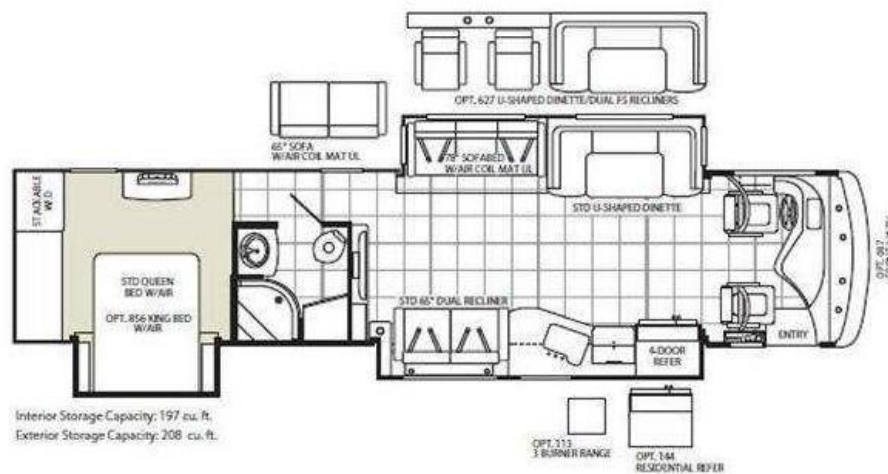


Discovery 2011 40X Flooring Replacement

When we bought our Discovery a year ago there was much to be thankful for. A residential refrigerator, king bed, 42" TV and a comfortable floor plan to name a few. There were also a few issues to be resolved like the mold under the Diamond Shield and a broken stove top cover.

One of the issues that we were uncomfortable with was the condition of the tile grout and carpet. Based on some of the beautiful upgrades others had done to their coaches here at DOAI, we considered wood flooring and Luxury Vinyl Planks among other options. Most of the flooring was ceramic tile with carpeting on the driver's side slide-out and in the bedroom. There was also carpeting on the passenger side slide-out and a few spotty locations like under the captain's chairs but these locations were barely noticeable.



We needed to decide if it made sense to replace all of the flooring to a single type for overall consistency or fix the grout and replace just the carpeting. We also considered keeping the tile and changing out the carpet for solid floor but there would not be a way to seal the gap between the driver's side slide out and the main floor. There was also the question of changing just the bedroom to a solid surface but then we would have had three different flooring materials but we felt that would downgrade the consistency of the floor to a patchwork look.

Tile Flooring

As we examined the tile flooring in our coach we realized that the ceramic tile was in excellent condition but the grout was not. No matter what we used to try to clean it, it remained inconsistently stained. In some places the grout was almost black.

The easy solution was to get a bottle of grout colorant and within an hour, the grout was consistently the same color throughout the coach. Before and after images:

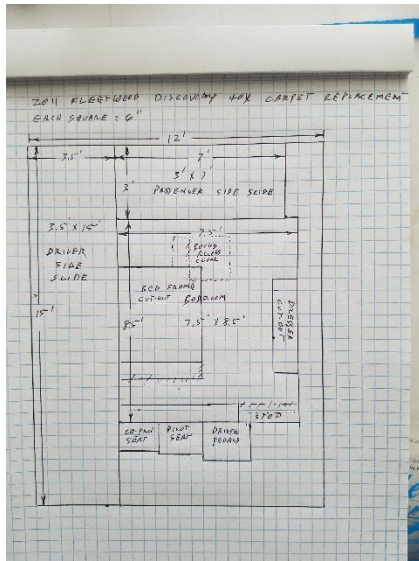


Carpet Flooring

For us, the most logical solution was to replace upgrade all of the carpeting. The existing carpet was a dirty and stained kind of 70's-ish gold shag. We had some carpeting left over from our previous coach and as it was still available so we purchased enough to complete the task for about \$260. This carpet wouldn't have been chosen if we often had kids or pets with us, but we wanted to offset the darker woodwork with something a bit lighter. Here is a before and after of the dinette area.



The first step was to get measurements of the 17 pieces of carpet needed and plan out the largest pieces against a roll of carpeting 12' wide by 15' long. Carpet comes in 12' wide rolls and the longest single piece was the driver's side slide out at 15'.



Because we already had some carpeting, we only needed to get an additional 10' but that also meant that we would need to piece together a 3.5' strip for the driver's side slide.

Driver Side Slide Out

We started by removing the two Euro Chairs and Wraparound Dinette and Table, carefully measuring the locations of the bolts for the seat belts and dinette frame. We could then unscrew the cabinet from the wall behind the Euro Chairs and pull the old carpet up. I often used blue painter's tape for temporarily markers.





The original carpet was mostly held in place by 3/16" narrow crown x 3/8" leg 22 gauge fine wire upholstery staples. The stapler for this size staples is about \$150. I decided to use 1/4" crown x 1/2" 18 gauge staples as I already had the stapler for that size.

I wondered why the original staples were so short so I used a stud finder on the slide out floor and found that although most of the floor was a double layer of plywood, there were four bands of metal ribs running the depth of the slide floor at 3/8" below the top layer of plywood. I marked their locations so that I wouldn't attempt to drive 1/2" staples into the metal bands.

The front edge of the carpeting had been held in place with construction adhesive so we will do the same when we install the new carpet.

The ceramic tile was marked at the left end of the slide floor and when the carpet was removed, I found that this was the result of the slide floor being warped.



This likely occurred with the slide retracted as this corner would easily be stepped on while walking around the end of the slide to reach the rear hallway. I'll need to address the warped slide floor later.

Once the carpet is removed I pulled the remaining staples from the floor and cleaned the construction adhesive off the metal front edge of the slide.

I used the old carpet to transfer the pattern to the new carpet but double checked the pattern against the coach measurements before cutting. NOTE: Always ensure that the carpet nap runs the same direction for every piece installed or it will look like you used two different carpets!

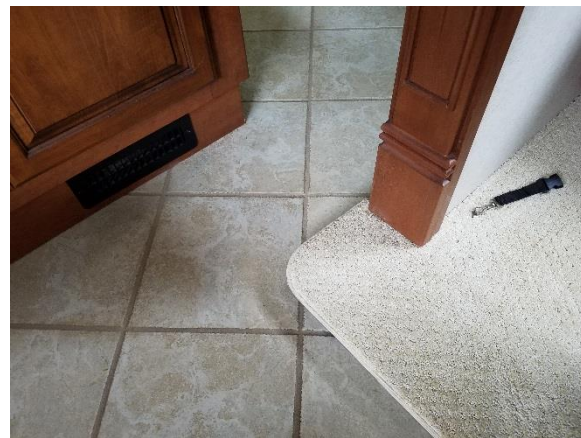


Once the two pieces of carpet were cut and test fitted in the coach it needed to be seamed together. I could have bought \$100 worth of seaming tools for this one job but it made more sense to pay \$16 and have the carpet supplier to professionally seam it for me. Once it was seamed, test fitted and final trimming, I took it back to the carpet supplier to get the outside edge bound and it was ready for installation. We rounded the outside corners and bound a flexible plastic stiffener into each of the corners to avoid the flop-eared look the original carpet had.

Flexible plastic corner stiffener



Corner that gets stepped on and bent



Slide Extended



Driver's Slide Carpet Complete



Passenger Side Slide Out

With the remainder of the original new carpet I could now do the passenger side slide. The only large place where there is carpet is under the sofa bed and only a tiny fraction of that carpet can be seen.

There was one screw at each end of the sofa back to remove and the entire back slips up and off the sofa. Opening the sofa allowed me to remove six bolts on each side of the frame and the rest of the sofa could be removed. We can now see the slide carpet, mostly. We will also need to unscrew the side cabinet as the carpet goes under it. This gives us a good look at the connections for power, water, sink drain, and gas connections to the slide.



There was no benefit to removing the back cabinet as none of the area can be seen so I only removed the old carpet up to that back cabinet. Meanwhile, I can inspect all of the slide connections with the slide both in and out and check for any problems that might be lurking there. There is no carpet binding needed so it is a straightforward cut and replace of the carpet. Replacing the cabinet and Sofa was relatively easy, however, I found that several of the sofa bolts were stripped in the slide floor so I replaced all 12 with the next larger diameter bolt so that they all grip firmly. It is disappointing how little

of the new carpeting is visible but it gave me an untouched piece of the original carpeting for use later in the process.



Bedroom

The bedroom differed in that it had a pad under the carpet and also strips of wood around the perimeter similar to tack strips but without any tacks in them. The pad was in good shape so I decided to reuse it given how little wear the bedroom carpet gets.

The carpet covering the engine access panel was edge-bound and uncomfortable under foot. It wasn't possible to get to the engine access panel screws without pulling up the carpet and having staples exposed as the screw heads were hidden. The carpet on the step in front of the closet was glued to a metal plate with silicone. The bedroom and closet carpeting was removed and used as a pattern to arrange optimum use of the new carpeting while maintaining the direction of the nap.

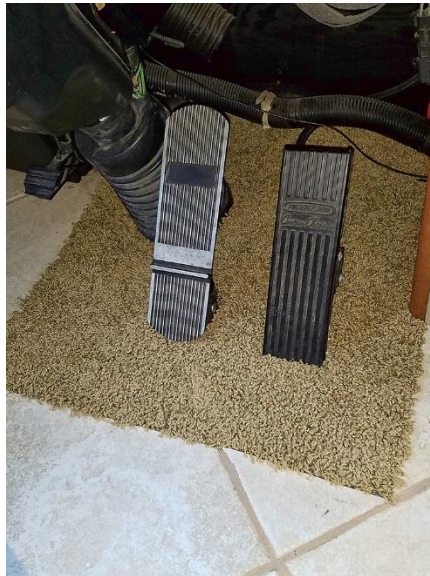


I stapled and glued a transition strip channel to the edge of the engine access panel and after the new carpet was installed put the transition cap over the junction of the two carpets. The panel screws are accessible from the top of the carpet but recessed so that they are below the height of the rest of the carpet. The idea is that if access to the top of the engine is required, the transition cap are popped off, the panel screws are removed, and the panel can be lifted out with the carpet still attached. Hopefully I'll never need to find out if that works as planned!



Bits and Pieces

There were small pieces of carpet replaced in the bathroom, left of the refrigerator, beside the entry and under the captain's chairs. The carpet under the driver's pedals was a different matter. That area gets way too much soil to be a candidate for light colored carpeting so I used some of the "new" condition carpeting that was removed from under the sofa to replace the carpet under the driver's pedals. Someday I may replace this carpet with a darker color but for now, this is acceptable.



It took about a month working at a leisurely pace and about \$400 total to complete the project.

Frank Miller