

black absolute honed granite

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we just installed these and are unhappy. There are sanding marks- I guess from the honing process. They installed the sealer then suggested I apply a couple of coats of a Home Depot product in the blue jug which I did. It is streaky and we still see the sanding marks. Help!!!

Dear Laura:

When a slab gets honed by the factory it is not fit for sale, IMHO. The reason for that is quite simple: in the factory they use automatic polishing lines; and those lines were designed to produce a polish, not a hone-finish; hence, all the unsightly swirl-marks that you see. By misapplying that particular product (a regular impregnator) to your countertop your fabricator added insult to the injury.

Now it is rime to get a real professional into the picture, namely a bona-fide stone restoration contractor that will have to re-hone with a good-quality honing powder (**not** diamond pads " they would leave swirl marks, too) your entire countertop. This procedure will obtain two results in one shot: it will remove all the useless stuff that your fabricator applied to your countertop and also eliminate all those factory swirly marks. At the end you will have a wonderful uniformly finished countertop!

Now it's time to make it enjoyable.

How?

There are indeed different opinions on back honed "granite" surfaces, but there is a unanimous consensus about the fact that it presents maintenance issues.

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 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** an 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 "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.

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Thank you.

Ciao and good luck,

Maurizio Bertoli

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