

# Formica vs. Granite: Which is Better?

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Deciding on new kitchen countertops is no small matter. Not only do the surfaces serve as a meal prep area, but they are often the centerpiece of the home. Because of this, you will want to find the best option possible for your space. This guide will walk you through everything that you need to know about Formica countertops and granite countertops, including numerous comparisons between the two materials.

## What is Formica?

Formica is not the actual name of the material, but rather a [brand name](#) that is commonly associated with laminate countertops (much like Corian with solid surface countertops). The material is created by a combination of wood and paper that is held together with glue and resin. On top of the wood particle board, a layer of plastic is laminated to make the final product.

## What is Granite?

On the other hand, granite is one of the most popular natural stone countertop materials on the market. It is quarried all across the world and is shaped into your new countertop by a fabricator.

## Formica (Laminate) vs. Granite Countertops: Comparisons

The sections below will compare Formica countertops to granite countertops, helping you get a better idea of which surface may be right for your home. The two materials will be evaluated based on the following categories:

- Appearance

- Cost
- Durability
- Hardness
- Maintenance
- Heat resistance
- Stain resistance
- Scratch resistance
- Additional uses
- Resale value
- Installation

## Appearance

Formica countertops (and other brands of laminate) have a laminate sheet with a printed design attached to a particle board core. You will have quite a few options to choose from in terms of looks, but not nearly as much as you will with granite.

[Granite countertops](#) can be found in a seemingly endless variety of colors and styles. Because granite is a natural stone, each individual slab is unique – even ones that come from the same quarry. From solid colors to slabs with veins, from white and black to outside the box colors like green and blue, there will be a type of granite that appeals to your taste.

## Cost

On average, laminate countertops cost between \$20 to \$50 per square foot. This makes the surfaces one of the cheapest countertop options that you can find.

Granite typically costs between \$32 to \$75 per square foot. This is the least expensive option among stone countertop choices. While some high-end options can be a bit pricey, you will certainly be able to find granite that won't break your budget.

## Durability

Laminate countertops are not the most durable option, but will stay in relatively good shape over their lifespan. The surfaces are non-porous, so you will not have to worry about sealing. The material is also stain resistant. On the downside, laminate countertops typically only last for about 10 years or so before

you should replace them.

Granite is one of the most durable materials you can install in your home. With proper care, which will not require significant effort, your granite countertops can stay in terrific shape for many years to come. Although they will require sealing, the process of re-sealing a granite countertop is not difficult. The surfaces will last for so long that they will likely remain in your home for longer than you do.

## **Hardness**

When it comes to hardness, laminate is not your best option. The surfaces are prone to cracking and other forms of damage if you are not careful.

Granite is a very hard natural stone. It ranks as an 8 on the Mohs Scale of Hardness (1 being the softest and 10 being the hardest). Keep in mind that, while not all types of granite are equal, it is one of the hardest countertop materials on the market.

## **Maintenance**

Laminate countertops are easy to care for. You will not need to re-seal, as you will with natural stone countertops. Cleaning is also very easy. Note that you should stay away from harsh cleaning products such as bleach.

Despite the need to re-seal, granite countertops are also among the easiest to care for. Using a [granite cleaner](#) and a good sealer can help keep the surfaces looking as good as new. It is recommended that you take a few minutes to clean every day. Most types of granite will only need to be re-sealed about once per year.

## **Heat Resistance**

Formica and other laminate countertops can burn or melt when exposed to excessive heat. Never take hot pots or pans off the stove and place them directly on a laminate countertop. Always use trivets and hot pads when setting down hot items like these.

On the flip side, granite is one of the most heat resistant materials you can have for a countertop. This makes it the clear better choice for new kitchen countertops. While the surfaces can handle heat, it is still always a good idea to exercise as much caution as possible by using trivets, hot pads, etc.

## **Stain Resistance**

Laminate is a stain resistant material. If you exercise proper levels of caution, stains will not be an issue. However, note that stain resistance does not mean that the countertops are totally stain proof.

Granite is also stain resistant. With a proper seal, staining should be no issue with your granite countertops. But as with laminate, you will still need to be careful, as stain resistance does not mean that your granite will never encounter a stain.

## **Scratch Resistance**

Laminate countertops are prone to scratches. If you are looking for a scratch resistant surface, it is not a good option. Always use cutting boards when preparing food.

Granite is very scratch resistant. As mentioned above, granite is one of the hardest countertop materials you can find. You can even cut directly on the surface with knives, although this will end up dulling the knife. While you can cut right on the surface, it does not mean that it is a recommended practice. It is advisable to

use a cutting board in the interest of being cautious.

## Additional Uses

Laminate can also be used for backsplashes, kitchen island tops and bathroom vanity tops.

Granite can be used for kitchen countertops, bathroom vanity tops, backsplashes, fireplace surrounds, and in many cases, outdoor living surfaces as well.

## Resale Value

Laminate countertops hold some appeal, but do not have as much resale value as natural stone options like granite.

Granite is one of the most attractive materials for homeowners – and not just for its looks. Many potential buyers also love the durability and easy care associated with the natural stone.

## Installation

Formica and other laminate countertops can be easily installed. If you have a simple and small countertop, you may be able to make installation a DIY project. If not, it is a good idea to hire a professional installer.

Granite is very heavy and complicated to install. Because of this, you will need to hire a professional to do the job. Having a professional install your granite countertops will significantly reduce the risk of improper installation or injury.

## Formica vs. Granite: Which Countertops Are Better?

Overall, granite countertops are the better option for your home remodel. Granite is beautiful, durable, easy to care for, and will offer you many options when it comes to color, style and cost. Whether it is a kitchen remodel, bathroom remodel or any other area of the home, granite is one of your best options.

Formica vs. Granite: Pros

Formica	Granite
Low cost	Naturally beautiful
Easy to care for	Affordable
Stain resistant	Long lasting
	Easy to care for
	Resistant to heat, stains and scratches
	Versatile
	Adds value to the home

Formica vs. Granite: Cons

Formica	Granite
Susceptible to heat damage and scratching	Requires a professional to install
Typically only lasts for about 10 years	High-end granite options can be expensive

# **Frequently Asked Questions**

## **How Can You Keep the Cost of Granite Down?**

Staying in the more affordable ranges of granite can include choosing a more common type of the stone and selecting standard edging. The rarer your slab is, the more it will cost. In addition, the more complicated your job is, the higher the cost will be as well.

## **What is the Best Non-Natural Stone Alternative to Granite?**

If you are looking for a high-quality non-natural stone alternative to granite, quartz countertops will be the way to go. The surfaces have many of the same benefits as granite, although they can be damaged by excessive heat.

Choosing a desirable countertop material may seem like a difficult process. With the proper knowledge of which materials you are considering, the process can be much easier. If you have narrowed down your options to Formica (laminated) and granite, this guide will help you toward making your final decision.