

MARBLE, GRANITE, TRAVERTINE, ONYX AND SLATE

INTRODUCTION:

Marble, granite, travertine, onyx and slate are extremely durable, long lasting natural stones. Although they require little maintenance, as with other fine products, periodic care is recommended. The natural stone industry recommends the following regimen to keep all of your natural stones beautiful.

STAIN PREVENTION:

Most stones are porous and readily absorb liquids and moisture. Materials like limestone and sandstone are extremely absorbent, whereas granites and serpentine (green marble) are denser, but will still absorb liquids that are allowed to remain in contact with them for extended periods of time. In areas where stains are likely to develop, protective measures should be taken.

The use of a sealer will help prevent staining in most situations. The natural stone industry recommends an impregnating stone sealer, which is specifically formulated for sealing stone surfaces. They act by actually filling the small pores in the surface of the stone and can be easily applied to polished, honed, rough or sanded surfaces. Impregnating sealers can be found at most hardware stores.

Even a sealed surface can be stained if left in contact with a staining agent for a long period of time. Therefore, all spills should be cleaned up as soon as possible, and coasters or napkins should be used when serving food or drinks on a stone bar, table, or countertop. Soft drinks, coffee, tea, and fruit juices contain mild acids and can etch the polished surface of a stone and stain quite rapidly. These should be cleaned off immediately with a mild soap and warm water. Remember, do not use any abrasive cleansers.

REGULAR CLEANING:

In order to prevent staining or dirt build-up, regular cleaning is recommended. Stones should be rinsed weekly with warm water and a non-abrasive, clear, non-acidic soap.

STAIN REMOVAL:

If stains do occur, a poultice may be required. Whereas a cleaner will wash off surface dirt, a poultice will actually act to draw out deep-seated dirt and stains from the stone's pores. Some poultice solutions are premixed which is easily applied to light colored marbles. Several applications may be required for difficult stains, and darker marbles should be tested to make sure that the poultice will not bleach the stone. For recurring problems, and/or a deep stain, scratches, or cracks, a professional stone fabricator should be contacted. KEM Homes Construction, Inc. can provide a reference of a fabricator for your convenience.

WHEN SPILLS OCCUR:

No matter how careful you are, spills are going to happen. Quick response time and the right solution will assist you in limiting the possible damage to your stone and/or sealer.

Food Spills - Carefully scoop up spill, do not wipe across the surface. Blot with dry cloth.

Liquid Spills - Blot away excess with clean dry cloth, turning regularly. Do not wipe across surface. For both types of spills, clean with a non-abrasive, clear, non-acidic soap. Then wipe until dry.

Oily Stains - Stains that are oily in nature (olive oil) will dissipate over time.

DO'S

- **Do** use coasters under glasses, especially if they contain alcohol, citrus juice or soda.
- **Do** use mats under hot and cold dishware.
- **Do** dust and clean surfaces frequently.
- **Do** blot up spills immediately to minimize permanent damage.
- **Do** clean surfaces with recommended cleaners.

DON'TS

- **Don't** use vinegar, bleach, ammonia or other general cleaners.
- **Don't** use cleaners that contain acid, such as bathroom cleaners, grout cleaners or tub and tile cleaners.
- **Don't** use alkaline cleaners not specifically formulated for stone.

Do enjoy the beauty of your natural stone interior!