

How Durable are Slate Countertops

[Slate countertops](#) are not the first option someone would consider when renovating their kitchen or bathroom. Thanks to the unique way slate is made, it is widely used for other materials in a home such as insulation or decoration. In order for a stone to function properly as countertop material, it has to be strong enough to withstand general wear and tear of possible active use and be easy to clean as kitchens and bathrooms are highly messy areas.

So the question is, how durable are slate countertops, and do they work well as kitchen or bathroom countertop material?

Short answer, yes! Let us explain how durable slate is and what makes it good for countertop material.

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What is Slate

Slate is a metamorphic rock which was created in a very specific manner different from other metamorphic rocks like [marble](#) and [quartzite](#). Slate is made in a technique called foliation, which is when minerals are layered upon each other, super-heated and merged together with intense pressure. This layering makes slate strong because it is fortified with supportive sheets.

How Durable is Slate

Stones are rated on the Mohs Hardness scale to determine how hard they are. According to the Mohs scale, slate has a hardness level of 2.5-4 out of 10. For context, diamond is the hardest substance on Earth with a 10 out of 1- hardness rating.

Slate has a low hardness rating, but that does not mean it is not durable. Slate's low hardness means it can be damaged and chipped when enough force is applied. Its durability means how well it can withstand damage without breaking. In this category, slate is exceptionally durable and capable of enduring stains, heat, and scratches effectively.

This all depends on the quality of the slate being purchased. Low quality slate will have a lower level of hardness and durability, forcing homeowners to take caution when using it as countertop material. Higher quality slate will have better hardness and durability to resist more active use.

Advantages of Slate

Slate can be an excellent option for countertop material as it has plenty of [advantages](#) using its strong durability and layered composition.

- Heat Resistant: Slate can easily resist heat as it was formed and exposed to high temperatures for thousands of years.
- Stain Resistant: Slate is made from several minerals layered upon one another. This makes it slightly non-porous to some degree where liquids will have a hard time sinking deep into the stone to stain.
- Subtle Colors: Iconic slate is dark and gray colors which is aesthetically attractive for rural and earthy-toned rooms.
- Easy to Clean: Slate's non-porous nature makes it easy to clean with simple warm water, a mild dish soap, and a soft microfiber cloth.
- Affordable: Slate is not as widely chosen for countertop material like granite, quartz, or marble, so it can be more affordable to purchase slate.

Disadvantages of Slate

No stone is without faults and slate has a few weaknesses which should be known before purchasing.

- Brittle: Slate is durable but can be brittle if a low-quality slate is purchased and installed. Too much force or weight could make the stone brittle and break.
- Varying Quality: Slate's quality can widely vary where it will affect the price and how resistant your countertop will be. A good quality slate countertop can handle active use and spills while a poor-quality slate will be brittle and flakey.
- Sharp Edges: Slate is prone to having sharp edges when being installed as countertop material. These sharp edges can be dangerous if there are young children running around, a clumsy big dog, or someone with poor spatial awareness. Slate corners need to be shaped to prevent injury from occurring.
- Limited Colors: Slate comes in a limited amount of colors and patterns, meaning there is not much customization a homeowner can look for with this stone.
- Thin: Slate has been layered and compressed into a durable stone which will appear thin for countertops. Some homeowners may not enjoy the appearance of thin countertops, opting for something thicker for design and status.

[Montuak Black Slate](#)

Uses for Slate

Slate's durability stretches beyond just countertop material. Interior designers and contractors use slate often for many homeowner designs and remodeling. Common uses for slate outside of countertops are:

- Roofing material

- Flooring
- Gravestones
- Billiards Table
- Chalk board
- Kitchen Backsplash
- Bathroom Backsplash
- Fireplace Surround
- Barbeque and Bar material

Where is Slate Found

Slate is quarried from mines around the world. It is commonly mined from cliff sides, pits, and underground caverns.

The biggest mines and suppliers of slate stone are found in the UK, USA, Portugal, Spain, Brazil, Italy, and Germany.

Conclusion

Slate may not be the first choice for countertop material, but it can certainly hold its own in the market. Slate's durability can vary wildly, depending on the quality of slate a homeowner is purchasing. A good-quality slate slab can have very high durability, excellent resistance, and will be easy to care for. A bad-quality slate slab could be brittle, scratch easily and will need extra attention to keep it healthy.

Overall, slate is a good quality stone material which will always look good as a kitchen countertop or bathroom vanity.