

What is Quartz? Origins, Cost and More

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Quartz countertops have risen in popularity in recent years. These engineered stone surfaces are beloved by homeowners for their high-quality appearance and durable properties. But many homeowners still wonder: What exactly is quartz?

What is Quartz and Where Does it Come From?

Quartz is a mineral that comes from the earth. It is one of the most abundant minerals found in the earth's crust – second only to feldspar. The chemical composition of quartz is referred to as SiO₂.

How Are Quartz Countertops Created?

Quartz countertops are made from a combination of quartz mineral and polyresin. The process begins with the mining of quartz minerals. These are then ground and combined with polyresin to create an engineered countertop surface. During the process, pigments are added to give the countertops their coloring.

How Are Quartz Countertops Different than Natural Stone Options?

Since quartz countertops are engineered, there are some distinct differences between these surfaces and natural stone countertops, like granite or marble. To start, quartz countertops are non-porous, meaning liquid and stains cannot penetrate the surface. Natural stone, on the other hand, is porous and will require sealing to reduce the likelihood of stains and liquid damage. In addition, because quartz countertops are engineered, the surfaces are easier to customize. You will have a seemingly endless amount of color and pattern options to choose from – some of which even look like natural stone.

What Are Some Benefits and Drawbacks of Quartz Countertops?

The table below analyzes some of the benefits and drawbacks of quartz countertops.

Quartz Countertops: Benefits and Drawbacks

Benefits	Drawbacks
High-quality appearance	Cost
Durable	Low heat tolerance
Non-porous	
Stain-resistant	
Scratch-resistant	

Quartz countertops are beloved because of their beauty and durability. With proper care, quartz countertops can stay in great shape for years. The surfaces do not require sealing because they are non-porous. This also helps the countertops resist stains and scratches.

While it has its positive qualities, every countertop option has downfalls. Quartz, while not the most expensive, is not the most affordable countertop option either. In addition to this, you will also need to be careful around the countertops with heat. Quartz countertops can become damaged if exposed to excessive heat. The heat can melt the resin and your countertop will have a permanent burn mark as a result.

How Do You Care for Quartz Countertops?

Quartz countertops are one of the easiest surfaces to care for. All you will really need to do to maintain the countertops is keep up on cleaning. You can clean the surface with warm soapy water. Be sure to never use any harsh chemicals, as these may cause the surface to dull. As mentioned above, do not expose your quartz countertops to high levels of heat.

How Much Do Quartz Countertops Cost?

Quartz countertops generally fall in the range of \$50 to \$120 per square foot. While the surfaces are more expensive than granite, they are less expensive than high-end options such as onyx and gemstone. The table below compares the cost of quartz to the cost of other countertop options.

Cost: Quartz vs. Other Materials

Granite	Between \$35 to \$75 per square foot
Marble	Between \$40 to \$100 per square foot
Quartz	Between \$50 to \$120 per square foot
Slate	Between \$50 to \$200 per square foot
Soapstone	Between \$55 to \$100 per square foot
Quartzite	Between \$60 to \$120 per square foot
Limestone	Between \$70 to \$200 per square foot
Onyx	Between \$75 to \$250 per square foot
Gemstone	Start around \$100 per square foot

Quartz is one of the best options you have when it comes to new countertops. The beauty, durability and other benefits you will receive from the material can leave you satisfied for years to come. From the information above, you now know what quartz is, where it comes from and how quartz countertops are made.