

Corian vs Granite vs Quartz: Best Countertop Materials

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Homeowners looking to alter their kitchen often look to renovate their countertop design. When deciding on a kitchen countertop, there are many different materials to choose from. Three of the most popular picks include Corian, granite, or quartz. All three materials are excellent picks, which can make the decision feel almost impossible. This guide will give you all the information you need to make this important decision.

Created or discovered?

All three materials have different processes in terms of its creation.

Corian is a brand of solid surface created and manufactured by DuPont. It is a man made material, composed of acrylic resin and natural minerals such as aluminum trihydrate. This material was first created by scientists in 1967.

Quartz is an engineered stone. Although natural quartz exists, quartz used in countertop projects is 90 percent quartz and around 10 percent polyresin with some added pigments. The exact percentages differ based on brand. The natural quartz is typically found in quarries around the world. This mixture is transferred into a mold and then sold as a slab, which is often also cured by manufacturers.

Granite is a naturally sourced stone. This stone is an igneous rock, meaning it is formed through the cooling of lava over millions of years. It is the most common igneous rock in the world. It is composed of a number of other materials, including natural quartz, feldspar and subtle amounts of other minerals. This stone is typically found in places such as Brazil, India, Italy and China, with each area having unique aesthetic characteristics.

Appearance

These three materials are beautiful and come in a variety of designs, which can make choosing between them difficult.

Corian, being manufactured, can come in a variety of looks and styles. This material can come in just about any color or pattern as it is entirely synthetic. This is also widely popular due to the fact that it can be created to have a seamless look. While there are very diverse options available for purchase, be aware that many view Corian countertops to be out-dated and out of style. It was previously seen as a good alternative to laminate

Quartz, like Corian, is an engineered stone. Marble.com has a variety of quartz options [available](#), of many different colors and patterns. There is a style in just about any color, capable of pairing with almost any home decor style. Typically quartz is designed to look similar to naturally found stone. Those looking for more exotic and colorful versions of natural stone should look to quartz. Some of the designs available from

Marble.com include the gorgeous white Vena Calcatta Infinita, the colorful and exotic Profondo Caesarstone, to even a simple and sleek grey in Pure Quantra.

Granite is more limited in appearance, but the styles it has are luxurious. This material is extremely popular due to its timeless appearance. This stone can be finished in multiple textures, including honed and polished. Most slabs feature multiple specks of different color and style sediments. There are many different kinds of minerals found in granite, so there is an abundance of granite patterns available for purchase. Check out our selection [here](#). There is everything from exotic blue and orange like Van Gogh granite, to a sparkling black like Black Galaxy granite, to even a more subdued white like Brazilian Kashmir granite. There is a design for just about any home decor style.

Durability and Care

Although all three are considered durable materials, granite and quartz are both two of the most long-lasting materials available for purchase. As long as proper care is taken, these two materials can withstand even the hardest days.

Corian requires basic cleaning instructions. The brand recommends warm soapy water, ammonia-based household cleaner, or a dedicated countertop cleaner.

Quartz requires similar care instructions. We recommend utilizing a water and mild dish detergent solution, which is then used to clean the surface of the stone. Once the surface is clean, it should be dried off immediately. Avoid more abrasive cleaners as they may cause permanent damage. Sealant, waxes or polishes should not be used on this stone type.

Granite has similar instructions, just requiring soapy water, however, more abrasive cleaners like bleach or ammonia should be avoided as they can damage the surface.

Granite also requires its surface to be resealed every six months to a year. Homeowners can tell if a sealant must be reapplied by checking to see if water is absorbed by the surface. While this may seem daunting, the sealing process is easy to do, with the basic instructions being incredibly simple to follow and able to be done by a homeowner. Sealing requires the countertop to be cleared off and cleaned with the professional granite cleaner, then the sealant will be applied to the surface. After this step, follow the sealant's instructions as some will require a curing period. This is an incredibly straightforward process and should not deter you from the purchase of granite.

With this proper care, these three materials will remain resistant against the following types of damage:

Stain

All three materials are resistant to staining, however, granite requires a sealant as the natural stone is porous. Quartz and Corian are both nonporous. While they are resistant, it does not mean they are stain proof. Without proper care, staining can still occur. For all three material types, it is recommended that all liquids be removed and/or dried immediately as even with the highest resistance, damage can still occur.

Scratch

Corian countertops are prone to scratches and can develop abrasion marks from everyday use. The brand specifically recommends not cutting or chopping on the surface of a Corian counter. Both granite and quartz are scratch resistant. These two stones are the clear winner in terms of durability against scratches.

Heat

Unfortunately, neither Corian or quartz are heat resistant. In order to use either as a countertop, precautions must be taken. For example, if setting a hot pan on a Corian or quartz surface, a buffer must be placed in between. If no trivet or hot pad is under a hot pan, burn marks may appear on your counter's surface. Granite, as a natural stone, can handle high temperatures with proper care. Although heat resistant, we still recommend using a buffer like a trivet or hot pad under hot pans just in case, however, you do not need to fear extreme damage.

With three differing levels of resistance, it is up to you to determine what is most important in your everyday life. To recap, Corian is stain resistant, quartz is stain and scratch resistant, while granite is resistant to stain, scratch and heat but requires additional maintenance.

While all three are durable at varying degrees, we recommend not being reckless with your new countertops regardless of how strong they seem. None of these countertops are designed for consistent sitting, standing, kneeling or jumping, and these activities should be avoided as it may cause cracking.

Another thing to consider is sustainability. Quartz contains one of the planet's most prolific materials (natural quartz), Corian is easily repairable and does not require any mining, while granite contains entirely a natural material and thus there must be careful mining and transportation involved in the creation process.

Cost

Corian brand products tend to be priced between \$40 to \$140 per square foot. Quartz is around \$50 to \$120, while granite is \$35 to \$100. All three are similar in cost and will carry a higher price tag based on the appearance of the material. It is important to note that both granite and quartz are often seen as investments as their appearance can increase the sale price of a home.

As you can see, the three materials are extremely similar in terms of appearance and general durability but there are a few important differences. We've outlined the differences in the chart below.

Material	Natural or Manmade?	Durability	Care Instructions	Average per
Corian	Manmade	Stain resistant	Basic cleaning	\$40 - \$140
Quartz	Manmade	Stain and scratch resistant	Basic cleaning	\$50 - \$120
Granite	Natural	Stain, scratch, and heat resistant	Sealant reapplication recommended	\$35 - \$100

What are your lifestyle needs and how much time do you intend using your countertops? In some homes, the countertops are rarely touched, while in others they are the catch all for multiple activities, including cooking, eating, working and storage. Consider your habits in your current kitchen. If you use your countertops extremely often and expect a lot of possibility for wear and tear damage, we recommend choosing a material with higher resistance like quartz or granite. To decide which material is best for you, we recommend asking yourself a few questions.

Do you often prepare elaborate meals? If so, you probably don't want the hassle of worrying about heat damage. As we said previously, both Corian and quartz are not heat resistant and will require further protection from hot pots and pans. Granite is the best choice for a cooking hobbyist as it can withstand high temperatures. While a cutting board is recommended on all surfaces, Corian material is specifically not scratch resistant and is therefore more likely to be damaged by the cutting and chopping process.

How much maintenance do you intend to do? If you want an easy surface that requires little effort, we recommend Corian or quartz as they both do not require a sealant. While the process of sealing is easy and painless, some homeowners do not even want to worry about it at all. If you don't mind the extra effort of a granite countertop, we recommend it due to its many other great benefits.

Corian is perfect for those only looking for a basic, man made stain resistant material for their countertops. The many colors available make it perfect for a variety of room decor styles. We do not, however, recommend this material for those looking to make an investment and raise the price of their home, as well as those who intend to use their countertops for cooking often.

Quartz is a beautiful, engineered stone which is great for individuals looking for the beauty of natural stone but with the benefits of manmade material. Like Corian, it is not heat resistant and precautions must be taken in order to preserve the surface of this stone.

The last stone, granite, is a fantastic choice for just about anyone as it is the most durable. Luckily, there are a wide variety of colors and designs available for purchase. This stone is also not recommended for those looking to do the bare minimum when it comes to maintenance; this is the only stone out of the three that requires a sealant.

Marble.com has a great selection of both granite and quartz slabs for custom countertop projects. Contact us for more information on which stone is right for you.