

Floors/stairs of Natural stone - Maintenance

High-quality natural stone floors and stairs are easy to maintain and remain beautiful for generations. The stone surface itself is durable and does not require any foreign coatings or costly treatments.

Natural stone floors and stairs should be maintained with the simplest methods possible - soft soap, and neutral all-purpose cleaner are usually sufficient. When properly cared for, the stone only grows more beautiful with the patina that age and use bring. This can be observed on stone floors that have been used and maintained in this way for centuries. Simple maintenance saves both time and cost while keeping the environmental impact low.

Regular cleaning

Granite and Slate

Use as dry methods as possible, such as dry mopping or vacuuming. For stubborn dirt, use a neutral all-purpose cleaner combined with damp or wet mopping. Note: On granite surfaces, it is better to use a neutral all-purpose cleaner rather than a soap solution. Products that build up layers should never be used.

Marble/Limestone

Use as dry methods as possible, such as dry mopping or vacuuming. For stubborn dirt, use a cleaning solution of natural soap in combination with damp or wet mopping. Regular use of a soap solution provides the stone with the balanced pore filling necessary for surface protection. The soap should be natural and free of additives.

A new, previously untreated stone surface should first be saturated with a soap solution to provide protective impregnation. Therefore, during the first two cleanings, soap is applied in a higher dose than normal (2–5 times the usual amount). Excess soap is worked in by dry polishing with a white floor maintenance pad or removed with water. (Here, “polishing” refers to cleaning practice, not technical stone polishing.) Afterwards, continue cleaning the floor with the normal soap dosage according to instructions. This becomes the standard daily cleaning routine.

Polished and honed surfaces of marble or limestone have low absorbency. Therefore, only a small amount of soap solution should be used. A surface that has been oversaturated with soap may become streaky, dull, or slippery. In that case, clean with water and a neutral all-purpose cleaner.

Restoring an etched surface

A honed marble or limestone surface etched by acidic substances, such as fruit juice, wine, vinegar, or carbonated drinks, can be difficult to restore. The most reliable method is to machine-sand the entire surface.

In some cases, improvements can be made manually by sanding the surface with fine wet sandpaper, a nylon scouring pad, or a block with diamond grit. Then, finely divided beeswax dissolved in white spirit can be used to attempt to restore the surface’s shine, or turpentine mixed with paraffin oil can be worked in with a soft cloth.

Pre-mixed solutions, often labelled “stone polish,” are also available on the market. Always test first on a small, inconspicuous area!

Stains

See *Stain Removal* on a separate sheet.

Soap provides excellent surface protection

For marble and limestone (carbonate stones), soap forms a compound called calcareous soap. This creates the proper pore filling in the stone without sealing its pores, giving the stone excellent surface protection.

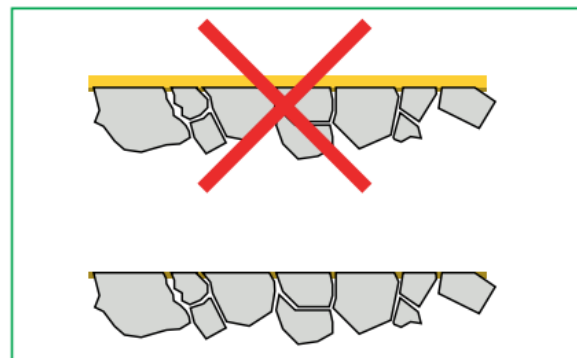
Cleaning products with additives that form a dense film on the surface clog the stone’s pores, prevent moisture movement within the stone, and can cause damage to the surface (thin layers may flake off). Such products should not be used.

Rotation cleaning

For optimal maintenance of marble and limestone, a rotation cleaning method is recommended. This involves alternating regular soap cleanings with scrubbing and renewed soap impregnation as follows:

- Clean the surface with regular soap cleaning.
- After a number of such cleanings, perform a scrubbing, either manually or with a scrubbing machine using brushes and neutral all-purpose cleaner. Do not use any wax, polish, or similar additives.
- For the first two cleanings after scrubbing, use an increased concentration of soap, 2–5 times the normal amount.
- Afterward, return to normal soap solution cleaning. If any excess solution remains, work it in with dry polishing using a white floor maintenance pad or remove it with water.

The frequency of scrubbing depends on how heavily the surface is soiled and how clean it needs to be maintained. The most heavily trafficked areas may require more frequent cleaning than other surfaces.



The stone itself resists wear much better than applied chemical coatings, which can also give the stone an unnatural appearance and hinder the natural moisture movement through the stone.

Only use products where the pH value is specified! For marble, limestone, or unknown types of stone, the pH must be 7 or higher. Granite and slate can tolerate a lower pH.

Polish or any product that seals the stone's pores should not be used on stone floors and stairs. Avoid products that contain wax or oil as well.

Always follow the safety instructions for the products used!

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