

CARING FOR AND POLISHING YOUR MARBLE

Marble is a beautiful choice for kitchen countertops, bathroom vanity tops, fireplaces and more. Marble is a wonderful natural stone with a very nice finish, but marble – like many things – can be damaged over time after much wear and tear. So how do you clean or polish your marble countertops, fireplaces, vanities, etc. to keep the marble looking bright and shiny? Here are some simple tips that you should follow.



How to Clean Marble

Marble is a limestone that has metamorphosed through heat and pressure, and in the process mixed with natural elements to produce the colours and intricate veining that makes it so beautiful. If only you didn't have to keep it clean...

Here are a few very important things to know cleaning marble.

- Marble is not granite. People often confuse the two, but there are some major differences between marble and granite, namely that Marble is softer than granite, so it stains and wears more easily and cannot be treated in the same ways.
- You must **never** use vinegar or cleaners containing lemon to clean marble.
- The acidic quality of vinegar (as well as many other cleaning products, like bathroom cleaners or those with lemon) will etch – dull – the surface of your marble.
- How to clean marble safely? Take a minimalist approach and go stronger only if you need to.

Cleaning Marble Countertops and Floors

For everyday marble cleaning, keep it simple. For quick touch-ups, less is definitely more. Use a soft cloth (we recommend a microfiber one) and warm water, (consider distilled if you haven't got a water softener installed) water to clean marble countertops – especially after contact with food – and then use another cloth to dry the surface.



Marble is very prone to water spots, so it is a good idea to never let it air dry. For cleaning marble floors, dust-mopping with a microfiber mop or soft cloth should be sufficient on a day-to-day basis, or plain hot water if you need to get rid of any marks. It is important to remember to avoid vinegar and other acidic cleaners when cleaning marble, even if you really, really love the smell of Pine Sol!

Granite & Marble Worktops

Kitchen, Bathroom & Bedroom
Vanity Basins, Bath Surrounds
Cold Shelves

York Stone

Handmade Cobbles
Crazy Paving
Flagstones

Interior Flooring

Marble, Granite,
Limestone

Masonry Service

Exterior Paving
Fire Hearths & Surrounds

If stronger cleaning is required - it is still important to remember that marble is delicate.

- A ph-neutral dishsoap is probably best when you do your deeper marble cleaning, but you may also use acetone (for dark marble only, to be safe), hydrogen peroxide (for light marble), or clear ammonia mixed with water.
- You can purchase a non-abrasive marble cleaner, even one containing a low percentage of beach (5% - 10%) of course, but shop cautiously. Whichever product you choose, be sure to rinse thoroughly so there's no residue left, always dry completely.



Clean marble stains as soon as possible.

Just like acidic cleaners, acidic "stuff" in general is bad for your marble. This includes wine, orange juice, tomatoes and even soft drinks, so get any spills up right away by blotting them – wiping or rubbing can make the problem worse.

- If you're left with a stain anyway, use a commercial marble stain remover, as above. (Remember to choose wisely) or make your own. Try making a poultice (a "soft, moist mass" – not just a medical term) out of a fine powder like whiting or baking soda, going for a peanut butter-like consistency.
- For oil-based stains (cosmetics, grease), use the powder with some water or rubbing alcohol. For water-based ones (coffee, tea), mix the powder with either hydrogen peroxide or acetone.
- When you have your poultice, wet the stain and apply the mixture. Tape plastic wrap over it and let dry (usually at least 24 hours); the drying process should lift the stain out.

Make your marble shine.

- The safest and easiest way to polish marble is with a chamois (shammy) on a damp surface; the chamois will polish at the same time as it dries.
- If you want more shine, try a commercial polish and then dry with the chamois. You can also use baking soda and a stick of chalk to polish marble. First wipe your marble with a baking soda mixture (3 Tbsp. soda to 1 qt. water) and let it air-dry (this time it's okay) for a few hours before rinsing it. Next, moisten a fresh cloth and dip it in crushed chalk, wipe your marble, then rinse and dry thoroughly. If you'd rather not crush chalk or launder a bunch of chamois, use a commercial floor polisher or consult a professional.

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Add further protection annually or bi-annually.

Marble has been used as washstand tops, as cool shelves in pantries, & as butchers blocks for centuries. Marble loves fat, which is why it is used to this day in butchers shops, the fat helps protect the marble. An old fashioned but very effective way to add additional protection to your marble surfaces is to oil them evenly all over using a light coloured, plain, vegetable oil & leave your marble to drink up what it needs before wiping off the surplus an hour or so later. You would do this once or twice a year. This is not essential to the care, but if you take the time your marble will benefit and stay lovely for longer. Unless, of course, you celebrate every scratch, acid etching & wine glass mark, LOVING & celebrating the ageing process (your marble has so far survived the past 35million years or so) & provenance that is reflected in work surfaces which tell a tale of a happy times. NB We have designers that offer a service to 'distress' marble at an extra cost...

In the future years- Consider re-sealing your marble.

Not all stone necessarily requires a sealer, especially since often it is sealed when it is made and/or installed, as ours is. However, because marble is quite porous, (and because sealer loses its effect over time), it is wise to use a sealer to protect against staining and interior damage. A sealer isn't fool proof, but it resists moisture for a lot longer than a surface that is not sealed; this matters when it comes to spills or mud on the floor – it buys you time, at least. If you do re-apply a marble sealer, be sure to use one that is nontoxic and – if you're using it on countertops – safe for food preparation.

Cleaning Marble FAQ

What About Scratches on Marble?

Now that you know how to clean marble, you may be wondering how to deal with scratches. If the scratch is slight, you can try fixing it yourself by using a course-grit sandpaper (starting at a 120 and working up to a 320) or 0000 steel wool. If the scratch is deep, however, or if you're uneasy about doing it yourself and possibly damaging your marble, please consult a professional.



What About Wax on Marble?

Some people use wax on marble because it can polish as well as protect, but it can also lead to discoloration – especially if your marble is white. For best results, try to avoid using wax. .

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