



CARE & MAINTENANCE

NATURAL STONE SURFACES

marble
granite
limestone
travertine
engineered stone
tiles

Taking Care of Your Natural Stone Surface

One of the advantages of having natural stone is its long lasting beauty. All natural stones are subject to variations in colour, grain structure, tonality and veining. Stone is a natural product and simple care and maintenance will keep it looking beautiful. Here are some recommendations for routine care and cleaning which will help the lasting beauty of your natural stone for years to come.

Routine Care & Maintenance

Sand, dirt or grit can do damage to any surface so it is highly recommended that interior floors are frequently swept and mopped with a dry dust mop. Placing mats or rugs at the entrance of a hallway or room will also help minimise the problem.

When cleaning natural stone always use a mild non-abrasive pH neutral cleaning detergent with warm water. A clean mop for floors and a soft cloth for other surface areas should be used. The cleaning product you use should not have vinegar, lemon or acid in its contents as these will do harm to the surface of the natural stone.

Use coasters under all glasses, particularly those containing alcohol or citrus juices. Many common foods and drinks contain acids that will etch or dull the stone surface.

A penetrating sealer should be applied to all natural stone surfaces as it creates a lining between the middle and top surface of the stone. This stops stains from penetrating the natural stone. We recommend the use of HMK S34 Protection - Extra - Sealer (Silicone Impregnator) which is available from Granite & Marble Works Pty Ltd on contact ph (02) 9519 9900.

Preventing Damage

Heat

Natural stone can withstand exposure to moderately hot temperatures without being damaged, but extreme temperature changes, whether prolonged, sudden direct contact with, or radiated heat from very hot pots can cause thermal shock, discolouration or damage which can permanently damage the material.

Therefore, we do not recommend placing hot pots, pans, electric frying pans and oven trays directly from the hotplate out of the oven onto the surface. We recommend a hot pad or trivet be placed on the surface under cooking units such as electric frying pans, pots, saucepans, roaster ovens, hot skilletts or any heat generating appliances on the surface.

Scratches

Refraining from using sharp objects such as sharp knives or screw drivers directly onto the surface as it will scratch and make the surface lose its shine. The use of cutting boards and taking care not to drop or move heavy objects on the surface will help to ensure the long lasting beauty the stone.



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Chemicals

With any stone surface, natural stone can be permanently damaged by exposure to strong chemicals and solvents. Do not use products that contain Trichlorethane or Methylene chloride, such as paint removers, paint, strippers, nail polish removers, bleach, furniture cleaners, oil soaps, permanent markers and inks. Any of these products may leave a residue and should be rinsed off thoroughly.

Avoid the use of highly aggressive cleaning agents such as oven/grill/drain cleaners and dishwasher polishing agents that have high alkaline/pH levels. A pH Neutral Detergent should only be used. Should your surface accidentally be exposed to any of these damaging products, rinse immediately with clean water to neutralize the effect, and then follow with normal cleaning procedures.

Floor Surfaces: Dust mop interior floors frequently using a clean non-treated dry dust mop. Sand, dirt and grit do the most damage to natural stone surfaces due to their abrasiveness. Mats or area rugs inside and outside an entrance will help to minimize the sand, dirt and grit that will scratch the stone floor. Be sure that the underside of the mat or rug is a non-slip surface. Normally, it will take a person about eight steps on a floor surface to remove sand or dirt from the bottom of their shoes. Do not use vacuum cleaners that are worn. The metal or plastic attachments or the wheels may scratch the surface.

Other Surfaces: Clean stone surfaces with a recommended neutral cleaner, stone soap (available at Granite and Marble Works) or a mild liquid dishwashing detergent and warm water. Use a clean rag mop on floors and a soft cloth for other surfaces for best results. 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 with a soft cloth. Change the rinse water frequently. Do not use scouring powders or creams; these products contain abrasives that may scratch the surface.

Bath and Other Wet Areas: In the bath or other wet areas, soap scum can be minimized by using a squeegee after each use. To remove soap scum, use a non-acidic soap scum remover or a solution of ammonia and water (about 1/2 cup ammonia to a gallon of water). Frequent or over-use of an ammonia solution may eventually dull the surface of the stone.

Vanity Top Surfaces: Vanity tops may need to have a penetrating sealer applied. We recommend the use of HMK S34 Protection - Extra - Sealer (Silicone Impregnator) which is available from Granite & Marble Works Pty Ltd on contact ph (02) 9519 9900. A good quality marble wax or non-yellowing automobile paste wax can be applied to minimize water spotting.

Food Preparation Areas: In food preparation areas, the stone may need to have a penetrating sealer applied. We recommend the use of HMK S34 Protection - Extra - Sealer (Silicone Impregnator) which is available from Granite & Marble Works Pty Ltd on contact ph (02) 9519 9900. This sealer is non-toxic and safe for use on food preparation surfaces.

Outdoor Pool & Patio Areas: In outdoor pool, patio or hot tub areas, flush with clear water and use a mild bleach solution to remove algae or moss.



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Do's and Don'ts

- Do dust mop floors frequently
- Do clean surfaces with mild detergent or stone soap
- Do thoroughly rinse and dry the surface after washing
- Do blot up spills immediately
- Do protect floor surfaces with non-slip mats or area rugs and countertop surfaces with coasters, trivets or placemats
- Don't use vinegar, lemon juice or other cleaners containing acids on marble, limestone, travertine, granite or onyx surfaces
- Don't use cleaners that contain acid such as bathroom cleaners, grout cleaners or tub & tile cleaners
- Don't use abrasive cleaners such as dry cleansers or soft cleansers
- Don't mix bleach and ammonia; this combination creates a toxic and lethal gas

HMK® Stone Care

The HMK Stone Care System includes a complete, comprehensive and interrelated series of products for all natural and semi-natural stone, and man-made hard surfaces. Unlike other products, which were initially designed for ceramics and later modified to accommodate natural stone, the HMK® system was specifically developed for natural stone and marble. Laboratory tested and field proven by professionals, the HMK® Stone Care System shows superior results over using individual products.

To properly care for natural stone, extensive knowledge is needed. HMK®, developed in Europe where natural stone has been used for thousands of years, is the marriage of chemistry and geology.

HMK® is known worldwide as the most complete stone care line, with over 60 specialty products, designed to maintain the natural beauty of stone, tile and pavers. Only the highest quality ingredients are used in our products and are biodegradable whenever possible. We never use chemicals that will deteriorate the stone or make it look artificial, washed out or yellow.

From Pre-Treatment and Initial Clean Up, through Protection, Ongoing Maintenance, and Refinishing, regular HMK® usage ensures the lasting beauty of your installation.

Granite & Marble Works Pty Ltd is the Australian distributor of all HMK® products, and the full range is available in our showroom.

General Comments

For problems that appear too difficult to treat or if a stain has been created, depending how deep it has gone, it can be removed by sanding the stone again. We recommend this procedure to be carried out by a professional stone mason only – Granite and Marble Works will be able provide this service. Please contact us regarding the time and cost to carry out this work.

The above care and maintenance information can be applied to all Marble, Limestone, Travertine, Granite, Onyx surfaces and all other natural stone surfaces.

For more care & maintenance information, please call Granite & Marble Works on (02) 9519 9900