

## Stone FAQ

### Marble Vs Granite

From an aesthetic standpoint, it is all a matter of taste as to which one to use. Both types of stone have their own individual beauty and "personality".

Marble comes in an extremely wide range of colors, and offers wonderful veining. No two pieces of marble are ever alike. In fact, part of this natural stone's beauty is that its irregularities will make any floor, wall or other surface, unique and "alive". Granite also comes in a very large variety of colors. Its look, however, is more of a speckled and crystalline one. Veining may also occur in some granites, but still it is prevalently more uniform than marble. Marble is often favored for added sophistication to a particular setting. In residential environments, for example, it is widely used in entrance ways, living rooms (especially around a fireplace), bathrooms walls & floors, bathroom vanity tops & shower walls, as well as surrounding bathtubs. Marble is also very popular with furniture (modern and antique furnishings), and has countless applications with simple ornaments, such as vases, bookends, candle holders and many more.

Some granites for eg. Black granite, that's present in Asia is sometimes doctored with dyes and oils to darken the surface, which then fades after some time. Marble are always a natural product that cannot be created 100%.

No doubt about it: marble is indeed a beautiful stone. But as beautiful as it is, it may not always be a very pragmatic one, so serious consideration must be given to each individual application. When compared to granite, marble is a softer stone, and less stain & scratch resistant. Spills on marble surfaces must be removed at once to prevent possible damage to the stone, especially those containing oil or acid. One should also resist the temptation to clean marble with any type of abrasive products, in order to prevent scratches and loss of shine. A general rule is to understand & accept that, anything that can stain will generally stain marble, unless appropriate precautions are taken; this can be as simple as always using coasters on table tops, for example.

So, marble or granite? Both equally beautiful; both with their individual characteristics to consider. The choice is yours, but one thing is for sure: Mother Nature did all right.....and we can't beat that!

### Marble Polishing Problems

When I am polishing with a powder the marble gets a dull, wavy appearance and sometimes looks rough and dimpled. What's going on?

You are describing what is known as "orange peel". Orange peel is the result of using too much acid on the marble. In other words, most marble polishing powders contain acid and you are either using too much powder or working the powder too long. To remove the orange peel you will need to rehone the marble. When you start polishing apply a small amount and work it for several minutes, making sure to check it often by pulling the slurry back with a window squeegee. If a shine is not being produced, fight the urge to add more powder. First work the powder a little longer before adding more powder. This should prevent orange peel. If you should happen to orange peel the marble you will need to re-hone the marble to remove the dimpling. Orange peel cannot be removed with more powder. You will find that it is very easy to orange

peel certain types of marble. Negro marquina, crema marfil and other soft marbles are easily orange peeled.

### **Warping of Green Marble**

Several type of thin stone tiles are very susceptible to warping. Many of the green marbles and a few agglomerate marbles are notorious for this warping condition. Many of an installer have had the surprise to find that there tile installation has become warped overnight.

### **Why does this a happen and can it be prevented?**

Warping is caused by water. Green marble set with any water based material will have a tendency to warp. The mechanism of why the tile warps is somewhat a mystery. Some believe that the water fills the pores of the stone and when the water evaporates the orientation of the stones crystal change and cause it to warp. Whatever the reason, one thing is for sure, green marble can warp when set with water based materials.

Cure: Once a green marble tile warps it is difficult to repair. Attempts have been made to grind the tile flat , but this usually fails since additional water is introduced during the grinding process. The green simply warps again.

Prevention; The only way to prevent warping is to install it properly with a non-water based material such as epoxy. Some installers have also been successful in sealing the back of the tile with epoxy and installing it in a water based system. Do not attempt to seal the back of the tile with a silicone sealer. The silicone acts as a water repellent and will cause the setting material to fail resulting in a bond loss.

### **Why does Stone Shine?**

When stone becomes dull and scratched, it loses its shine and luster. At this time the stone needs to be refinished and polished to restore the shine it originally had.

### **Why does stone shine, and how can a lost shine be recovered?**

Stone is extracted from the earth in the form of raw blocks with explosives, large saws and specialized equipment. These blocks are then cut into thinner and more easily handled pieces, called slabs. The slab itself is then processed in a variety of shapes & sizes, based on its intended use. It may be given a high shine and shipped to a marble fabricator, who will ultimately turn it into a table, vanity top, etc., or it may be transformed into tiles for installation on floors or walls.

The deep shine seen on polished stone is achieved by rubbing the stone with a series of abrasive materials. The process is very similar to sanding a piece of wood. The stone is rubbed with a coarse abrasive grit, followed by finer and finer grits until the stone becomes smooth. The scratches left behind from one grit are removed by the next, creating finer and finer scratches. The process continues until the scratches are microscopic. The shine on the stone is achieved by abrading the surface to the point at which it becomes extremely smooth and starts to develop some reflectivity. The shine on the stone is thus a product of optics. This same optical property can be observed on a pond. When the wind is blowing and the surface of the pond is wavy, it becomes difficult to see a reflection; when the air is still and the pond is calm, a deep reflection can be observed. So, in order to achieve a deep shine on stone, all that is really needed is to smooth it until it shines.

If it sounds simple enough, the techniques employed to achieve this degree of smoothness do require special knowledge and training. This is not friendly territory for the do-it-yourselfer.

### **Cleaning Bathroom Marble Tips**

While marble is a beautiful material used for countertops in both kitchens and bathrooms, you want to keep it clean and shiny, which is why we are providing you with some great tips for cleaning bathroom marble. Just remember that you cannot use just any cleaning product or substance for cleaning bathroom marble. Instead, we suggest, you use a simple home solution.

For this, take mild dishwashing detergent such as Dove or Palmolive, mixing it with plain warm water. Then with a soft, clean sponge, use the solution for cleaning the bathroom marble until it sparkles. The great thing is that this mixture will do a great job but not damage the marble. After cleaning, you would wipe the marble down use a soft, dry cloth for buffing it dry.

When cleaning bathroom marble, you want to be careful never to use products containing anything acidic, which would include vinegar or lemon, as this will actually eat away at the marble causing damage. To avoid etching on the marble, you want to make sure things with alcohol do not come into contact with the surface such as perfume or aftershave. Finally, remember that marble will become permanently stained from hair dye.

One of the most important aspects of cleaning bathroom marble is the drying process. The reason is that if the marble is not dried properly, it will spot, making it look dirty and dull. If you find your marble has a stain, you can try cleaning bathroom marble with a salty grapefruit solution. For this, spread salt onto a cutting board. Then, cut one grapefruit in half, dipping it in the salt. Next, rub the salty grapefruit onto the marble, making sure you clean the bathroom marble going with the grain, never against it. Again, wipe it dry when done.

A great rule of thumb for cleaning bathroom marble is that less is more. Therefore, if you need to use a cleaning product to remove stains and sanitize the surface, use the lightest product possible, making sure you avoid alcohol and acid. Marble, although beautiful, is delicate. Another tip for cleaning bathroom marble is to wipe up any spills or water spots immediately. Finally, do all you can to protect the surface and remember, cleaning bathroom marble is not difficult but just be sure you never use anything abrasive that could cause significant damage.