

Limestone is a *calcareous* sedimentary stone — composed of calcium carbonate and chemically very similar to marble, but softer and more porous. It is highly sensitive to acids and absorbs stains quickly. The guidelines below are essential, not optional, for keeping a limestone countertop looking new.

DAILY CARE

- **Wipe spills immediately** — citrus, wine, vinegar, tomato, coffee, and soda will etch and stain limestone within minutes. Blot, do not wipe.
- **Clean with a pH-neutral stone cleaner** and warm water. Rinse and dry. Skip dish soap — film build-up dulls the finish.
- **Use cutting boards.** Limestone is soft and knives will gouge it.
- **Use coasters** under every glass, particularly cocktails and citrus drinks.
- **Use trivets** under hot cookware to prevent thermal shock and trapped-moisture rings.

WHAT TO AVOID

- × Vinegar, lemon juice, or any acid-based cleaner — permanent etch.
- × Bathroom / grout / tub-and-tile cleaners — nearly all are acidic.
- × Bleach in regular use; occasional dilute use only.
- × Abrasive pads, scouring powders, melamine sponges — scratch and polish away the surface.
- × Mineral oil and waxes on light-colored limestone — yellow the stone. (Mineral oil is traditional on dark Belgian limestone such as Petit Granit — see your stone's specific spec sheet.)

STAIN REMOVAL

| Stain | Treatment |
|---|---|
| Oil / grease (cooking, butter) | pH-neutral degreaser, then poultice with mineral spirits + diatomaceous earth for set stains. |
| Organic (wine, coffee, tea, food) | 12% hydrogen peroxide + a drop of ammonia. Poultice for set stains. |
| Etch marks (dull, rough) | Light: re-polish with marble/limestone polishing powder. Deep: professional honing required. |
| Rust | Non-acid stone-safe rust remover only. Acid removers will etch limestone catastrophically. |
| Biological (mold, mildew on backsplash) | Dilute bleach (½ cup per gallon) sparingly; rinse well; re-seal. |

Poultice method: Mix absorbent powder (diatomaceous earth or kaolin) with the appropriate cleaning agent into a thick paste. Apply ¼–½" thick, cover with plastic wrap, tape edges, dry 24–48 hrs, scrape off and rinse with distilled water. Repeat as needed. Limestone is porous — two or three poultices may be required for set stains.

SEALING

Limestone is among the most porous countertop stones — sealing is **essential**. Always use a **penetrating impregnating sealer**; topical coatings trap moisture and peel. A second coat is recommended on installation.

STAIN-PROOF (Dry Treat) · Premium Impregnating Sealer

ISO Class 5 stain resistance with breathable molecular bond. Best-in-class for porous limestone. Will not yellow.

Re-seal: Every 5–7 years

Tenax · Proseal-P Premium Natural Effect Sealer

Ultra-premium impregnator that fills pores deeply with no surface film.

Food-safe certified. Suitable for kitchen countertops.

Re-seal: Every 3–5 years

Color enhancing option: If a light limestone has uneven absorption marks, Tenax Ager or STAIN-PROOF Color Enhancing Sealer will even the tone — but the effect is permanent. Test first.

HOW TO SEAL

1. Clean thoroughly with pH-neutral cleaner. Allow 24–48 hrs to dry fully.
2. Apply sealer with a soft cloth in an even, generous coat until the surface no longer absorbs.
3. Dwell 5–15 min per product directions, then buff off all excess with a dry cloth.
4. Apply a second coat after 10–15 min — limestone needs it.
5. Allow 24 hrs before use. Full chemical bond develops over 3–4 weeks.
6. Annual test: water should bead on a clean, dry surface. If it soaks in, re-seal.

SEASONAL MAINTENANCE

- **Daily:** Wipe with pH-neutral cleaner; dry promptly.
- **Monthly:** In good light, look for new stains or etches. Treat fresh oil or organic stains promptly with a poultice (above); for small fresh etches, an at-home etch-removal pad (Tenax TeEtch, MB-11) can be used by a homeowner — call a stone professional for anything larger or persistent.
- **Annually:** Water-bead test. Re-seal if absorbed.
- **Every 5–10 years:** Have polished limestone professionally re-honed if etching is widespread.