

Laying lots of slate-now what?

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We've been housebuilding and have laid lots of very beautiful slate. It needs cleaning and ??? It's mostly in the entry, dining, breakfast nook, in front of doors, and some hallways.

Dear Laura:

It needs cleaning and ???? •

I don't know.

By saying slate you're saying very little "if anything at all. There are many different (and I do mean **different**) kinds of slate that span from dense and acceptable rocks, to slate that will actually fall apart under running water or foot traffic; or turn into mud, and everything in between.

So which slate do you have? (And even if you give me a name, chances are that I don't know what it is.)

Will it need sealing? Will it be better off color-enhanced? Will it be better off left alone?...

In most cases I always recommend to use a good-quality stone color enhancer/impregnator non-sensitive to most acidic substances, like MB-6. But then another factor comes into play, namely personal preferences. Will you like the way your slate is going to look with a color enhancer applied to it. (To find out how it will look like, just wet it with some water and wipe the water off, so that the stone is only darker and not any shinier.)

One thing is for sure: as you will scratch your slate, a good-color-enhancer is the only possible fix to "repair" the scratches. And the same applies to etching of the surface of the stone, if your slate is "like many are" sensitive to acidic substances.

As for the routine cleaning, that's an easy one: a good stone floor detergent (never a stone soap!) like MB-1 is all you will ever need. Well, maybe once a year or so, over spring-cleaning or something, you may need to hit the most traffic-intense areas a little harder, with a heavy-duty alkaline cleaner rated "for natural stone", like MB-2, which will clean the grout, too.

May I ask you now to please read and e-sign our Statement of Purpose at: <http://www.marblecleaning.org/purpose.htm>?

Ciao and good luck,

Maurizio Bertoli

