

**Cultured / Artificial marble**, is a type of [solid surface](#), is made from a mix of colours, binders, high strength polyester resin and natural marble stone dust that is cast or formed in a variety of standard and custom molds. When choosing cultured marble or another cultured stone in your home, be aware potential problems with this product caused by poor manufacturing and its high maintenance needs.

Because most of the cultured stone does not contain quartz, which makes it softer and less durable than engineered stone. Therefore, it is NOT recommended for use in kitchens or other hard use areas. It is mostly used in bath only.

## Disadvantages of Cultured Stone

- It could be more expensive if you are in an area that has natural stone readily available.
- If it is not installed properly it will be obvious that it is artificial. This is the case if the installer leaves large gaps between the stones.
- Most manufactured stones are not as thick as real stones and they do not look natural if too many gaps are apparent.
- It is also porous,
- Can't be used in the outdoor and in area where Sun light comes, as its affected by UV rays.
- Once stained can't be removed
- No Texture, when compared to Pure marble
- Agglomerated Marble (chinese Marble or ordinary) can't be repolished.
- Agglomerated Can't be moulded
- Joints are seen.

**Manufacturing Issues** – Use care in choosing your Cultured Stone manufacturer. They are all not created equal!!! Take the time to have a close look at the stone you are going to purchase!

- While natural stone can be fairly consistent in terms of mineral makeup within one color or type of stone, cultured stone can have a wide range of variations. The type and amount of crushed stone added to the product, the chemicals that make up the resins, the temperature it is

made and cooled at can all have an effect on the quality of the finished product.

- Not every cultured marble product is the same; some are much higher in quality than others. Before purchase a product, find out if a warranty exists and if any tests have been carried out on how easily the material chips, scratches or burns. Ask for maintenance recommendations, and compare products between manufacturers. If one vendor admits to more problems, a lower warranty or more maintenance, or if a builder has encountered problems with a manufacturer before, it may be best to avoid this one.
- Some manufactures do not color their stones with the base color thru and thru. This is very important because when the stone is cut the interior color will show. Many product look like pure concrete in the center and look fake when cut or shaped to fit. A very good way to check this is ask the salesperson to show you a stone cut in half. If the surface and the interior are not the same color you will have an ugly edges showing when the installer cuts the stones to fit in tight spots.

**Ongoing Maintenance Issues** - Maintenance is the second largest problem with cultured stone. While the material is touted as not requiring the sealing that natural stone materials do, cultured marble requires a great deal of maintenance to keep it looking good.

- The material can stain from hardwater, toothpaste and other debris, most of which can be removed, but at a cost. The polishing compounds required to help restore its luster also can add up to cost. Additionally, specimens like urine can permanently mark and damage the material, so homes with small children may be better off with another material in tubs and showers.
- The biggest complaint about engineered products is that if something does manage to scratch or somehow deface the surface of your countertop, it is **almost impossible to repair**. This is because engineered stones have a surfacing substance applied to them.

With natural stone it is possible to repair a chip or fill a scratch and to cover your tracks by surface polishing the material. Afterwards the repair can often be unnoticeable. This is something that is difficult or impossible with many engineered stones.

- Most engineered stone countertops are heat-resistant but not heatproof. It can be damaged by high heat and prolonged exposure to heat. This means that the surface may be safe from heat but its internal parts may not **affecting the integrity of the sealer and discolor** it. A very hot frying pan can damage the resin binders of your engineered stone when it is placed directly on the surface. Even Running only hot water may cause cracking around the drain. Continuous long-term exposure to direct sunlight (UV rays) may result in slight discoloration of Quartz stone countertops.

This is the main reason why it is not recommended to use cultured marble in your kitchen

- Keep lit cigarettes away from the surface. They may cause little or no damage at all to your engineered surface, but if they start a **fire**, then you may have to say goodbye to both your house and your artificial stone.
- Avoid placing hot curling irons and rollers directly on the surface of your artificial stone. Also, do not use the surface to iron clothes on to prevent **burn marks on the surface**.
- The cultured Marble is waterproof but the **joints are not waterproof**. Because the artificial stone are created and installed in solid slabs, there will be visible seams along the front edges. This provides a place for water and contaminates to collect if the homeowner is not careful and diligent about removing these items from the seams. After time, the water and contaminates collected in the seams will begin to smell, which may require professional cleaning to get rid of.