

Spectra Kitchen & Bath

By JS Design & Build

COUNTERTOPS, CABINETS & MORE



Natural Stone Care & Maintenance Guide

for
Granite, Marble, Quartz, & Soapstone

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Natural Stone Care

The natural stone you've chosen for your home, office or commercial building is an investment that will give you many years of service. Each type of stone has varying degrees of porosity and while some people prefer materials that age and show wear, many prefer materials they can keep looking "new" as long as possible. Keep in mind that no surface can be expected to be perfect or impervious to stains or damage, but by following a few simple steps, you can ensure your natural stone will provide a lifetime of beauty and practical use.

GRANITE

To get the longest life and preserve the beauty of your natural stone, follow these simple tips:

CLEANING: Clean your stone surfaces periodically with a PH neutral cleaner or stone soap and warm water. An excessive concentration of cleaner or soap may leave a film and cause streaks. Follow manufacturer recommendations. Dry with a clean, soft cloth. Please note: General household cleaning products that are not recommended for natural stone will damage your stone! They will break down the sealer, thereby removing its protective properties and making the surface susceptible to stains while etching the surface, degrading the polish, and discoloring or scratching the stone.

COASTERS: Use coasters under all glasses, particularly those containing alcohol or citrus juices.

TRIVETS: While many stones can withstand heat, the use of trivets and mats are recommended to avoid scratching.

SEALING: Your stone was sealed at installation, but if spills are left on for an extended period of time, they will penetrate the sealer and damage the stone. The sealing process should be every 8-12 months, depending on usage or an extended sealer warranty could be purchased from the supplier of the granite slabs.

A FEW ITEMS THAT CAN DAMAGE YOUR STONE: Soda, alcoholic beverages, mustard, vinegar, salad dressings, oil, tea, rock salt, sand, cosmetics, shaving cream, perfume, polish remover, toothpaste, household cleaning products.

SOILS: Blot the spill with a paper towel immediately. Don't wipe the area, it will spread the spill. Flush the area with water and a PH neutral cleaner or Stone soap and rinse several times. Dry the area thoroughly with a soft cloth. Repeat as necessary. If a spill goes unnoticed and this cleaning method does not remove the stain, don't panic. Call Spectra Kitchen & Bath.

MARBLE

Marble countertops look great in the store or online but they may not be a good option for your high use areas like kitchen and bathroom countertops. Marble is a natural stone and will vary in density. Marble is one of the most porous stones available. If you prefer materials that look new as long as possible, then marble may not be the stone for you. These countertops can stain quite easily. Marble is very predisposed to acid. Acid will etch the surface and stain it. Lemon juice will even mar the surface of the counter. Marble countertops require a lot of regular sealing applications to keep them from staining. Putting Marble in a bathroom can be a bad idea because many soaps, skin creams, and hair spray are going to stain/etch it.

Avoid setting beverage glasses directly on Marble as they leave rings. Fruit juice, carbonated beverages or other acids will etch (remove shiny surface) if allowed to remain on marble. Don't leave any liquid standing on the countertops, even water, for a short period of time because it could sink in and stain. Wipe up acid spill immediately, and wipe surface with wet cloth. If surfaced is etched, polishing may be required.

Marble is very porous. The best way to prevent stains is to treat the surface with a protective sealer. The sealer fills in the pores and repels spills on the surface, allowing you time to completely wipe it away.

Dust mop interior marble floors frequently using a clean non-treated dry dust mop. Sand, dirt and grit do the most damage to natural stone surfaces due to their abrasiveness. Mats or area rugs inside and outside an entrance will help to minimize the sand, dirt and grit that will scratch the stone floor. Be sure that the underside of the mat or rug is a non-slip surface. Normally, it will take a person about eight steps on a floor surface to remove sand or dirt from the bottom of their shoes. Do not use vacuum cleaners that are worn. The metal or plastic attachments or the wheels may scratch the surface.

Although we usually think of marble as "hard," it is a very porous material. Marble has varying degrees of porosity. If left unsealed, spills and everyday messes can easily penetrate the surface. The liquid eventually evaporates but the stain is left behind.

MARBLE (CONTINUED)

The DO's and DON'Ts of Marble:

DO clean up spills immediately to minimize damage to your stone.

DO use trivets or mats under hot dishes and cookware.

DO use place mats under china, ceramics, silver and other objects that can scratch the stone's surface.

DO use coasters under glasses, especially if they contain alcohol or citrus juices.

DO clean surfaces regularly with StoneTech™ Professional Revitalizer™ Cleaner & Protector.

DO use StoneTech™ Professional BulletProof™ Sealer to protect the stone.

DO use a tray for toiletry products in the bathroom to protect the surface from the damaging chemicals contained in many toiletry products.

DO dust mop marble floor tile regularly.

DO use door mats inside and out along with runners and area rugs on marble floors.

DON'T wait to clean up spills on stone.

DON'T use cleaners that contain acid such as bathroom cleaners, grout cleaners or tub cleaners.

DON'T use vinegar, bleach, ammonia or other general-purpose cleaners.

DON'T use abrasive cleaners such as dry cleansers or soft cleansers.

DON'T use alkaline cleaners not specifically formulated for stone.

DON'T use scouring powders and abrasives because they will scratch the surface.

DON'T place toiletry products directly on the countertop surface.

QUARTZ

Brand Names: Zodiaq, Silestone, Cambria, & Pental

Quartz surfaces are very easy to maintain. The quartz — coupled with high-performance, stain-resistant polymers — results in a durable, nonporous, chemical-resistant surface. Quartz is also heat and scratch resistant, but not heat- and scratch-proof. Therefore, the use of a cutting board is recommended when using a knife.

Of course, Quartz stone keeps its lustrous gloss and ultra-smooth surface without polishing. Because it is nonporous, Quartz does not require sealants or waxes.

ROUTINE CARE: With simple care, Quartz stone will retain its radiant, lustrous appearance for many years. For routine cleaning, use a damp cloth or paper towel and, if necessary, a small amount of non-bleach, nonabrasive cleanser.

Even though Quartz resists permanent staining when exposed to liquids (such as wine, vinegar, tea, lemon juice and soda) or fruits and vegetables, wipe up food and liquid spills as soon as possible.

For stubborn or dried spills, use a nonabrasive cleaning pad such as a white 3M Scotch-Brite®* scrub pad coupled with Formula 409® Glass & Surface Cleaner** or a comparable cleaning product.

Avoid using cleansers that contain bleach. Always follow the cleaner manufacturer's use instructions and exercise proper care when handling and storing any cleaning products.

PREVENTING HEAT DAMAGE: To maintain the beauty of Quartz, do not place hot skillets or roasting pans directly onto the surface. We recommend the use of trivets and hot pads.

REMOVING DIFFICULT SPILLS: Sometimes spills occur and dry on the countertop. For materials that harden as they dry (such as gum, food, grease, nail polish or paint), remove by gently scraping away the excess with a plastic putty knife. Permanent markers and inks may adhere to the surface and should be avoided. Should these agents come into contact with the surface, clean first as outlined in Routine Care. If the stain persists, moisten a cloth with Saniten 313, Greased Lightning™ or a comparable product and rub it into the stain. Let the cleaning agent sit for 15 minutes and wipe the surface clean with a cotton cloth. Rinse thoroughly to remove any cleaner residue.

QUARTZ (CONTINUED)

While casual exposure to alkaline materials will not damage Quartz, highly alkaline (high-pH) cleansers are not recommended when cleaning Quartz stone.

Avoid exposing quartz surfaces to strong chemicals and solvents, especially paint removers or furniture strippers containing trichlorethane or methylene chloride. Keep nail polish remover, bleach, bluing, permanent markers or inks, and oil soaps away from Quartz.

If any of the substances listed above come into contact with your Quartz stone, rinse the exposed surface immediately and thoroughly with water.

SOAPSTONE

Taking care of soapstone is pretty easy. Remember, this stuff is highly stain resistant. Almost nothing can get down into this stone! So...several options exist.

OPTION ONE: is – don't do a thing. Time will make this grayish blue stone slowly darken from regular use. It will gain a natural patina darkened color over time. If a mark gets on the stone you don't like, either rub it out with dry paper towel and lots of muscle or use a little piece of light grit (300-400) sandpaper. The sanded stone will return to its original gray-blue color.

OPTION TWO: Use standard mineral oil that's purchased in a pharmacy. Rub it onto the stone (not too much so that it remains looking wet). Rub off any excess. This will darken all the stone tenfold to almost a black color. Over time, the mineral oil will need to be re-applied (every 4-8 weeks) to keep all the countertops uniform in color as the oil will evaporate. If time goes by and you wish to return the tops color to the original grayish blue, you can with a lot of sandpaper and a few hours of time – have a friend help and use an electric flat sander.

OPTION THREE: Stone sealers will work with slightly limited effect on soapstone compared to granite. Remember – Nothing can get down into soapstone – Stone sealers are made as a rule to penetrate Granite and Marble – not soapstone. They can't get down into soapstone like they can with marble and granite. There are two types of sealers. One which will change the color of the soapstone to look like it was oiled. Once it dries (1-2 hours) it will keep the stone looking dark and oiled for up to three years or more. Another type of sealer will leave the natural soapstone color unchanged (gray-blue), and will protect the stone from changing color at all. It should be re-applied every year or so. If either sealer is scratched through, you may wish to re-apply some more to that area.

SCRATCHES: Depending on the size of the scratch will depend on how to repair it. The deeper the scratch, the lower number grit sand paper you'll want to start with. 80 grit sandpaper is pretty rough and will sand quite a lot of soapstone quickly. As the scratch is sanded out, you will want to graduate to a higher grit sand paper (220) – then higher to (300-400) for a finish that will basically match the original grit finish. After sanding is complete, top off the repaired area with a little mineral oil or sealer.