



Care and Maintenance of Granite Countertops

Granite is a durable hard stone that is formed over time from volcanic magma. [Granite](#) has earned a reputation as a great building stone and is very popular in homes. It ranges in color but is known for how beautiful it is, especially for countertops. Granite has become a major selling point when prospective homebuyers are shopping for a new place to live in. Caring for granite countertops is necessary to protect the investment.

Pros

Granite countertops are gorgeous additions to a home, with each piece like a unique work of art. Due to granite being available in so many colors, homeowners have many options to choose from. Granite can be chosen to fit any decor or design scheme. Granite is also very durable and resists heat. This makes it great for kneading dough, making roll-out cookies, and other tasks that need a cool countertop for best results.

Cons

It's a common misconception that granite countertops are effortless. In reality, granite requires regular maintenance to keep it looking beautiful. Besides just cleaning, you'll need to make sure the granite is sealed periodically to protect this investment. Stains can be extremely difficult to remove, but not impossible. Dealing with stains quickly will give the best results. Countertops may also be susceptible to cracking, although proper installation can alleviate these concerns.

Basic Cleaning

To keep granite countertops clean, use a [microfiber cloth](#) to dust off the surface. Often a microfiber cleaning cloth, even a dry one, is all that is needed for basic cleaning. For times when spills or daily life happen, try to wipe down the granite countertop daily or as needed using only water. Once a week wipe



your granite countertops down with a damp cloth and a stone cleaner formulated with a neutral pH.

Never use harsh chemicals or abrasive cleaners on your countertops, even if you think the stain or mess needs it. These types of cleaners can scratch, pit, and etch the surface of the stone permanently. For oily stains that have soaked into the granite, try a poultice made of a cup of flour or baking soda and five tablespoons of dish soap.

Add water to make it the consistency of sour cream or yogurt. Place the solution directly on the stain and cover with plastic wrap overnight, before washing away the poultice. Be sure to gently rinse the countertops and dry thoroughly.

Seasonal Maintenance

[Sealing](#) is a regular maintenance task for granite that cannot be ignored. There is a simple test that you can do to determine if your countertops need to be sealed again. Splash a little water on the surface of the countertop, and watch to see if the water sits on the countertop in small bead-like shapes or flows freely. Re-seal the countertop when water splashed on the surface no longer beads up. Be sure to perform this test on areas that get the most use.

It's important to examine your granite at least once a year. Inspect areas to make sure there is no cracking or shifting at the seams. Inspect for stains and scratches as well. If there are stains or damage, contact a stone-care professional for repair. Delaying repair or treatment can lead to larger and more expensive repairs or even the need for a total replacement.

Many homeowners that don't know about or forget to perform these extra seasonal tasks end up with costly repairs.