

Granite Counter Top Care Tips

The easiest way to keep your stone looking great is to **avoid bad habits** that may damage it. Granite, marble, travertine, limestone, soapstone, quartz and solid surface are similar in many ways, but their differences require varying degrees of maintenance. However . . .

If you utilize the granite counter top care and cleaning procedures that follow for *all* your countertops . . . no matter what type of stone or surface . . . you'll eliminate most *potential* problems without ever having to think too hard about it or worry that you may be causing damage.

Do: Blot up spills immediately.

Acidic substances like wine, coffee, fruit juices, tomato sauce and sodas will not etch granite like they do marble, but they could potentially stain the surface. Cooking oils may also leave a stain if not wiped up.

Do: Clean surfaces using a sponge or soft cloth.

Using a specially formulated stone cleaner like [Stone PLUS](#) is recommended to keep your tops in the best condition and protect the sealer, but hot water will do for quick clean-ups. Dish soap won't permanently damage your granite, *but* repeated use of soap will cause build-up (yes, even if you rinse) and dull your countertop's shine. So, using dish soap for regular granite counter top care is *not* recommended.

Do: Use coasters under all glasses, bottles and cans.

Again, granite won't etch and using coasters on dense and/or properly sealed granite is not an absolute necessity like with marble, but using coasters is just a good practice to protect all surfaces.

Do: Use trivets and hot pads under pots & pans.

Yes, you can take a hot pot off the stove and put it right on granite countertops without any problems. It is *possible* for granite (or any stone or quartz) to suffer "thermal shock" and crack, but rare. You don't really want to put hot pans on any other surface save soapstone.

But you must consider other issues as well...

Grit that gets trapped between the pot and the countertop surface may scratch the surface--even granite countertops. Granite is very hard and can take tons of abuse without any significant damage, but it can develop light surface scratches or pitting in high-use areas around the sink and cooktop.

It is not common, but it is possible. And *ALL* other surfaces are softer than granite. Better safe than sorry.

If it does happen, don't fret too much. Most chips and scratches can be repaired, but it's best to avoid them by following the granite counter top care tips.

Also, once you remove the hot pan from the countertop the surface will be very hot and may burn.

Do: Use cutting boards.

Again, avoid the possibility of scratching the surface and protect your knives. Cutting on stone will dull and damage your knives' edges quickly.

Do: Dust mop your natural stone floors regularly.

Use a clean, dry, non-treated dust-mop. Some people choose to use a vacuum cleaner. But be real careful. Worn parts or grit jammed by the wheels may scratch the surface.

Do: Use door mats inside and out along with runners and area rugs.

Grit, dirt and sand carried in by our shoes are abrasive and will wear and scratch the surface. Clean the rugs regularly.

Don't: use generic cleaning products such as bleach, glass cleaners, de-greasers or other common household cleaners.

These products that you buy at your local store contain acids, alkalis and other chemicals that will degrade the granite sealer (and will etch marble) leaving the stone more vulnerable to staining.

Trying to save money by using these chemicals only ensures that you'll spend a lot more time and money on you granite counter top care in the long-run.

Don't: use vinegar, ammonia, lemon or orange as cleaners. Again, most common and name-brand household products are not good for cleaning granite countertops (and definitely cannot be used for marble, travertine or most other stones)

Don't: use bathroom, tub & tile or grout cleaners.

The powders and even the "soft" creams contain abrasives that will scratch and dull surfaces.

Don't: sit or stand on your countertops.

Unlike laminate countertops, granite, marble and quartz countertops are very hard, but not flexible and they DO NOT have a plywood backing so too much weight in one spot could cause a crack.

Don't: store toiletry products directly on your countertop surface.

Hair products, perfumes, colognes, nail products, creams, lotions and potions have a tendency to spill or leak and go overlooked.

Even when sealed, a substance that remains on the surface for an extended period may stain granite (and etch marble and other stones). Practice proactive granite counter top care by storing these products on a shelf or decorative tray like they do in fancy hotels!