

# absolute black granite - honed

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Hello, My husband and I recently remodeled our kitchen. We selected absolute black granite - honed. I started out wanting white marble then moved onto soapstone. I did not want to have to oil or wax my counter top all of the time... White marble ... some people love it others hate it but it too seemed risking due to how porous it is. The honed absolute black seemed to have everything I wanted - matte finish dark color and it was granite not marble and didn't need to be waxed. According to the manufacturer the slabs we chose were "honed" before they arrived at the local warehouse. They are in and are beautiful. BUT as I was reviewing your site to find out how to best care for my new counter tops, I found all kinds of negative talk about absolute black honed. I can't take them out so now I need to know how to care for the so that they keep looking like they do today. Additional info you might need ... the contractor did seal the counter top and told me to clean them only with a soft cloth and hot water. I don't cut directly on the counter top nor do I ever set hot pans directly on the counter top. I love the way the counter top looks today how can I keep it that way for many years to come? Julie Roy Oak Michigan

Dear Julie:

Not for the sake of the argument, but for the sake of the truth, marble is not very porous at all. In fact, it is very dense.

That said and coming to your black hone-finished countertop, as in all too many cases, the fabricator applied a totally useless impregnator to your stone that will prevent a good routine maintenance, and then did tell you anything on how to care for it, other than that silly and totally insufficient information of the soft cloth and warm water. This is "sealing" at work and at its very best! L

Read this:

There are indeed different opinions on the practicality of hone-finished black "granite", but there seems to be a unanimous consensus about the fact that it presents maintenance issues. And rightly so, I must add.

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/installer, 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. ( <http://www.mbstonecare.com>)

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Thank you.

Ciao and good luck,

Maurizio Bertoli

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