

Living with Granite...

Granite is a very dense, durable and attractive natural stone, sourced from many different areas around the world. Most worktops supplied in Granite are highly polished. Granite is also very slightly porous. These facts mean that some care and common sense should be used when using and caring for your new worktops. Although Granite has been used successfully for kitchen and bathroom surfaces for many years, there are some reminders about what you can expect from your worktops, and how you can care for them:

Heat... granite will expand slightly if heat is applied. Installers and designers should allow for linear expansion where worktops abut walls. Certain granites may discolour – either temporarily or permanently – if sufficient direct heat is applied. You should avoid placing hot pots or utensils directly on the surface. Granite can absorb large amounts of heat energy. If you stand a hot cooking pot on the worktop, the surface will become very hot to the touch.

Scratches... granite is described as scratch-resistant. The process of polishing to a high quality finish means that the gloss surface may be marked if misused. Do not chop directly on the surface – you might cause scratches, and you will certainly damage your knife. Diamond rings are known to cause marks – diamonds are harder than any other stone, and can often be overlooked as a source of scratches. On delivery and installation, any surface scratch less than 30mm long would be disregarded.

Chips and Pits... granite comprises of grains of minerals, which vary in size, distribution and colour. It is occasionally noticed that small losses of grains may appear in the polished surface. This is entirely normal, and these small pits do not impair the quality or functionality of the granite. Larger losses may be termed as chips, and these are normally rejected at the point of manufacture. Despite the strength of granite worktops it is possible to cause chips by dropping heavy, sharp objects onto the surface. If this happens we may be able to recommend appropriate tradesmen who can assess and possibly repair the damage.

Staining and Ring Marking Ring Marks can be made by hot pans, teapots, coffee cups, red wine, aggressive household chemicals, fresh fruit and fruit juice & cordials. Also surprisingly we have found that tonic water can cause these marks as well as certain foods that have strong colours (beetroot, curry, etc) which can progressively penetrate

into the **stone**, causing **discolouration**. If you recycle, note that rinsed containers may still have residues (e.g. vinegar acid from pickle jars, etc) which could affect the **surface**.

Here at AG&M we have done extensive testing over the last two years as to why some of the **black granites** can sometimes **ring mark** and have come up with a solution with which we now treat all our **black granites** at the factory before installation. This has been proven to massively help reduce any further **ring marking** and **staining** and has also been proven to take out existing ring marks on **granite** that has already been installed with up to a 95% success rate! We are presently waiting for a patent on the product. At present you can buy the product from us.

The granites we sell are free from dyes, but they do have surface preparation which aids polishing and maintains their shine. The polished surface helps to repel many stains, but we strongly recommend that customers treat their new worktops immediately after installation, and again every 6 months. Dishwasher water is known to comprise a cocktail of aggressive agents, and so we advise customers not to stack wet crockery straight from the dishwasher onto the worktop.

Plain granite colours will normally show up marks that a more varied **granite surface** would effectively disguise, and so customers choosing any of the Black range (**Star Galaxy, Absolute Black, Classic Black,**) are especially advised to treat and use their worktops according to this specification.

Colour The images we display on our website are subject to the colour reproduction process of the photography, and to the colour performance of the viewer's monitor. Printed versions in our literature or in magazines are prone to printing variables. We always urge our customers to see the granite in person. We can send small **granite samples** through the post (for a nominal charge to cover P&P), or we are delighted to welcome you to see larger samples as well as view our stock at our premises in **Derbyshire's Peak District**. Granite is a natural product, formed by volcanic processes over millions of years. The **stone** is extracted, cut and machined, but is not otherwise artificially altered, so you will often find considerable variation from one piece to another. Where a project requires more than one piece of **worktop**, we make every effort to ensure that the various pieces match together. Due to the natural qualities of the stone, however, this can never be guaranteed.

Initial Preparation once your **worktops** have been installed, and you have been advised by your installer that once any joint sealants have safely cured, you should thoroughly clean the surface, treat it with Lithofin Stainstop (or similar), and use the stone polish. The recommended products for this are contained within the **granite Care Kit** offered as an option with all **fitted worktops** which we strongly advise you to use. For ongoing care, clean with a mild neutral soap or detergent, rinse with clean water and then dry with a soft clean cloth. Do not use abrasive cleaning products or scouring pads, as these will cause micro-scratches, making the surface dull over time. Approximately every six

months, depending on the amount of use, the worktops should be thoroughly cleaned (as at installation), and re-treated with Stainstop.

Upstands... we supply upstands at 110mm high x 20mm thick. These are not intended to be flexible, and so bowed walls will require either several shorter pieces or packing and filling behind the upstand.

Strength Granite at 30mm thick is undoubtedly strong, but in a worktop situation it is generally only supported at the front and rear edge, and by the kitchen unit **carcases**. It is not designed to support the weight of a person, and areas such as joints and cut-outs are especially liable to damage.