

How to Clean Carrara Marble Countertops

If you were to ask someone how good Carrara marble countertops are, you could get a wide variety of answers. Some would tell you they are the best investment they ever made for their home. Others would say that marble countertops are beautiful but difficult to deal with, requiring more work than other stones to keep healthy.

[Carrara marble countertops](#) are truly a beautiful stone that will increase the value of your home and add an atmosphere of historical class, but they are very delicate and require a lot of extra maintenance to manage.

That is why we are going to explain why Carrara marble countertops are so sensitive, discuss how to properly clean marble, and tips to keep them clean so they can last a lifetime.

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Why Is Carrara Delicate

As the name suggests, Carrara marble countertops are made from marble stone. Marble stone is a delicate stone that has a [low hardness rating](#). According to the Mohs rating system, marble stone has a hardness of 4 out of 10, qualifying it as a soft or gentle stone. Marble has medium resistances to staining, scratching, and chipping, meaning they can handle some use, but caution must be used when installed in high traffic and active areas like a kitchen.

Carrara marble has small indents and divots in the stone called pitting. Marble countertops that have pitting must be careful when installed as kitchen countertop material since small food or acidic liquids like juice can fall into the divots and cause erosion. Any strong chemicals or acidic liquids like orange juice, lemonade, lemon scented cleaners, bleach, strong grease cleaners and more are all strong enough to damage marble countertops.

Carrara marble is also more difficult to obtain compared to other stones. Carrara marble is only quarried in Italy, meaning if the stone is damaged, it will be harder to find a replacement at an affordable price. This works as a double-edged sword as the rarity makes it more valuable. This is easily seen when studying how marble was used in home design [throughout history](#).

Great care needs to be taken when maintaining Carrara marble countertops. The wrong product or a stain could cause long term or permanent damage to the stone.

Tools To Clean Carrara Marble

Now that you know why Carrara marble countertops are so sensitive, you will need certain tools to clean it appropriately. Thankfully, cleaning Carrara marble is not as complicated as it sounds, it just takes a lighter touch and softer cleaning agents.

Soft Rag / Microfiber towel: This type of towel is gentler than normal towels or paper towels. They are more absorbent and have a higher chance of removing any water droplets to prevent future water staining.

Mild Dish Soap: Many common dish soap companies are aware they dish soap have acids derived from animal fat which can damage Carrara marble. That is why they have made mild or softer dish soaps which can be used when watered down to be used safely.

Mild Detergent: Detergents are a synthetic version of soap which does not have the same acids as dish soap but could contain other strong chemicals which can damage Carrara marble. Purchasing a soft or gentle detergent which has been watered down can be safely used to clean your countertop.

Baking Soda: Baking soda is very abrasive, so it should only be used to clean difficult stains.

Warm Water: Warm water is easier to use to remove germs and dirt and beneficial in diluting strong chemicals to make them safe for Carrara marble countertops.

Spray Bottle: Using a spray bottle is safer for Carrara marble than using a sponge or bucket as this reduces the amount of liquid being placed on the countertop.

0000 Grade Steel Wool: Not to be used often on marble as it can cause etching, but it is very useful in removing hard mineral stains.

These materials are all easy to obtain at a local grocery or home improvement store.

Cleaning Methods for Carrara Marble

We have highlighted that Carrara marble is very delicate, but that mostly means that you need to use gentler chemicals to clean it. Despite its sensitive nature, cleaning Carrara marble is quite easy.

Warm Water + Mild Soap

This is the simplest method to clean Carrara marble countertops for daily messes and shallow stains.

Step 1: Fill a spray bottle with warm water and the soft dish soap or detergent. Do not use both! Choose only one cleaning solution.

Step 2: Mix the contents of the warm water and soft cleaning agent together.

Step 3: Spray the Carrara marble countertop with the cleaning solution, making sure to target the mess and surrounding area.

Step 4: Use the microfiber cloth to wipe down the Carrara marble countertop, absorbing as much of the mess as possible.

Step 5: Wet the countertop with just warm water to completely remove any lingering soap particles embedded in the pitting.

Step 6: Use a secondary microfiber cloth or soft rag to wipe down the Carrara marble countertop, making sure it is completely dry to avoid water stains.

Water + Hydrogen Peroxide

This method should only be used to remove difficult food stains on Carrara marble countertops. If the previous cleaning method of warm water and a soft detergent or soap has failed, this method is the next option.

Step 1: Fill a spray bottle with warm water, adding in 12% of hydrogen peroxide.

Step 2: Mix the contents of the solution together.

Step 3: Spray the countertop with the solution, targeting the food stain itself and the surrounding area.

Step 4: Use the microfiber cloth and wipe in small circles to remove the stain. Apply a small amount of pressure to buff out the stain, but not too much otherwise it can dull the finish.

Step 5: Repeat step 3 if stain remains. Otherwise, wet down the Carrara marble countertop with just warm water to remove any lingering chemical residue.

Step 6: Use a separate microfiber cloth or soft dry rag to absorb any remaining liquid to prevent water stains.

For lighter types of Carrara marble countertops, some companies may suggest using a small amount of bleach and heavily diluting it in warm water for stronger stains. Not every company suggests this for their products, so check with the marble fabricator to see if heavily diluted bleach can be used on their marble.

Water + Baking Soda

This method is useful for very heavy stains where soap, detergent, and hydrogen peroxide have failed.

Step 1: Sprinkle the baking soda powder on targeted stain on the countertop.

Step 2: Using a damp microfiber cloth or soft rag, gently rub the baking soda into the surface.

Step 3: Use warm water to rinse off the marble countertop and see if stain has been removed.

Step 4: Repeat steps 1-3 until stain is completely removed.

Step 5: Once stain is gone, rinse down the marble countertop with clean water to eliminate any remaining chemicals.

Step 6: Use a dry soft rag to absorb any remaining water so the countertop is dry.

Marble Specific Cleaners

Marble fabricators often have cleaning agents specifically designed to clean Carrara marble countertops. These cleaning agents are safe to use and often recommended to purchase when Carrara marble is first being installed.

Every cleaning agent has their own set of instructions, so homeowners must follow the specific instructions on the bottle on how to properly use the solution.

Removing Stains

Depending on the stain, it will require different cleaning methods to remove.

Oil Stains: Oils stains form when cooking or grease spills on a countertop. To remove oil stains, use a very small amount of acetone to chemically remove the oil from the pitting. Afterwards, thoroughly wipe the area with a dry microfiber cloth.

Water Stains: Water and hard mineral stains form when water evaporates and leaves behind fragments of calcium and other minerals. These can form from sink water, rain water, or any source of water. To remove water and hard mineral stains, use a 0000-rated steel wool pad to gently brush away the mineral particles. Afterwards, wipe down the countertop with a wet cloth and dry with a separate rag.

For tough stains like rust or when the other previous cleaning solutions are not working, a poultice can be used to remove stains. A poultice is a soft, moist mass of material applied to a body or surface to treat a specific issue. There are several poultice products designed for Carrara marble countertops which are available at home improvement stores. Follow the instructions on the products to remove these difficult stains.

Do Not Use These Chemicals

As we have shown, cleaning marble is simply using the right cleaning agents to keep Carrara marble healthy. However, homeowners should still avoid using certain products on Carrara marble as strong chemicals will damage and dull the stone.

Acidic Solutions: Any liquids that are highly acidic should not be used on Carrara marble and need to be removed immediately. Some common acidic materials are lemon juice, vinegar, orange juice, rust removers, mold removers, and stain removers.

Regular Soap: Regular soaps contain animal fat which have acidic materials in it. These chemicals can dull the stone or cause it to etch over time.

Abrasive Scrubs: Strong abrasive scrubs like a rough sponge or steel wool will etch Carrara marble countertops, causing them to lose their sheen.

Harsh Chemicals: Strong and harsh chemicals like bleach and ammonia can damage and dull Carrara marble countertops. They should not be used unless the marble company cleaning instructions directly suggests using it.

Tips to Keep Carrara Marble Healthy

Here are a few tips to make sure your Carrara marble countertops are healthy and bright.

Sealing: Sealing Carrara marble countertops provides an extra layer to ward off spills, stains, and messes. It is advised marble countertops are sealed once or twice a year, depending on company policy.

Clean Daily: Cleaning Carrara marble countertops daily will keep the stone shining and healthy, as well as prevent stains from forming.

Do Not Mix Chemicals: Never mix chemicals together to clean Carrara marble. Marble stone is very delicate and mixing chemicals can damage the stone or harm the user as some chemicals can create dangerous fumes.

Coasters / Trivets: Use coasters for glasses and cups and trivets with hot dishes to keep your marble stone safe from harm.

Limited Decoration: Avoid placing toiletry products on Carrara marble countertops as they can etch the surface to cause rings.

Conclusion

Carrara marble countertops are a beautiful but sensitive stone that will require some maintenance to keep healthy. It is not the softest stone on the market, but it will need protection and daily cleaning to prevent stains from forming. If your Carrara marble countertops ever gets dirty, follow this guide and your countertops will shine for a long time.