

STONE CARE DISCLOSURE

IMPERIAL

MARBLE & GRANITE

NATURAL STONE MATERIALS

Varieties. Many varieties of natural stone have been used successfully for countertop surfaces. However, different types of stone have specific properties that offer advantages or disadvantages in various applications. The following is a brief overview of the common varieties of stone used as countertops.

Granites are undoubtedly the most popular stone type used in countertop applications today. Whatever the name, these stones are some of the hardest of the common countertop stones, offering high levels of resistance to abrasion and scratching. The primary minerals in granite are resistant to almost all chemicals commonly found in a home; however, there may be trace minerals present in some granites and granite-like stones that are vulnerable to some acids.

Marbles, serpentines, and onyxes are traditionally prized for their aesthetic appeal, accentuated by distinct veining and often bold colors. They are relatively softer than granite, although some serpentines are as dense as some granites. Marbles can be scratched by kitchen utensils so it is best to use cutting boards and other protective measures. Use only non-abrasive products when cleaning marble. Marbles can also be etched by chemical attack. These stones are calcium carbonate based and are damaged by exposure to acidic solutions such as lemon juice, tomatoes, vinegar, etc. The use of inappropriate cleaning agents may also trigger acidic

MAN-MADE STONE MATERIALS

Varieties. Man-made countertops come in several varieties, but not all types of man-made countertops are considered man-made “stone”, though. Laminate, Corian, cultured marble, recycled glass, porcelain, concrete, metal, and paper countertops are all man-made.

The composition of a quartz countertop is basically the same no matter which brand you buy. All are 93% quartz and 7% binding resins. The different types of quartz countertops come down to the different colors, patterns, and finishes each brand develops. The quartz countertop material itself is the same across all brands.

attack. Acidic solutions can permanently etch the surface of the material. The application of a sealer will reduce, but not eliminate, the vulnerability to acidic attack. For these reasons, your stone dealer may not recommend marble for use in kitchens.

Limestones and travertine are calcium based similar to marble. Therefore, they have the same weaknesses as marbles when used as countertops. Abrasion damage is a concern, particularly if the stone is polished. Many varieties of these stone types will absorb water to some degree and must be sealed to help protect them.

STONE CARE DISCLOSURE

MAINTENANCE

Application of Sealers. The application of a topical sealer or impregnator is a common step in decreasing the vulnerability of the stone to stains.

Topical sealers cure as a film on the stone surface. Since the material is actually covering the stone, the appearance of the stone surface may be altered by the application of this type of product. This material will provide somewhat of a sacrificial layer over the stone, and will absorb most of the wear on the countertop. Since the sealer is softer than the stone, normal use of the countertop will result in abrasion of the sealer surface and dictate reapplication to maintain the original luster of the surface. A properly applied topical sealer will normally reduce, although not eliminate, the vulnerability of calcareous stones to attack from mildly acidic solutions.

Impregnators will penetrate the stone and cure a few millimeters below the surface, residing in the microscopic spaces between the minerals in the stone. These products do not actually “seal” the stone, and are more correctly referred to as a repellent rather than a sealer. As such, they are formulated to prevent transmission of liquids, while allowing transmission of vapor (not unlike ‘breathable’ fibers). Since they reside below the actual surface of the stone, the change to the appearance of the stone surface is minimal. Impregnators will be either hydrophobic, in that they repel water-based fluids only, or oleophobic, repelling both oil and water-based fluids. The Manufacturer of the impregnator product will recommend a reapplication interval.

Care and cleaning practices.

Stone is a natural product and simple care and maintenance will keep it looking beautiful. Make

sure you understand which methods are best for your particular stone countertop.

Man-made quartz doesn't need sealing and is very stain-resistant. But it can be discolored by some chemicals. The methods for general quartz and natural stone cleaning are essentially the same. For quick cleanups use hot water and a sponge. Avoid soap as this forms a film. Using a quality stone cleaner for messes and end-of-day cleaning is best for both natural stone and/or quartz countertops.

FIVE COMMON PRACTICES TO AVOID IN ORDER TO MAINTAIN YOUR NATURAL STONE SURFACES.

- 1 Cleaning With Vinegar
- 2 Choosing an Abrasive Tool
- 3 Skipping the Dust Mop
- 4 Leaving High-Traffic Areas Unprotected
- 5 Not Sealing Your Stone Regularly