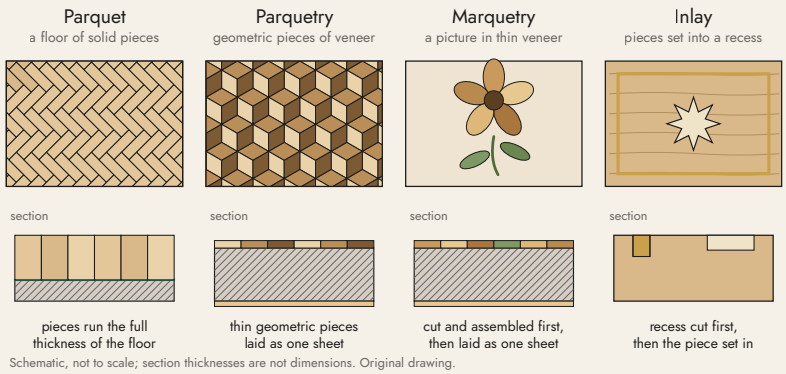
Parquetry, marquetry and *inlay*: what each word means, and how to write it into a specification

Marquetry is cut and assembled first, then laid on a ground. Inlay is set into a recess cut in a solid body. Parquetry is geometric marquetry, and a parquet floor is a floor of solid or engineered pieces. Definitions are the Getty thesaurus, V&A records and NWFA; write the construction, not only the word.

AT A GLANCE

Word	What the sources say	Write it as
Parquet (the floor)	Pieces of solid or engineered wood, from 5/16 to 3/4 in (8 to 19 mm) thick, laid or assembled into panels in a pattern: the floor itself (NWFA)	'[pattern] parquet floor, [species], [size], [thickness], [bonding]'
Parquetry	'Marquetry executed in a geometrical pattern, used especially for floors' (Getty AAT). Museum records use it for geometric veneer on furniture (V&A)	'parquetry panel: [pattern] in [veneers] on [ground]'. Not a word for a floor of blocks
Marquetry	Small pieces of shaped wood, or other material, incorporated into a surface of decorative veneer; the entire surface is veneered (Getty AAT). Glued to the surface, not cut into it (V&A)	'marquetry panel to drawing [ref]: [species], [hand or laser cut], on [ground]'
Inlay	Pieces of one material inserted into a larger piece of another to make a design (Getty AAT); set into a solid ground. Stringing is a fine inlaid line (V&A)	'inlay: [material, size] set in a [groove or recess] in [solid timber]'
Intarsia	Italian term for assembling small shaped wood pieces, commonly used for both marquetry and wood inlay (Getty AAT)	Avoid. Say marquetry or inlay, and which
Boulle work, pietra dura	Boulle: marquetry of brass and tortoiseshell. Pietra dura: hard polished stone set into marble or another hard surface (Getty AAT)	Name the material; state the substitute for any restricted one

Definitions are the Getty Art & Architecture Thesaurus (scope notes retrieved 5 Nov 2026), V&A object records and the National Wood Flooring Association's Ornamental Floors (B300, 2015, US). BS EN 13756:2018 is the wood-flooring terminology standard: named, not read.



Parquet, parquetry, marquetry and inlay, each as a plan above and a section below. The Getty's parquetry has the same construction as marquetry with a geometric pattern. Schematic and not to scale. Original drawing by Make Bespoke Studio.

SPECIFICATION WORDING

PARQUET FLOOR

Parquet floor to layout drawing [ref]: [herringbone, 90 x 450 mm blocks] in [species, grade], [solid / engineered], total thickness [ ] mm, wear layer [ ] mm, fully bonded to [subfloor], finish [ ]. Border and apron as drawing [ref]. Terms as BS EN 13756 [confirm current edition].

MARQUETRY OR PARQUETRY PANEL

[Marquetry / parquetry] panel to drawing [ref]: [pictorial / geometric] design, cut and assembled as one sheet from [veneer species list, ref], [hand cut / laser cut / both], veneer thickness [ ] mm, laid on [ground, thickness [ ] mm] with a balancing veneer on the reverse. Finish [ ]. Where historic work used tortoiseshell, ivory or bone, the substitute is [material]. Species and origin documentation supplied. Sample [ref] approved before production.

INLAY

Inlay: [brass] strip [1.5 x 12] mm set flush in a groove cut in [solid timber, species], bonded with [adhesive], corners [mitred], finish [ ]. Groove [ ] mm wide by [ ] mm deep to drawing [ref]. Metal is nonferrous where the floor is sanded on site. Sample including a sanding test approved before production.

FLOOR MEDALLION OR BORDER

[Medallion, diameter [ ] mm / border, width [ ] mm], craft [marquetry / parquet / inlay], to drawing [ref]. Total thickness [ ] mm to match the field. Installed after the surrounding floor is laid, position approved on site before the opening is cut, and set within [ ] hours of cutting it. Face and wear layer [ ] mm, finished and protected as the workshop specifies for floor use. [Stone, glass or leather: not sanded.]

TERMS USED

Marquetry

Small pieces of shaped wood, or other material, incorporated into a surface of decorative veneer, so that the entire surface is veneered (Getty AAT). Cut and assembled first, then laid on a ground.

Inlay

A process in which small pieces of one material are inserted into a larger piece of another to make a design (Getty AAT): in a solid ground, the recess is cut first.

Parquetry

Marquetry executed in a geometrical pattern, used especially for floors (Getty AAT).

Parquet

In the flooring trade, a floor of solid or engineered wood pieces, 8 to 19 mm thick, laid or assembled into panels in a pattern (NWFA).

STANDARDS AND SOURCES

- Getty Research Institute, Art & Architecture Thesaurus: inlay, marquetry, intarsia, parquetry, boulle work, pietra dura, banding: scope notes read 5 Nov 2026.
- V&A collection records O119198, O120865, O61542, O63424: read through the museum's API.
- NWFA, Ornamental Floors: Design & Installation (B300, 3rd ed., 2015): read, pages 3 to 5 and 15 to 18; US usage.
- BS EN 13756:2018 Wood flooring and parquet. Terminology: BSI listing read, current; text not read.
- GOV.UK, bringing endangered species (CITES) and CITES imports and exports (updated 23 June 2026): parts read.

Full guide: https://makebespoke.com/trade/technical/parquetry-marquetry-and-inlay-in-specifications. Make Bespoke Studio coordinates manufacture through its partner workshops. Figures are guidance only and your specification governs; some may be superseded, so contact the studio to verify.