



Artistic Stone Design / Vanillawood Design Build



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## Granite Maintenance

Granite countertops can last a lifetime, if correctly maintained. Granite is, hands down, the most popular countertop surface chosen for homes. This means it's vital to learn how to care for it properly!

### SEAL

All stone countertops are slightly porous. Granite countertops are less porous than marble, but they still have a tendency to absorb liquids. In kitchen terms, this means that your Granite counters can turn any spill into a colorful and potentially permanent stain. The solution is to keep up with sealing your Granite; this will prevent stains and maintain your counter's finish. Talk to your fabricator to determine which sealant is right for you. When water no longer beads, it's time to reseal. The polished finish is still the most popular choice, but other finishes are available, such as honed or leathered. These provide some texture, along with a matte finish, and have special care considerations. Since these finishes tend to be more absorbent, a special penetrating or enhancing sealer is recommended to protect your countertop from stains, or even everyday fingerprints.

### PROTECT

Wiping up counters regularly with a gentle ph neutral cleanser, water, and a soft cloth or paper towel. As with any surface, simple preventative measures should be taken to protect your countertops. Wipe up spills and moisture as quickly as possible, and use coasters, trivets, and cooling racks.

### CLEAN

After sealing your countertop, you should also ensure that you clean it regularly. The best way to do this is with a damp cloth and some mild ph neutral detergent. After you've applied the soap, rinse the counter with plain water and another clean cloth. In between major washings, you use a wet micro cloth to dust off your countertop while maintaining its finish. When you're cleaning any stone countertop, it's important to avoid using abrasive or harsh cleaners. Citrus and vinegar bases will cut through the sealant and can leave your stone exposed. If you need something stronger than soap, look for an antibacterial and virucidal cleaner that's intended for use with natural stone.

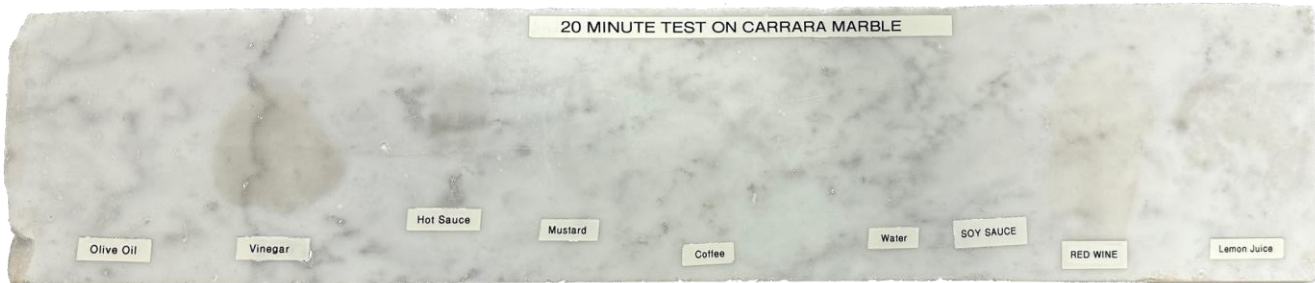
### SPOT TREAT

To remove stubborn stains, use a poultice paste. Spread it onto the stain, then cover with plastic wrap. Once it's dry (12 to 24 hours), scrape the paste off and wipe off the remainder with a damp cloth. For deep-set stains, you may need to reapply paste. If your counter has stains that are difficult to remove, or scratches, contact a stone care professional for repair.



Enhancing Sealer

Traditional Sealer



**Marble Maintenance**

Protecting marble against etching and staining takes effort.

**SEAL**

People often ask if there is anything you can do to prevent marble from etching. Unfortunately, no. Sealers can't prevent the chemical etching from occurring. Keep in mind no sealer will ever make your marble stainproof. Talk to your fabricator to determine which sealant is right for you. When water no longer beads, it's time to reseal.

**PROTECT**

Vinegar, citrus, and tomato will etch marble; don't let them sit on the stone. Treat marble as you would a fine wood finish. Use coasters and cutting boards and wipe up spills immediately. As you can see above, even 20 minutes can cause damage.

**CLEAN**

Avoid using acidic or abrasive cleaners. Wipe up loose dirt and use a damp rag or sponge regularly. Try and wipe up spills quickly! Warm, ph neutral, soapy water is the best for the job—just make sure to rinse well, sop up any standing water, and thoroughly dry the surface. Also note that, for marble, acid is kryptonite—so do your best to keep things like wine and lemon juice (or even cleaners that contain vinegar) away from the surface. And if they do spill, tend to them as quickly as possible.

**SPOT TREAT**

To remove stubborn stains, use a poultice paste. Spread it onto the stain, then cover with plastic wrap. Once it's dry (12 to 24 hours), scrape the paste off and wipe off the remainder with a damp cloth. For deep-set stains, you may need to reapply paste. If your counter has stains that are difficult to remove, or scratches, contact a stone care professional for repair.







## Quartzite Maintenance

Quartzite countertops make for an appealing and exotic kitchen installation. Thanks to their durability, utility and beauty, these counters have become the go-to choice for many homeowners; however, even the best counters can still get stained or dirty, especially after heavy use. Regular maintenance will help you keep your quartzite countertops looking and functioning at their best.

### SEAL

All stone countertops are slightly porous. Quartzite countertops are less porous than marble or granite, but they still have a tendency to absorb liquids. In kitchen terms, this means that your quartzite counters can quickly turn any spill into a colorful and potentially permanent stain. The solution is to keep up with sealing your quartzite; this will prevent stains and maintain your counter's finish. Talk to your fabricator to determine which sealant is right for you. When water no longer beads, it's time to reseal.

### PROTECT

Wiping up counters regularly with a gentle ph neutral cleanser, water, and a soft cloth or paper towel. As with any surface, simple preventative measures should be taken to protect quartzite countertops. Wipe up spills and moisture as quickly as possible, and use coasters, trivets, and cooling racks.

### CLEAN

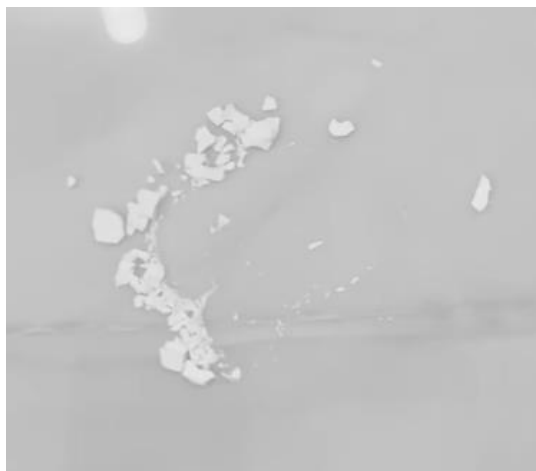
After sealing your quartzite countertop, you should also ensure that you clean it regularly. The best way to do this is with a damp cloth and some mild ph neutral detergent. After you've applied the soap, rinse the counter with plain water and another clean cloth. In between major washings, you use a wet micro cloth to dust off your countertop while maintaining its delicate shine. When you're cleaning any stone countertop, it's important to avoid using abrasive or harsh cleaners. Citrus and vinegar bases will cut through the sealant and can leave your stone exposed. If you need something stronger than soap, look for an antibacterial and virucidal cleaner that's intended for use with natural stone.

### SPOT TREAT

To remove stubborn stains, use a poultice paste. Spread it onto the stain, then cover with plastic wrap. Once it's dry (12 to 24 hours), scrape the paste off and wipe off the remainder with a damp cloth. For deep-set stains, you may need to reapply paste. If your counter has stains that are difficult to remove, or scratches, contact a stone care professional for repair.



Immediately applied



Scraped off

Photos Provided by: Charla Ray  
Interior Design



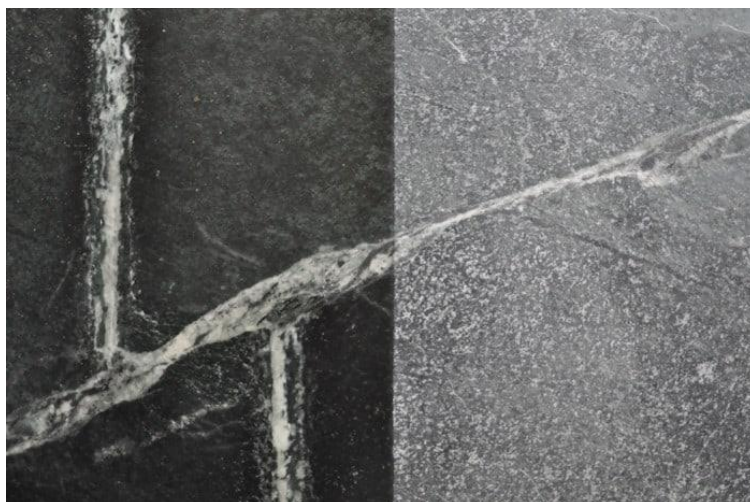
### Soapstone Maintenance

The only maintenance required for soapstone (steatite) is the application of mineral oil to enhance the natural darkening process the stone goes through. Once mineral oil is applied, the stone will turn into a very dark charcoal gray, sometimes black. Often times, varieties of soapstone will keep a hint of green. Steatite (soapstone or soaprock) is virtually heat proof and used in the construction of masonry heaters because of its excellent thermal qualities. It is also used in creating pizza stones, cooking pots, oven interiors and numerous related applications. You can take a pot right from your stove and place it on your soapstone countertops without harm.

### Oiling a Soapstone Countertop

We recommend oiling your countertops to ensure that the stone will evenly darken. The oil is not sealing or protecting the stone, it is only "speeding up" the natural darkening process that steatite (soapstone) goes through. Soapstone is non-porous and, unlike marble and granite, does not need to be sealed. There isn't a set rule of how often you should oil the countertops. Oiling too little or too much will not damage the stone in any way. We recommend oiling the countertops as soon as the previous coat of mineral oil has started fading away (evaporating). Once you oil the countertops for the first time, you will see the stone will become much darker. A few days from the first oiling, most soapstone will lighten back up. You can re-treat your countertops every time this happens. The soapstone will take approximately 3 coats of mineral oil to reach its final color, getting darker after every oiling. Every time you oil your countertops, the stone will hold the oil longer than the last time, until about the 6th or 8th month the stone will stay permanently dark.

You can oil the countertops any way you like. You can spread some oil on the counters, then rub it with a rag, or you can put the oil on the rag and oil the counters. To make the next oiling easier, keep the same rag in a zip lock bag, you will see that the rag will soak in the oil and spread easier on the countertops. Immediately after you've oiled the soapstone, you can remove all the excess, until the countertops no longer feel slick. There is no such thing as "let the oil soak in". Remember, soapstone is impermeable, nothing penetrates the surface.



Oiled

Un-Oiled



### Cleaning a Soapstone Countertop

Any common household cleaner can be used to clean soapstone counter surfaces. Chemicals and acids do not harm it. However, we do recommend that you use regular soap and water because harsher solvents may remove the mineral oil treatment, therefore generating more maintenance. Soapstone, being softer than granite and marble, is also more prone to scratches. The great advantage is that any scratches can be easily removed with a light sanding and/or mineral oil.

### Removing Scratches

Eventually the countertops will get scratched. Most scratches can be hidden by lightly applying some mineral oil. If you get a deep scratch in there, you will need to do some sanding. With a small piece of 120-grit sandpaper, sand the scratch area in a circular motion until the scratch is almost gone, then using a 220-grit sandpaper do the same thing but this time using water. Clean up the countertop and oil in that section again. Sanding will remove the mineral oil, and remember that the stone will take 3 coats to reach the final color. You may notice a slight color difference on that spot. Do not worry, you can oil in the morning, then again in the afternoon and so on until the color evens out.

#### DO

Use soapstone in the kitchen as it is non-porous & heat resistant



#### DON'T

Forget to use a cutting board to avoid scratches in your soapstone



#### DO

Apply mineral oil or wax to your soapstone counter to give it a more uniform appearance



#### DON'T

Worry about complex maintenance like sealing your soapstone or only using specialty cleaners.



**General Precaution for Liquid Stains:**

Keeping your EleQuence clean is simple and easy. It is recommended to use a soft cloth and apply a **neutral household liquid detergent** (avoid using any high pH products such as an oven cleaner). If the countertop comes in contact with cleaning products that contain bleach, are acidic or have a high pH chemical constituent, rinse immediately to avoid further damage to the stone surface.

For a second cleaning on your countertop surface, it is recommended to follow these steps:

1. Use a **nonabrasive cream cleanser** mixed with warm water, gently wipe the entire surface or use a soft non-scratch cloth to very gently rub where you think the stain might be until you remove the cleaning product and wipe down with clean warm water.
2. Then use a dry non-scratch cloth to bring the surface back to your original shine. Never excessively scrub or rub heavily on your countertop as this may cause, a dullening of the stone surface.

**General Instructions for way of cleaning for different liquids:**

Liquid Stain Caused by	Way of cleaning
Oil	Ph neutral detergent with sponge scouring pad
Ink	Sponge scouring pad with rubbing alcohol (Isopropyl alcohol) or washing powder solution.
Rust	White vinegar with scouring pad
Food stains	Ph neutral detergent with sponge scouring pad
Water marks	White vinegar with scouring pad

**Preventive measure for Heat Resistance:**

Hot pots, pans or any other utensils should never be placed on a EleQuence Surface at high temperatures. Quartz surfaces normally have a heat resistance of 100- 120 degree Celsius (212 degree Fahrenheit). However, excessive localized heat may result in the damage of your countertop surface due to thermal shock.

**Safeguard against scratches and blunt marks:**

It is appropriate to use a cutting board while performing any cutting action using a knife or a sharp object directly on to the stone surface. This can help to avoid blunt marks and scratches that may damage the stone’s surface.

**BEST CARE PRACTICES FOR COMPOSITES:**

1. Clean up spills as soon as possible to minimize contact time with staining agent.
2. Cleaning agents: use pH-neutral cleaner designed for stone; rinse with water, towel-dry. Do not use bleach or acidic cleaners except according to **manufacturer’s** recommendation in stain removal guides.
3. Repairs are possible but not invisible. If a composite product has been stained or scratched, repair may be affected by a stone restoration specialist. Unlike natural stone, however, repairs to composites are generally noticeable and breaks are typically not repairable.



**Routine Maintenance:**

For daily cleaning, simply use a damp microfiber cloth. Mopping up any stain producing substances (e.g. coffee, tea, red wine) as quickly as possible after spilling makes cleaning easier. We recommend you use a neutral liquid detergent with a soft sponge or microfiber cloth.

**Stubborn stains:**

Any stubborn marks may be removed by using a low-abrasion sponge beforehand (we do not recommend the use of steel scouring pads as they may leave metal residues that are hard to remove), using a specific product (see table) if necessary.

**Precautions for use:**

Highly caustic substances (e.g. oven cleaners), acids or dyes must be removed extremely quickly, by washing the surface with water. Take care to avoid blows to the weaker areas (sides and edges). Porcelain offers excellent resistance to thermal shock, which means hot pots and pans can be placed directly on the top, although we still recommend the use of hot mats. Ceramic knives can scratch the surface; we recommend you use chopping boards.

Liquid Stain Caused by	Way of cleaning
METAL RESIDUES	Ph Neutral/acidic detergent
COCA COLA, LEMON	Ph Neutral detergent
COFFEE/TEA, WINE	Ph Neutral detergent/bleach
SAUCE/KETCHUP	Ph Neutral detergent, cream or powdered detergent
OIL/GREASE/FAT	Alkaline detergent

**Safeguard against scratches and blunt marks:**

It is appropriate to use a cutting board while performing any cutting action using a knife or a sharp object directly on to the stone surface. This can help to avoid blunt marks and scratches that may damage the stone platform.

**BEST CARE PRACTICES :**

1. Clean up spills as soon as possible to minimize contact time with staining agent.
2. Cleaning agents: use pH-neutral cleaner; rinse with water, towel-dry. Repairs are possible but not invisible. If a porcelain product has been stained or scratched, repair may be affected by a stone restoration specialist. Unlike natural stone, however, repairs to composites are generally noticeable and breaks are typically not reparable.

**Regular Cleaning:**

Weekly, the surface should be cleaned with Soft Scrub<sup>®</sup> Liquid Gel with Bleach and thoroughly dried. Due to the quartz's high density and non-porous qualities, normal cleaning with a damp cloth and mild detergent is all you need to keep your Caesarstone surface looking great. We recommend a thorough cleaning of your Caesarstone surface on a regular basis (because of the patina that will develop on the surface from day-to-day use) to keep the surface as beautiful as the day it was installed. If you have heavy patina build-up from using non-approved cleaners, **please contact Caesarstone's Customer Care department** for detailed instructions on how best to remove it.

**Guidelines:**

- Counters are not sold with patina. Natural patina can take around 6 months to form using regular mild cleaners, soap and water, Windex, etc.
- Patina forms on all quartz products unless bleach based cleaner is used regularly
- All colors become slightly darker and shinier
- No sealer of any kind should ever be used
- May be called something different but still acts like a sealer
- Sealer leaves a topical film that makes cleaning even harder over time

**How Does Caesarstone Quartz Withstand Heat?**

Caesarstone can withstand very brief exposure to moderate heat, however the material can potentially be damaged by sudden and rapid temperature changes, especially near the edges. Therefore, the best course of action to prevent discoloration or cracking is to use inexpensive and readily available trivets, especially when using cooking units such as electric frying pans, crock pots or toaster ovens. Do not put hot cookware directly on the Caesarstone surface.

**How Durable Is Caesarstone Quartz?**

Tough, yes. Indestructible, no. Caesarstone is resistant to cracks, scratches and stains. However, like most materials, force and/or pressure from objects can damage the surface. As with any surface, Caesarstone can be permanently damaged by exposure to strong chemicals and solvents. Use of a minimum 1/8" radius on an edge detail profile can reduce the susceptibility for chipping on the edge. A greater profile radius (minimum 1/4") is recommended for high traffic areas, such as sink areas and commercial installations. Caesarstone surfaces are scratch resistant; however, avoid using sharp objects such as knives or screwdrivers directly on the surface. The use of a cutting board is always recommended.

**Are There any Chemicals or Cleaners to Avoid?**

Prolonged exposure to any cleaning solutions may cause permanent damage/discoloration to the countertop surface. Avoid exposing Caesarstone to chemicals, such as oven grill cleaners, floor strippers, paint removers/strippers, oil soaps, toilet bowl cleaners, tarnish removers, furniture cleaners, drain products, battery acid, dishwasher detergent, etc. Should your surface accidentally be exposed to any potentially damaging products, rinse immediately with water to neutralize the effect.

Liquid Stain Caused by	Way of cleaning
Common Household Spills	<p>Soft Scrub<sup>®</sup> Liquid Gel with Bleach or 50/50 combination of vinegar and water</p> <p>Instructions: Thoroughly rinse off the soap or mild detergent with warm water after use and dry with soft cloth or paper towel. You may also clean the surface with either Soft Scrub<sup>®</sup> Liquid Gel or alcohol using a cloth or paper towel. To avoid dulling the surface shine, make sure to use a non-abrasive cleaner and thoroughly wash off with water after use. Those wishing to use environmentally safe cleaners may also use a combination of 50/50 vinegar and water, rinsing and drying the surface thoroughly afterwards.</p>
Stubborn Food Stains	<p>Soft Scrub<sup>®</sup> Liquid Gel with Bleach</p> <p>Instructions: If needed, apply a generous amount of a non-abrasive gel, such as Soft Scrub<sup>®</sup> Liquid Gel with Bleach, to a damp soft cloth (not directly onto the countertop). Wipe the area using a circular motion, rinsing thoroughly with water and dry with soft cloth or paper towel.</p>
Dried Spills	<p>Soft Scrub<sup>®</sup> Liquid Gel with Bleach</p> <p>Instructions: To remove adhered material, first carefully scrape away the excess material with a plastic putty knife and then clean the surface with a damp cloth to remove any marks left behind and any residual dirt. Do not use any abrasive pads to clean tougher dirt as abrasives can damage the finish/sheen of your countertops.</p>
Metal and Rust Marks	<p>Bar Keepers Friend Powder (Special use for spot cleaning ONLY. Because of the abrasive nature of this cleaner, use Bar Keepers Friend Power only as follows: Place a small amount on a damp cloth. Using very light pressure, wipe the area where the marks are in a circular motion, rinsing thoroughly with warm water and dry with a soft cloth or paper towel. Do not use a scouring pad or over scrub.)</p>
Oil (Synthetic or Natural)	<p>Soft Scrub<sup>®</sup> Liquid Gel with Bleach or Dawn Soap</p> <p>Instructions: Apply a delicate cleaning product on the surface if necessary (soap and water often suffice) and allow it to sit for five minutes. Wipe clean with a damp cloth and material disintegrates with ease. Avoid soaps with plant oils as they may leave a film build-up on the surface.</p>
Cosmetics	<p>Soft Scrub<sup>®</sup> Liquid Gel with Bleach</p> <p>Instructions: Apply the cleaning product to a damp cloth. After a few seconds, wipe with a clean cloth and water then wipe dry.</p>
Other	<p>Soft Scrub<sup>®</sup> Liquid Gel with Bleach or Alcohol or 50/50 combination of vinegar and water</p> <p>Instructions: Soft Scrub<sup>®</sup> Liquid Gel should remove most dirt and spills. For tougher spills or dried-on stains, apply alcohol to a cloth and let sit for a few minutes. Wipe clean with a damp cloth or paper towel then dry the surface. To remove hard water deposits, treat the surface with a 50/50 combination of vinegar and water before wiping.</p>