block production. See how the blocks work [here](#).

### 8. Ferrock

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One of the newest eco-friendly options, ferrock uses recycled materials, such as steel dust, to produce a product like concrete – only stronger. The most innovative aspect of ferrock is its drying process. As it dries, it actually absorbs and traps CO2. That makes it a carbon neutral material. It has a rich rust colour, see how it looks [here](#).

### 9. Timbercrete

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Timbercrete is a blend of sawdust and concrete. By using sawdust, Timbercrete prevents it from going into landfills. In addition, as it is lighter than concrete, there are fewer transportation emissions tied to it. If you are just starting your journey with eco-friendly materials, this could be a good option for you as it is a simple replacement for decorative concrete products.

## 10. Recycled glass tile

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If you want tile in your Custom Home Design, consider recycled options. There are companies now making tiles out of 100% recycled glass. Often, these tiles have a sea glass look, but with some searching, you can find a wide variety of colour and style options. These tiles are the perfect example of how you can use eco-friendly materials without compromising your desired Custom Home Design look.

## 11. Ashcrete

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Ashcrete is a combination of cement and the ash by-product from coal combustion. Concerned about using coal ash? It goes through a process of encapsulation that binds it to an insoluble compound at a molecular level. This means the ash does not escape, even in the Ashcrete is demolished. Find out more about it [here](#).

## 12. Plant-based polyurethane rigid foam

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For insulation, many builders use rigid foam. This material, however, is taxing on the environment. That is why researchers have developed a plant-based alternative. Made with hemp, bamboo and kelp, or other plant-based materials like soy, this insulation prevents against mould and pests, is sound and heat resistant, and is eco-friendly.

## The top way to create an eco-friendly Custom Home Design...

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The best way to make sure your home is eco-friendly is to speak with your Home Designer. Once they know that being green is important to you, they will be able to advise you about how to make eco-friendly choices for your construction and finishing materials, as well as [ways to make your house energy efficient](#). Your Designer will also be able to work with your Builders to make sure eco-friendly materials are used in your new home.