



# NATURAL STONE COUNTERTOPS CARE & MAINTENANCE

## QUARTZ CARE & CLEANING

Quartz is a natural stone product produced by intense heat and pressure: it combines the natural beauty of natural stone with lasting durability. Quartz is a non-porous product and does not need to be sealed to repel stains.

Any pH balanced general house hold cleaner can be used to clean your new Quartz counter tops. For best results wipe or scrub Quartz counter tops with a general cleaner and rinse with clean water.

**Do not use Ajax or Comet or any cleaners too abrasive.**

### Spot removal

Quartz is extremely resistant to damaging chemicals. When necessary you may use the following products for stain removal.

✓ Rubbing Alcohol    ✓ Ammonia    ✓ Acetone    ✓ Vinegar    ✓ Formula 409

### Difficult spots

Adhered materials like gum, nail polish, paint etc. can be scraped with a sharp edge carefully. These spots can also be treated with one of the cleaners listed above. Let the cleaner soak the spot for about ten minutes then remove with a damp rag and rinse.

## CAUTION MUST BE USED FOR THE FOLLOWING:

- ! Products containing oil or powder may leave residue.
- ! Repetitive use of abrasive cleaners may dull the finish.
- ! Use of oven /grill cleaner may damage the color of your Quartz.
- ! Repetitive exposure to heat may damage finish of your Quartz.

# GRANITE CARE & CLEANING

Unlike marble, Granite is a relatively hard, semi-porous, natural stone. It is relatively unaffected by many chemicals. However, harsh, caustic chemicals are not recommended.

## Avoiding stains on Granite

Granite needs to be sealed semi-annually to help prevent permanent stains. Sealant can be purchased at any home improvement store. Be sure to follow manufactures directions while applying.

## Cleaning your Granite

Use ph balanced cleaners for the best results. There are many brands of cleaners for every day cleaning and maintaining the luster in your stone. Make sure the cleaner states that it is for natural stone countertops.

Wipe up spills immediately because some spills like coffee, wine, or juice will stain more easily than others. Light colored stone will also stain more easily than a darker stone.

Do not use anything abrasive on your Granite as it will tend to dull the luster of the stone and make tiny scratches.

## Things to avoid

- ! Do not put anything too gritty on the surface of your granite.
- ! Avoid putting hot pots or ice bags on your Granite surface as this may cause thermal shock to the stone and cause it to crack.
- ! Do not use ammonia based or abrasive cleaners. Avoid using rust removers on your Granite and keep drain cleaners and oven cleaners off your Granite top.
- ! Do not use alkaline cleaners that are not made especially made for stone.

## Things to do

- ☞ Use coasters under glasses, trivets or mats under hot dishes and placemats under dishes.
- ☞ Clean your counters often to help prevent build up.
- ☞ Re-seal your tops every six months to prevent stains.
- ☞ You may use a synthetic scouring pad.

# MARBLE CARE & CLEANING

Marble is used often for its unique beauty & classically timeless charm.. There are no two pieces exactly the same so they create a very custom look for each application. Marble is also naturally heat resistant but you still need to be careful. Putting something too hot on too cold of a Natural Stone surface can cause thermal shock.

Marble does have some things to be aware of. It is a porous, high maintenance surface that is much softer than other durable stones. It is susceptible to stains, scratching, & to acid etching. Prepare yourself to see some scratches.

## Cleaning your Marble

Clean surfaces with a few drops of a neutral cleaner, stone soap (available at hardware stores or from your stone dealer), or a mild liquid dishwashing detergent and warm water. Use a clean soft cloth for best results. Too much cleaner or soap may leave a film and cause streaks. So rinse the surface thoroughly after washing with the soap solution and dry with a soft cloth.

## Avoiding Stains or Etching on Marble

! Do not use products that contain tomatoes, lemon, vinegar, or other acids on marble without a cutting board.

! Do not use scouring powders or creams: these products contain abrasives that may scratch the surface.

! Never use anything you wouldn't use on your hands

! Do not leave dark foods or drinks on light marble surfaces for a long time.

! Clean spills as soon as possible

! Never leave grease on a marble countertop

👉 Re-seal your tops every three months to prevent stains.

👉 Select honed marble to help prevent etching and scarring (and give it a matte finish)

## STAIN IDENTIFICATION TIPS

Identifying the type of stain on the stone surface is the key to removing it. Stains can be oil based, organic, metallic, biological, ink based, paint based, acid based. If you don't know what caused the stain, consider likely staining agents that may have been present. Here are some questions you consider:

- Where is the Stain Located?
- Is it near a plant, a food service area, an area where cosmetics are used?
  - What color is it?
  - What is the shape or pattern?
- What occurs in the area around the stain?

## STAIN REMOVAL TIPS

Surface stains can often be removed by cleaning with an appropriate cleaning product or household chemical.

### WHAT TYPE OF STAIN IS IT?

The following sections describe the types of stains you may have to deal with and the appropriate household chemicals to use and how to prepare and apply a poultice to remove the stain.

#### Oil-based

(grease, plumbers putty, tar, cooking oil, milk, cosmetics)

An oil-based stain will darken the stone and normally must be chemically dissolved so the source of the stain can be flushed or rinsed away. Clean gently with a soft, liquid cleanser with one of the following: household detergent, mineral spirits, or acetone.

#### Organic

(coffee, tea, wine, fruit, tobacco, paper, food, urine, leaves, bark, bird droppings)

May cause a pinkish-brown stain and may disappear after the source of the stain has been removed. Outdoors, with the sources removed, sun and rain action will generally bleach out the stains. Indoors, clean with 12% hydrogen peroxide (hair bleaching strength) and a few drops of ammonia.

#### Metal

(iron, rust, copper, bronze)

Iron or rust stains are orange to brown in color and follow the shape of the staining object such as nails, bolts, screws, cans, flower pots, metal furniture. Copper and bronze stains appear as green or muddy-brown and result from the action of moisture on nearby or embedded bronze, copper or brass items. Metal stains must be removed with a poultice. (See website on Using a Poultice. Deep-seated, rust stains are extremely difficult to remove and the stone may be permanently stained.

#### Biological

(algae, mildew, lichens, moss, fungi)

Clean with diluted cleaning solution. Use a 1/2 cup of any of the following: ammonia, bleach, or hydrogen peroxide and a gallon of water. Reminder: do not mix bleach and ammonia.

#### Ink

(magic marker, pen, ink)

On light colored stones, clean with bleach or hydrogen peroxide. On dark colored stones, clean with lacquer thinner or acetone.

## **Paint**

Small amounts can be removed with lacquer thinner or scraped off carefully with a razor blade. Heavy paint coverage should be removed only with a commercial heavy liquid paint stripper available from hardware stores and paint centers.

These strippers normally contain caustic soda or lye. Do not use acids or flame tools to strip paint from stone. Paint strippers can etch the surface of the stone: repolishing may be necessary. Follow the manufacturers directions for use of these products, and flush the area thoroughly with clean water. Protect yourself with rubber gloves and eye protection, and work in a well-ventilated area. Use only wood or plastic scrapers for removing the sludge and curdled paint.

Normally, latex and acrylic paints will not cause staining. Oil-based paints, linseed oil, putty, caulks and sealants may cause oily stains. Refer to the section on oil-based stains.

## **Water Spots and Rings**

(surface accumulation of hard water)

Buff with dry steel wool.

## **Fire and Smoke Damage**

Older stones and smoke or firestained fireplaces may require a thorough cleaning. When the smoke is removed, there may also be some etching (due to carbonic & other acids in smoke). Commercially available smoke removers may save time and effort.

## **Etch Marks**

(caused by acids left on the surface of the stone)

Some materials will etch the finish but not leave a stain. Others will both etch and stain. Contact your stone dealer or call a professional stone restorer for refinishing or repolishing etched areas.

## **Efflorescence**

(a white powder that may appear on the surface of the stone)

It is caused by the deposition of mineral salts carried by water from below the surface of the stone. When the water evaporates, it leaves the powdery substance. If the installation is new, dust mop or vacuum the powder. You may have to do this several times as the stone dries out. Do not use water to remove the powder: it will only temporarily disappear. If the problem persists, contact your installer to help identify and remove the cause of the moisture.

## **Scratches and Nicks**

Slight surface scratches may be buffed with dry steel wool. Deeper scratches and nicks in the surface of the stone should be repaired and repolished by a professional.

Care and Maintenance information provided by the Natural Stone Institute

**Feel free to ask us any questions you may still have.**

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