

A few years ago, I installed beautiful granite countertops in my kitchen and was thrilled with the elegant look they brought to the space. Within months, however, I noticed dull spots, water marks, and stubborn stains appearing. After some research and trial and error, I developed a simple, effective routine that keeps my granite looking showroom-fresh with minimal effort.

Granite is a popular choice for kitchens because of its natural beauty, durability, and heat resistance. However, it is a porous natural stone that requires specific care to prevent etching, staining, and loss of shine. Knowing how to clean granite countertops properly is one of the most important skills for any homeowner who wants to protect their investment and maintain its luxurious appearance for decades.

This comprehensive guide provides practical, step-by-step advice tailored for busy families. You will learn daily routines, deep cleaning methods, natural solutions, what products to avoid, and long-term maintenance strategies that actually work.

Why Granite Countertops Need Special Care

Granite is formed from natural minerals and, despite its hardness, remains somewhat porous. When left unsealed or improperly maintained, it can absorb liquids, develop stains, and lose its polished finish. Acidic substances like vinegar, lemon juice, or certain cleaners can etch the surface, creating dull spots. Understanding these vulnerabilities helps you choose the right cleaning methods and prevent damage before it occurs.

Daily Cleaning Routine for Granite Countertops

The best defense is consistent, gentle care. Here is a simple daily routine:

1. Wipe up spills immediately with a soft cloth and warm water.
2. Use a mild dish soap (a drop or two in warm water) for light cleaning.
3. Dry the surface thoroughly with a microfiber cloth to prevent water spots.
4. Avoid leaving acidic foods or liquids sitting on the counter.

This quick 30-second routine after meal preparation prevents most buildup and keeps your granite looking its best.

How to Clean Granite Countertops Naturally

Natural cleaners are often the safest and most effective for granite:

Baking Soda Paste for Stains Mix baking soda with a small amount of water to form a paste. Apply to stains, let sit for 10–15 minutes, then gently wipe away. This method lifts many organic stains without damaging the stone.

Mild Soap Solution A few drops of pH-neutral dish soap in warm water works excellently for daily cleaning. Dawn dish soap is generally safe when highly diluted, but always rinse thoroughly.

Rubbing Alcohol for Disinfection For sanitizing, use isopropyl alcohol diluted with water. It evaporates quickly and leaves no residue.

Avoid vinegar, lemon, or any acidic cleaners on granite, as they can etch the surface over time.

Deep Cleaning Methods

For weekly or monthly deep cleans:

- Spray a commercial stone cleaner formulated for granite or a DIY solution of warm water and mild soap.
- For tougher grime, use a soft scrub brush on non-polished edges only.
- Polish with a granite-specific sealer or enhancer to restore shine.

Always work in small sections and dry completely between steps.

How to Remove Common Stains from Granite

Oil-Based Stains (cooking oil, grease): Apply baking soda paste or a poultice made with baking soda and acetone. Cover with plastic wrap and let sit overnight.

Water Marks and Hard Water Stains: Use a granite polishing compound or a specialized remover. Prevention through immediate drying is best.

Ink or Marker Stains: Rubbing alcohol on a cotton ball, followed by thorough rinsing.

Rust Stains: Use a commercial rust remover made for natural stone.

Sealing Granite Countertops: When and How

Most granite needs sealing every 6–12 months, depending on usage and stone porosity. Test by dropping water on the surface — if it beads up, the sealer is still effective. If it absorbs, it is time to reseal. High-quality penetrating sealers offer the best protection without changing the stone’s appearance.

What to Avoid on Granite Countertops

- Acidic cleaners (vinegar, lemon, bleach, ammonia)
- Abrasive sponges or scrub pads
- Harsh chemical cleaners
- Leaving standing water or spills
- Placing hot pans directly on the surface (use trivets)

Clorox wipes and similar disinfectant wipes often contain ingredients that can damage the sealant and stone over time.

Comparison Table: Cleaning Methods for Granite

Method	Best For	Safety for Granite	Effort Level	Frequency
Mild Dish Soap + Water	Daily cleaning	Excellent	Very Low	Daily
Baking Soda Paste	Organic stains	Very Good	Low	As needed
Commercial Stone Cleaner	Regular maintenance	Excellent	Low	Weekly
Granite Polish/Enhancer	Restoring shine	Excellent	Low	Monthly
Vinegar Solution	Not recommended	Poor	-	Never

Seasonal and Long-Term Maintenance

In humid climates, check for moisture-related issues more frequently. During dry winter months, monitor for cracking due to low humidity. Schedule a professional deep clean and resealing once per year for best results.

FAQ About Cleaning Granite Countertops

What is the best thing to clean granite countertops with? A pH-neutral stone cleaner or a simple solution of warm water and mild dish soap is safest and most effective for regular cleaning.

What should you not put on a granite countertop? Avoid acidic substances like vinegar, lemon juice, bleach, and harsh chemical cleaners that can etch or damage the stone.

Is Dawn dish soap okay for granite? Yes, when highly diluted in warm water. It effectively removes grease without harming the granite when used properly and rinsed well.

Should you use Clorox wipes on granite? Generally not recommended for regular use, as they can contain ingredients that break down the sealer over time.

How to make granite shine naturally? Use a small amount of food-grade mineral oil or a dedicated granite enhancer on a soft cloth, buffing gently after cleaning.

How to clean granite countertops stains? Apply a baking soda paste for most stains, let it dwell, then gently remove. For tougher stains, use a commercial poultice designed for natural stone.

Final Thoughts: Enjoy Beautiful Granite for Decades

Properly caring for granite counter-tops is simpler than many people realize. By establishing gentle daily habits, using the right products, and addressing spills immediately, you can maintain the natural beauty and value of your investment for many years.

The key is consistency and choosing gentle, stone-safe methods over harsh chemicals. Your granite counter-tops can remain a stunning centerpiece in your kitchen with just a few minutes of attention each day.

Start implementing these practices this week, and you will quickly notice the difference in both appearance and peace of mind.

What type of granite do you have, or what is your biggest challenge with countertop

maintenance? Share your experiences in the comments, I read every one and often reply with specific recommendations.

For more practical kitchen care and home maintenance ideas, explore our [home improvement category](#).

According to the [Marble Institute of America](#), using pH-neutral cleaners and proper sealing practices are the most effective ways to protect and maintain the beauty of granite surfaces.