

# Honed absolute black

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I wanted to install kitchen countertops, using honed absolute black. I really like it's smooth universal GRAY appearance. However lots of people on the web say that it's very painful material to deal with: applying color enhancements, and sealers. First of all I don't know if I need any enhancements, if I like it to gray? Second: How resistant is honed stone to scratches vs. polished? Third: What other negatives I should be aware of? Fourth: Can I use matrix granite for kitchen countertops? Thank you in advance, Oleg Popov

Dear Oleg:

I will answer your question in the same order they were asked:

1. If you like it gray, you do not get a hone-finished "black granite" countertop - as simple as that. The testimonial of several users are reflecting the truth: honed "black granite" left gray is a royal pain in the neck to maintain. The problem with honed black granite is that it is not, well "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 in 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 (like MB-6) **instead of** an impregnating sealer (a good-quality stone color-enhancer 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 "infinite wisdom," 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, namely MB-5. (<http://www.mbstonecare.com>)

2. As for scratch resistance, the way the stone is finished makes no difference whatsoever. It is not that by polishing it a stone becomes any harder!

3. I already gave you the negatives with the answer to point one.

4. You can even use whipped cream as a countertop if that is what you like. I'm not really familiar with man-made stuff.

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

Maurizio Bertoli

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