

Stone Care Guide



Care of Your Marble and Granite Surfaces

Marble and granite are natural stones that were created thousands of years ago. They are very durable and can last for centuries. As durable as they are, they still require a reasonable amount of care to protect them against staining, discoloration, etching, scratching, and chipping.

Many people think that marble is almost impervious. They often mistake it for granite. Marble is a form of limestone made from the sedimentation of minerals over a long period of time. It is a porous material and can act as a sponge in the presence of fluids. The porosity varies greatly between different types of marbles. It is susceptible to staining by many foods, spilled liquids, and other household materials, especially if they are left standing on the surface for an extended period of time. The more porous a marble is, the more likely it is to stain.

Granite is a very hard, crystalline, plutonic rock, of various colors consisting of feldspar, quartz, and other minerals. It is typically three times harder than marble. Its crystalline structure is far more resistant to staining and discoloration than marble. Marble is like chalk that can soak and hold stains; granite is more like compacted glass beads that can be washed out. The porosity of granites also vary greatly, making some nearly impervious, and others nearly as pervious as some porous marbles.

Colored liquids such as colas, wines, and fruit juices, can stain marble if allowed to soak in. Other substances with mildly acidic content can etch and discolor marble. Water from a sweating glass can leave a ring on some marbles, so coasters should always be used. It is nearly impossible to remove stains and etching from marble.

Some granite may stain. Granite is nearly impervious to etching. Granite is also far more resistant to scratching and chipping since it is much harder than marble. Stains in granite can be dispersed around and evaporated out of its crystalline structure.

Stone sealer is applied to all of our products before shipment. The more porous the stone, the less effective the sealer is. Specially formulated sealers for natural stone are available in our store and should be applied when you notice moisture penetrating the stone surface. When applying a sealer, be sure to test it on a small out-of-the-way area before treating the entire surface. Do not use that sealer if you notice any undesirable darkening or discoloration.

Cleaning Marble and Granite Surfaces

To clean your marble or granite, we recommend you wipe the surface with a clean, damp, white cloth. Then wipe the moisture off with a soft, dry towel. Do not use abrasive pads, scouring powder, or creams. They may scratch the stone. On marble, do not use products that contain lemon, vinegar, or other acids. If something is spilled on your stone, especially marble, blot the spill with a soft cloth. Do not *wipe* the spill or you may spread it.

Removing Stains

If your stone appears stained, do not react immediately. Often apparent stains may turn out to be moisture that has soaked into the stone, darkening it. (Such as condensation from a glass that has been left sitting on it) This moisture will normally evaporate without a trace. If the spot in question does not disappear on its own, it may be possible to remove it with various solvents such as acetone or xylene. When using solvents to remove stains be sure not to use colored rags or sponges since they can leach color into the stone. If the stain proves to be too stubborn for even acetone or xylene, you may need to apply a poultice.

A poultice is a liquid cleaner or solvent mixed with a white absorbent powder that forms a paste about the consistency of peanut butter. There are commercially available poultices that have been formulated for use on natural stone. The poultice is spread over the stained area to a thickness of about ¼" with a plastic spatula, covered with plastic, and left to dry out for 24 to 48 hours. The liquid cleaner or solvent will draw the stain out into the absorbent powder as it dries out. This process may need to be repeated a few times to remove the stain entirely. We have had good success removing stains by this method. Always test any sealing or stain removal process on a small out-of-the-way area before applying elsewhere!

Scratches and Chips

Small scratches are visible because they are lighter in color than the surrounding areas. Making them darker will hide them. On darker stones, we have had great success using permanent black marker.... that's right, a marker. Do not use this method on lighter stones! Apply the marker to the scratch, let it dry, and then rub it off of the surrounding area.

Both marble and granite may chip when subjected to a sudden impact. If you have a large chip, try to find the loose pieces, they can often be epoxied back into place. The chip can also be filled with colored epoxy to match the surrounding stone. Repairing this kind of damage should always be left to us or other knowledgeable professionals.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR BUSINESS!