

How to Care for Granite Countertops: Steps for Keeping Your Natural Stone Beautiful

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Granite is one of the most beautiful natural stones that you can select for your countertop. Beyond the appearance of the stone, many homeowners love the low maintenance requirements that granite has. But while the stone is low maintenance, you will still need to put in some effort to keep it looking beautiful. This guide will provide you with the information you will need to know about how to properly care for your [granite countertops](#).

How Do You Go About Everyday Cleaning?

Regardless of the maintenance requirements, all natural stone countertops need consistent attention if you want to keep the surface in top shape. The following steps will help you achieve this with your granite countertops.

Step 1: Use a Cleaner Suitable for Granite

While you can use soap and warm water, there are many cleaners available on the market that are designed for use with granite. Apply the cleaner and wipe your counter down. Make sure to use only cleaners or dish soap that is pH neutral, rather than acidic cleaners such as vinegar or ammonia. If you use acidic cleaners, you might remove any sealant from the countertop, which will leave the surface vulnerable to damages.

Step 2: Keep Up on Cleaning

While granite countertops are among the lower maintenance options that you have, it is highly recommended that you keep up on regular cleaning. Regular cleaning can be as simple as using a little dish soap and warm water, so this process is not anything difficult or time consuming. Make sure to use a soft cloth to wipe the surface clean, not a rough sponge.

Helpful Hints: Everyday Maintenance

Below is a list and explanations of helpful hints you will need to know for daily care of your granite countertop.

Do Not Leave Spills Sitting on the Countertop

Even if your granite countertop is sealed, it is still not good to leave any spills sitting on the surface. Clean any spills that may occur as soon as they happen to avoid any potential damages. To wipe up any spills, use a soft dishcloth instead of a rough cleaning device.

Exercise as Much Caution as Possible

It is always a good idea to be as careful as possible with any natural stone countertop. As such, you should use coasters when placing drinks down on the countertop so you do not risk any chance of moisture penetrating the surface. Another example of cautious behavior would be to use trivets or hot pads in the kitchen. Although granite is heat resistant, consistent exposure to high levels of heat will weaken the countertop over time.

How Do You Seal a Granite Countertop?

Granite countertops, like almost all natural stone surfaces, need to be sealed to prevent stains and liquid damages. While this may sound like an inconvenience, the process of sealing granite is simple and quick, and you will typically only have to do it once a year. How often you have to re-seal the countertop will depend on what type of granite you choose. Lighter colored granite will need to be re-sealed more often than granite that is a darker color.

How Do You Know if Your Granite Needs to Be Re-Sealed?

To tell if your granite countertop needs to be re-sealed, you can perform a simple test. Pour a small amount of water on a small section of your granite countertop. After you do this, wait for about 10 minutes. If the water beads up on the surface, your sealant is still effective. On the other hand, if the water sinks down into the surface, you should re-seal your countertop as soon as possible.

Step 1: Find Your Sealer

The first part of the sealing process is finding your desired sealer. There are many sealers available on the market, so you will have a wide variety to choose from.

Step 2: Clear and Clean the Countertop

You will want to make sure everything is off your countertop before you begin sealing it. You will also want to make sure the surface is clean, which you can do by following the steps for everyday cleaning above.

Step 3: Ventilate the Area

It is always a good idea to make sure your workspace is well ventilated. You can do so by opening windows, turning on fans and/or opening doors.

Step 4: Apply the Sealer

Apply the sealer to your countertop by following the instructions on the label that comes with the product. Depending on the product you purchase, you will either have to pour the sealer onto the countertop or spray it on if the product comes in a spray bottle. Coat the countertop with the sealer and wait for 5 to 10 minutes. If the sealer absorbs within 5 minutes, simply add an additional coat. After 10 minutes, wipe off any excess sealer. Then, let your countertop sit for 24 hours to let the sealer take effect.

How Do You Remove Stains from a Granite Countertop?

If your granite countertop is not sealed properly, it may incur stains. To take care of these stains, carefully follow the steps below.

Types of Stains

Types
Oil-Based Stains
Water-Based Stains

How to Remove Oil-Based Stains

Oil-based stains are some of the most common stains on countertops. Examples include grease and milk. To remove these stains, you will need to make a paste out of baking soda and water. Apply this paste to the stain, cover it with plastic wrap and let it sit for several hours. Make sure to poke small holes into the plastic wrap. After you let it sit, you can remove the plastic wrap and the paste.

How to Remove Water-Based Stains

Granite is also susceptible to water-based stains if it is not properly sealed. Examples of these stains include juice, coffee or wine, which are frequent stains that occur on kitchen countertops. To remove these stains, combine baking soda and hydrogen peroxide and follow the steps above for oil-based stains.

Granite countertops have long been desirable for both their looks and durability. You can easily care for your granite countertops and keep them looking great for years to come by following the necessary steps above.