

# Cleaning Honed Absolute Black Granite

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We have a fire place surround and hearth of honed finish Absolute Black Granite. Our grandson's little hand prints are clearly visible on the hearth. I tried cleaning with paint thinner or mineral spirits (per installer's instructions), but the handprints remain clearly visible. Might a poultice work? Should the granite be sealed once the stain is removed? Do you have a cleaner/sealer that you recommend?

Dear Joseph:

You're not thinking of getting rid of your grandson, are you?!... (I'm a grandpa, too!...) :-)

Use Comet to clean it. After that...

There are indeed different opinions on the issue of sealing black hone granite, but there is a unanimous consensus about the fact that it presents maintenance issues. You just experienced one!...

The problem with honed black granite is that it is not, well â€” black any more! Most black stones are but an optical illusion: they become black only when highly polished, or when wet. (See the back of your slab to see the *real* color of your stone!) As you take gloss off the stone surface (and honing does just that) you lose depth of color and the stone turns gray; but when you wet it ... here it is black again! As you spill oily liquids, or you simply touch the stone surface with your fingers (perspiration), you're going to have all sorts of dark surface stains that are a terrible eyesore. Please notice that I said, **surface** stains, not **imbedded** stains. In fact, you can clean those stains off (though with lots of labor), while if they were imbedded you would have to poultice them out. If you apply an impregnator/sealer to the stone you will not solve your problem one bit: in fact the sealer will only prevent liquids from being absorbed by the stone (which in the case of black honed granite is an unlikely event to begin with), not the staining of its surface.

Any solution?

Well, yes: you have to give up the gray!

If you apply a good-quality stone color enhancer to your countertop **instead of** a regular impregnating sealer (a good-quality stone color-enhancer like MB-6 is also an impregnator/sealer) it will turn it permanently black, while preserving the hone finish. In that way, the surface-staining problem would be minimized.

Let's just hope that your fabricator, in their â€œinfinite wisdom,â€• did not apply an impregnator/sealer to your stone: this would have to be stripped (not an easy feat!), or else the color/enhancer wouldn't stand a chance to work properly.

And don't you forget that in order to upkeep your stone *and* the color enhancer, your best bet is to use good-quality specialty products for stone.

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Moreover, do take advantage of the plethora of FREE Helpful Hints available at:

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Thank you.

Ciao and good luck,

Maurizio Bertoli

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