



GRANITE AND QUARTZ

Countertop Care Guide



SIMS-LOHMAN
FINE KITCHENS *and* GRANITE

GRANITE & Natural Stone

To properly care for the investment of your stone countertop, understanding your stone's geological classification and composition is key. This information will help you to identify what cleaning products to use and how best to care for your natural stone.



KNOW YOUR STONE: There are 3 basic geological classifications by their respective formation processes:

Sedimentary, Metamorphic and Igneous. Additionally, stones in each category can be either Calcareous or Siliceous.

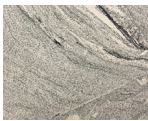
Calcareous stone is composed mainly of Calcium Carbonate, a chemical compound commonly found in natural stone, shells, and pearls. Calcium Carbonate is sensitive to acidic solutions so mild, non-acidic cleaners are recommended.

Siliceous stone is one composed primarily of silicates, such as Quartz, Feldspar, Mica, etc. It is generally resistant to most acids found in kitchen settings, although acidic cleaners are still not recommended.

| | Sedimentary | Metamorphic | Igneous |
|------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|---------|
| Calcareous | Limestone Travertine, Onyx | Marble Serpentine | |
| Siliceous | Sandstone | Slate, Quartzite Soapstone | Granite |

What type of stone do you have?

Conduct a visual identification of the stone.



Granite has a distinct crystal pattern or small flecks with very little veining.



Limestone is typically gray, tan, or buff. Shell and/or fossil impressions may be present.



Marble is usually veined, fine textured patterns that come in many colors.



Sandstone colors vary widely due to mineral and clay variances.



Slate is often green, black, grey, or multi-colored. It has a natural cleft texture.

Basic Cleaning

You'll find caring for your natural stone is easy. Warm water, mild dishwashing liquid, and a soft clean cloth are generally all that's needed to maintain your stone countertop surface. The best care you can give your natural stone is preventive care. By following a few solutions, your countertops will last a lifetime while maintaining a brand-new appearance

Countertop Surfaces:

Using a clean soft cloth, clean your surface with luke warm water, a few drops of neutral cleaner, stone soap, or a mild liquid dishwashing detergent, like **Dawn**. Too much cleaner or soap may leave a film and cause streaks. **DO NOT** use products that contain lemon, vinegar, or other acids on Marble or Limestone. Rinse the surface thoroughly after washing with the soap solution and dry. **DO NOT** use scouring powders or creams, since these products contain abrasives that may scratch the surface.



Bath and Other Wet Areas:

Soap scum can be minimized by using a squeegee after each use.

Solution: To remove soap scum and a build-up or streaking, mix rubbing alcohol and water (50/50 ratio) in a spray bottle. Spray the mixture onto your countertops and wipe dry with a soft cloth.

Floor Surfaces:

Dust mop interior floors frequently to prevent sand, dirt and grit to damage natural stone surfaces. **Solution:** Normal maintenance involves periodic washing with clean, potable water and neutral (pH 7) cleaners. Soapless cleaners are preferred because they minimize streaks and film. Mild, phosphate-free, biodegradable liquid dishwashing soaps or powders or stone soaps are acceptable if rinsing is thorough.





Identifying Stains

Oil-Based Stains: (grease, tar, cooking oil, cosmetics) Will darken the stone and normally must be chemically dissolved so the stain's source can be rinsed away. **Solution:** Clean gently with a soft liquid cleanser house-hold detergent, ammonia, mineral spirits, or acetone.

Organic Stains: (coffee, tea, fruit, tobacco, paper, food, urine, leaves, bark, bird droppings) May cause a pinkish-brown stain and may disappear after the source of the stain has been removed. **Solution:** Indoors, clean with 12% Hydrogen Peroxide and a few drops of Ammonia. Outdoors, with the sources removed, normal sun and rain action will generally bleach out the stains.

Inorganic Stains: (iron, rust, copper, bronze) Iron or rust stains are orange to brown in color and leave the shape of the staining object, such as nails, bolts, screws, cans, flowerpots, or metal furniture. Copper and bronze stains appear as green or muddy brown and result from the action of moisture on nearby or embedded bronze, copper, or brass items. **Solution:** Metal stains must be removed with a poultice. Deep-seated, rusty stains are extremely difficult to remove and the stone may be permanently stained.

Biological Stains: (algae, mildew, lichens, moss, fungi) **Solution:** Clean with a dilute (1/2 cup in a gallon of water) Ammonia, Bleach, or Hydrogen Peroxide. **WARNING: DO NOT MIX BLEACH AND AMMONIA! THIS COMBINATION CREATES A TOXIC GAS!**

Ink Stains: (magic marker, pen, ink) **Solution:** Clean light colored stones with Bleach or Hydrogen Peroxide. Use Lacquer thinner or Acetone for dark-colored stones.



Paint Stains: *Solution:* Small amounts can be removed with Lacquer thinner or scraped off carefully with a razor blade. Heavy paint coverage should be removed with a commercial liquid paint stripper. **DO NOT USE ACIDS OR FLAME TOOLS TO STRIP PAINT FROM STONE.**

Water Spots and Rings: (surface accumulation of hard water) *Solution:* Buff with dry 0000 steel wool.

Fire and Smoke Damage: Older stones and smoke or fire-stained fireplaces may require a thorough cleaning to restore their original appearance. *Solution:* Commercially available smoke removal products may be most efficient.

Etch Marks: (Calcareous stones) Caused by acids (typically from Milk, Fruit juices, Alcohol, etc.) left on the surface of the stone, some will etch the finish but not leave a stain; others will both etch and stain. *Solution:* Once the stain has been removed, wet the surface with clear water and sprinkle with Marble polishing powder. Rub the powder into the stone with a damp cloth or by using a buffing pad with a low-speed power drill or polisher. Continue buffing until the etch mark disappears and the Marble surface shines. Honing may be required for deep etching. This process may require the services of a stone maintenance professional.

Tough Stains: May require Poultice. *Solution:* Mix a paste of baking soda and water that has the consistency of sour cream. Slather the paste on the stain. Cover the paste with plastic wrap. Let set for 24 hours, then remove the poultice, and clean the area. Repeat until it lightens.

Sealing & Maintenance

Sims-Lohman applies a sealer to your stone at the time of installation. Factors such as your choice of stone, its finish, and its location will help you determine how often you need to reseal your stone. In most cases, we recommend you reapply your stone every 1 - 3 years.

Resealing is an easy task that you, as the homeowner can perform. Sealers can be purchased at most home centers. Avoid using a stone sealer that will not penetrate the stone, as it will create a cloudy surface that will have to be removed by stripping the entire countertop using harsh solvents. Make sure you understand the differences between the types of sealers that are available on the market.

It is also a good idea to test any new sealer on a small, inconspicuous area of the countertop before sealing the entire surface.

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Do's and Don'ts

- **DO** clean surfaces with mild detergent or stone soap
- **DO** thoroughly rinse and dry the surface with clean, clear water after washing
- **DO** blot up spills immediately
- **DO** avoid scratches which can occur with certain stoneware, or pizza stones containing Silica sand
- **DO** save a chip which a professional may be able to reattach using epoxy
- **DO** use coasters and trivets
- **DO NOT** rest hot pans on your countertop
- **DO NOT** use harsh cleaning products
- **DO NOT** stand on your countertop for any reason
- **DO NOT** store bottles of cooking oil directly on your countertop
- **DO NOT** leave acidic liquids on the surface which can dull the finish, (Lemon or Orange Juice, Vinegar, Soft Drinks, and Wine)
- **DO NOT** use abrasive products such as dry or soft cleansers. (Comet)



QUARTZ

 **SILESTONE®**
by COSENTINO



QUARTZ

Routine Cleaning & Maintenance

Due to their low porosity, Silestone® surfaces are highly resistant to household stains. Cosentino recommends you use Q-Action* to clean its Silestone® surfaces. If you do not have this product, the best alternative is to use water and neutral soap. You should then finish off by rinsing the surface with plenty of water and drying it with a soft cloth.

Cleaning Stubborn Stains

When faced with stubborn stains, here are our recommendations:

Grease stains

Apply Q-Action or VIM® Actifizz® multi-purpose spray onto the stain and rub it with the soft side of a sponge until it disappears. Repeat the process if necessary. Rinse with a generous amount of water and dry the area.

Limescale:

Use cleaning Vinegar and a damp sponge. If the stain persists, you can use a Limescale remover that has been diluted with water. Never leave it on for more than 2 minutes. Repeat the process if necessary. Rinse with plenty of water and dry a soft cloth.

Silicone and Putty Stains:

We recommend you remove this type of stain as soon as possible. To do so, use a knife blade held horizontally and Clean Colorsil, and scrub with a sponge. If you don't have any Clean Colorsil, you can use a well-known brand of silicone remover. Afterwards, rinse with plenty of water and dry.

Cleaning Difficult Stains

For difficult stains, pour some Q-Action (or VIM® Actifizz® multi-purpose spray) onto the affected area and leave for 2 minutes. Scrub with a gentle scouring pad (for glass-top cookers), rinse with plenty of water and dry. If the stain persists, contact your fabricator or K&B dealer who supplied you with your Silestone countertop.

OTHER STAINS

| STAIN | PRODUCT | TOOL |
|----------------------------------|----------------------|----------------|
| Food | Neutral Soap + Water | Wet Soft Cloth |
| Ink | Alcohol Etalic* | Paper Roll |
| Greasy Stains (Oil) | Neutral Soap + Water | Wet Sponge |
| Rust / Metal | Hydrochloric Acid* | Paper Roll |
| Limescale | Limescale/Vinegar | Wet Sponge |
| Other Stains (Coloring, Wine) | Diluted Bleach | Wet Sponge |

* Do not apply directly on the stain, but on the paper roll.

Response to Impacts

One of the most notable features of those surfaces is their high impact resistance. However, you should avoid any impacts in those areas that have been left weakened and exposed (sharp pointed corners, non-bevelled edges, thin edges, etc.) due to the material fabrication and elaboration.

Avoiding Heat Damage

After using certain kitchen utensils, such as frying pans, pots and other items that give off heat, do not place them directly onto the surface. Instead, you should use a trivet (a rubber one, if possible) until the utensils have cooled down. The thermal shock could damage the surface.

Cleaning Silicone and Glue

During the fabrication (miter cutting, laminating, general cleaning of pieces) and the counter top installation (joints, splash backs, etc.) where glues, adhesives and silicones are used, we recommend to clean afterwards (at latest 30 minutes after gluing). To do so, use clean cotton cloths or paper. Use Clean Colorsil (Cosentino's complementary product) as a Silicone and adhesive cleaner. Isopropyl Alcohol or Isopropanol (cleaning Alcohol) or ethanol may be used instead.

Not Recommended: Products such as solvents or Acetone should not be used for cleaning countertops or slabs. Scouring pads should not be used. It is advisable to use a microfibre soft cloth or wet paper roll.



Precautions for General Use

- **DO NOT** leave water on the surface for long periods of time. The most susceptible areas are those that are close to sinks.
- **DO NOT** use sharp objects to cut directly on the countertop surface. Instead, use protective materials such as chopping boards.
- **DO NOT** place the surface outside or anywhere that may be exposed to high levels of ultraviolet radiation.
- **DO NOT** place any objects that give off heat, or that have been recently removed from the cooker, onto the surface. Use a trivet.
- **DO NOT** use water-repellents, sealants, polishes or similar products.
- **DO NOT** polish the surface.
- **DO NOT** place heavy objects that are unsuitable for countertop use on the surface.
- **DO NOT** use paint strippers, caustic soda or any products with a pH greater than 10. If you use bleach or solvents, you should rinse the surface with plenty of water immediately. Never leave such products in permanent contact with the surface, as they may affect it after 12 hours. Avoid the use of any Chlorine-based products and any contact with Hydrofluoric acid.
- **DO NOT** use grease removers with a high mineral content, or very strong products containing 50% solutions of Hydrochloric acid or Sodium Hydroxide.
- **DO NOT** use any cleaning products that have a mineral content or that include microparticles in their composition.
- **DO NOT** use any scouring pads that may scratch the surface. Use the soft side of a cleaning sponge.

Examples of products that you MUST NOT use on Silestone surfaces: paint strippers, oven-cleaning products, cleaning products containing Methylene Chloride, acids for unblocking plugholes or nail-polish removers containing Acetone.

If any of these products are spilled onto the surface, remove them as quickly as possible and rinse using plenty of water with neutral soap.

Note: The use of these types of products may result in the loss of the product warranty.



* To check terms and conditions please go to www.silestone.com

** To obtain more information about colors with a NSF certificate please visit www.nsf.org



Sims-Lohman is an Accredited Natural Stone Fabricator Member of the Natural Stone Institute. Natural stone care and cleaning information originally sourced by the Natural Stone Institute.



Sims-Lohman is a family-owned cabinet distributor and fabricator of countertops. Our legacy of developing trusted relationships within the building industry has helped our business evolve and grow. Call us today for an appointment with one of our talented design specialists.

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