

CUSTOMER CARE & INFORMATION GUIDE FOR

NATURAL STONE



Great Floors®
GREATFLOORS.COM

Great Floors takes great pride in our quality workmanship and materials. With proper maintenance and appropriate cleaners, your natural stone will remain beautiful for many years to come.

CHARACTERISTICS

This material has been cut from carefully selected stone blocks, quarried from Mother Earth. Please understand that no two pieces will be the same, and as a natural product, it will contain blemishes which are characteristic of stone. When natural stone is extracted from the source, the veining, shading and color will have extreme variation from one part of the mountain to another; thus each tile has a pattern of its own. Also, the size and thickness of each tile will vary within industry standards. The color, veining and shading in stone are caused by minor amounts of mineral substances deposited during formation. This also means that the sample you see in the showroom may vary from the material actually installed in your home. All are features of natural stone and will always be present to some degree. Each tile could be all one shade or a combination of light, medium and dark shades in various proportions.

If these variations in natural stone are not appealing to you, then natural stone may not be the best choice for your home. Today, there are many ceramic or porcelain products that emulate natural stone, while at the same time are more consistent than natural stone is expected to be.

Great Floors®
GREATFLOORS.COM

MARBLE

Marble is primarily composed of calcium carbonates. It is susceptible to stains and abrasions due to its softness. Most marble purchased today has a high reflective polish. This polish is achieved by the use of grinding stones and polishing compounds and can be damaged. If the stone is exposed to acids, such as food, alcohol, and acidic cleaners, etching (a loss of polish) will result. If etching does occur, the stone must be resurfaced, preferably by a professional.

Polished marble is not recommended for use in food preparation areas due to the fact that etching cannot be prevented. To minimize staining and etching we recommend applying a stone sealer.

Honed marble (unpolished marble) is very absorbent and should be sealed with a stone sealer. In general, a honed surface will require less maintenance than a polished one.

Marble floors should be swept daily to keep abrasive particles to a minimum. A marble cleaner should be used regularly to remove soils and contaminants.

GRANITE

Granite consists mainly of quartz and is available in several finishes such as polished, flamed, sandblasted, and honed. It is a relatively hard stone; however, it can be stained easily due to the small fissures between the quartz crystals. A stone sealer should be used to protect the stone from readily absorbing water and oil-borne stains. It is important to keep granite surfaces clean and use a marble cleaner for maintenance.

LIMESTONE

Limestone has the same characteristics as marble; however, most limestone purchased in today's market has a honed or textured finish. This surface is very absorbent and is susceptible to staining. A stone sealer is recommended to dramatically lower the ability of the stone to absorb liquids that cause deep stains. A marble cleaner is recommended for regular cleaning.

SLATE

Slate is a semi-hard rock with a tendency to split into thin plates. Some slates will absorb stains, and some will show foot traffic over time. Slate can be protected in two ways. If a natural appearance is desired, a stone sealer should be applied to the slate. This does not protect the slate from abrasion because there is no physical barrier on the surface. Therefore, if a gloss is desired and a protective coating is necessary, there are stone sealers that have additives to provide long-lasting protection from abrasion. Use of a marble cleaner will maintain the polish. Other cleaning agents may strip or damage the finish.

BATHROOMS

Baths can endure more use than other areas and are subjected to a wide variety of residues from soap and shampoo. The best tip is not to let these surface oils build up – regular care can go a long way! After each use simply wipe down your shower walls with a soft rubber squeegee or towel. This simple procedure will eliminate the build-up of soap scum or hard water film and mildew is much less likely to develop. Note that liquid body wash does not adhere to shower tile as well as bar soap and is much easier to clean off. Routine wiping with a damp sponge or cloth will generally maintain the brightness of vanity tops, walls and floors.

GROUT

A slight discoloration in cementitious grout is very common. Shading variations may occur in the grout after it is installed. Around sinks, where water is prevalent and around stove cook tops where cooking oil and grease are present, the grout may appear darker than other areas.

Cement-based grout joints are absorbent to water, oil, and food stains. After a period of time, grout will separate from non-porous surfaces. Latex additives will not prevent staining.

A grout sealer should be used to minimize damage to sanded and new sanded grout joints and leave the surface natural in appearance. Sub-surface sealers penetrate the grout while leaving the surface natural in appearance. Because grout must cure for 30 days before applying sealer, it is the responsibility of the homeowner. Topical sealers form a barrier on the surface and may give a light gloss to the grout.

Some newer grout technologies do not require sealing. These products require unique maintenance and care. Please refer to the manufacturers recommendations on these products.

A stone sealer is recommended in the shower area and all wet areas. It will be the homeowners responsibility to check and properly caulk to prevent water damage.

SEALER

There are several types of sealers available. To determine the type of product you may need, please see the list below:

Solvent Based Impregnator Sealer – Stain protection for all natural interior and all natural exterior stones; granite and marble. This is a wipe on, wipe off product that can be used on grout.

Water Based Porous Stone Protector – Stain protection for more porous natural stones; limestone, travertine, slate or concrete. This is a wipe on, wipe off product that can be used on grout.

Grout Sealer – Stain protection for grout. This product is generally used when a glazed tile is used and only the grout needs to be sealed. It is usually applied with a small brush.

