

granite tile installation

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I want to do it myself. What is the best way to install granite (12"x12") tiles for a kitchen countertop?

Dear Sharon:

It much depends on the substrate where you will be installing the tiles. Assuming that's appropriate and solid, you will set your tile using white thin-set. (Do **not** use the "ready-to-use" stuff that comes in a tub!) Using appropriate spacers (available at any tile store), you will set the tiles with a grout gap of 1/16". Make sure that the tiles are nice and even with one another; in other words, **zero tolerance**!! After a couple of days to allow the setting material to cure, you will grout the whole installation using color-matching caulk. Squeeze it inside the grout gap, push it in deep with a flexible putty knife and then "shave" it flush with the tiles with a razor blade. As soon as you can, clean the worst of the residue along the edges of the tiles with a finger wrapped in a damp piece of terrycloth. Let it cure for day or two, finish the cleaning of any possible residue of the caulk with a razor blade and some acetone, and then, if your stone can take any impregnator in, you will seal it with a good-quality stone impregnator like MB-4. If it will not take the impregnator in, don't bother sealing it.

To find out if your stone can be sealed, do this: spill some water in a couple of spots of your stone, let it dwell for 5 minutes or so, wipe it dry and observe if the areas under which the water has been sitting have become (temporarily) any darker than the rest. If so, then you will seal it. If not, you know what **not** to do!...

Now remember, it's never too early to think about the proper maintenance of your stone. **The issue of what you'll be doing day in and day out to your stone is far more important than its sealing** (if and when possible and/or advisable) and it's all too often neglected. As you can tell by reading many of this site's postings, you're not likely to get good information about it from your dealer or installer. Don't become another statistic! By logging into the Helpful Hints section of our website at: <http://www.marblecleaning.org/helpful-hints.htm>, you will be able to get the short version of our maintenance guidelines at no charge. The full version of it "a 7-page document considered by many as an industry benchmark" is available in pay-per-download format in our Educational Literature section at: <http://www.marblecleaning.org/literature.htm>.

And remember, every single penny of the cost of the literature will be used to support this site and its cause: **your** cause.

While you are in the "Helpful Hints" section, do spend some time reading all of the interesting FREE articles you'll find in there!

Finally, keep in mind that we need your support to help us helping you!

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

By spreading the word about this valuable site among your friend & family and the stone trades' people you've been dealing with, you will be rendering everybody a valuable service!

Thank you

Ciao and good luck,

Maurizio Bertoli

