



Care & Maintenance of Your Granite Countertops

Sealing

Once natural stone is properly sealed, it's protected from everyday spills. Instead of being absorbed into the stone, water and other spills will bead up on the surface. People often assume that natural stone is "stain-proof," however all stone is porous to some degree. If not properly treated with a protective sealer, water, oils, or other liquids can penetrate the stone, leaving behind unwanted stains. Good news is that once treated with a protective sealer, natural stone is ready for carefree, everyday use. After fabrication we treat your countertops with a sealer to protect your stone from staining. For most countertops, a quick application of a stone sealer once every year will eliminate potential problems.

Basic Care

When cleaning up those messes and spills, it's important to use cleaners specially formulated for stone. Most general purpose cleaners, acidic and alkaline solutions, abrasives, ammonia or bleach can break down sealers and damage stone surfaces. Some soapy cleaners may leave an unsightly film. Our daily revitalizing cleaners and heavy duty cleaners were carefully designed for stone, providing you with peace of mind. Our stone polish adds instant, touch-up shine to polished surfaces.

Water Spots & Stains

Water spots from hard water around a sink area are the most common issue with granite. These can simply be buffed out with dry 0000 steel wool. Stains are fairly uncommon with sealed natural stones and there are different recommendations for stain removal depending on the type of stain. There is a guide to granite stains on our website: www.stonesourceusa.com

Scratching

As granite is one of the hardest, most durable materials available for countertops, it will not scratch when used as a cutting surface, but it will dull knives.

Heat

Granite and other natural stones are virtually impervious to damage from normal cooking temperatures. Placing a hot pot or pan directly on your stone countertops will not damage them.

Cleaning

Clean the countertop daily with a soft white cloth and a neutral cleaner or household detergent such as Dove. Household cleaning products including Windex, Lysol Disinfectant and 409 can

be used, but may leave a film. A solution of vinegar and water works great to remove streaking, smudges, and body oil.

Granite countertops are sealed at the time of fabrication. Resealing is up to the individual. Manufacturers of impregnators recommend countertops to be resealed from three to every five years, or longer, depending on the application, the sensitivity of the individual, and the type of stone. Granite impregnators, cleaners and disinfectants are available here.

Spills should be wiped up immediately. Blot the spill with a clean paper towel. If the countertop stains, a poultice may need to be applied. See the Stain Removal guidelines that follow.

Use the flat side of a razor blade for removing stuck on tape residue, dried paint, glue, dried food, etc. Use #0000 or finer steel wool to remove dried water spots, smudges, hazy areas, and for general cleaning to bring out the shine. Do not use the steel wool wet. Use a pencil eraser to remove aluminum trails.

Don'ts

Do not use acid-based cleaners such as rust removers, sterling silver cleaners, etc., on the countertop, or place rags saturated with acid based cleaners on the countertop.

Do not use any cleaners containing Hydrofluoric Acid.

Do not use strong abrasive cleaners such as Comet or Soft Scrub.

Do not leave spills on the countertop for prolonged periods of time.

Stain Removal

If you have stained your stone, don't worry. Because stone is porous you can often remove the stain by reversing the staining process. Stains should be treated as soon as possible. As time goes by it becomes increasingly difficult to remove the stain; however, attempts to remove stains should not precede stain identification. Using the appropriate removal technique is important to achieve the desired results. You must ask questions to determine what the stain is:

- What is the color?
- Where is it located?
- How long has it been there?
- Is it associated with main traffic areas?
- Are plants near the stain? Etc...

Once the stain has been identified, the best method of removal can be determined.

If you reabsorb the stain into a medium, you can remove it from the stone. The typical medium is called a poultice. Clays, cornstarch and diatomaceous earth are usually the best. Many stains are so deeply imbedded that a chemical solution will need to be added to the poultice to dilute and/or react with the stain. Test patches will need to be performed, and in many cases it will take several tests. The process can be simple: Mix poultice medium with distilled water, or the chemical you have selected, to make a paste-like substance with a consistency similar to peanut butter. Apply the paste to the stain and do not let any excess drip or spill onto adjacent clean areas. The paste should be applied approximately 1/8 to 1/4 inch thick, overlapping the stain by 1/2 to 1 inch. Cover the area with plastic wrap and secure the edges down with non-marking tape. The poultice must dry completely. Drying time is usually 24 to 48 hours, depending on the type of poultice being used. As the poultice dries, it will pull the stain from

the area into the paste. Remove the poultice using cotton balls, paper towels, or a fabric. If the stain has improved, re-apply the poultice. Multiple applications may be required.

Stain Removal Procedure Guide

Always test a small area to ensure the desired result.

Typical Stains:

ORGANIC: Coffee, Tea, Tobacco, Food, Cosmetics, Plant

INORGANIC: Rust, Iron, Bronze, Steel, Metal

BIOLOGICAL: Mildew, Mold, Fungus, Algae

OIL BASE: Grease, Cooking Oil, Food Stains, Tar, Body Oil

INK: Ball Point Pen or Magic Marker

Challenge: Iron Stains

Solution: Clean with one of the following:

- Naval Jelly
- Ammonium Oxalate
- Oxalic Acid
- Grout Concrete Film Remover

Challenge: Ink Stains

Solution: Poultice with one of the following:

- For light colors: Bleach or Hydrogen Peroxide
- For dark colors: Acetone or Lacquer Thinner

Challenge: Oil Based Stains

Solution: Clean with one of the following:

- Bleach
- Household Detergent
- Ammonia
- Mineral Spirits

Follow with a poultice of one of the following:

- Methyl Chloride

Challenge: Organic Stains

Solution: Clean with one of the following:

- 35% Hydrogen Peroxide. Pour directly on the stain and then add a few drops of ammonia. Leave on until the bubbling stops.

Follow with a poultice using the same methods as suggested for an Oil Based Stain.

Challenge: Copper Stains

Solution: Poultice with one of the following:

- Ammonia Chloride
- Ammonia Hydroxide

Challenge: Biological Stains

Solution: Clean with one of the following:

- Diluted Ammonia
- Bleach

Challenge: Crystallization Coatings

Solution: Re-hone the surface with abrasives