

Granite has a way of setting the tone for an entire kitchen or bath. When it is clean, properly sealed, and finished well, it looks substantial without feeling fussy. Light moves across it differently than it does across laminate or tile. The surface catches detail, depth, and mineral variation that manufactured materials try hard to imitate. That is exactly why damage stands out so sharply when it happens.

Homeowners usually call a granite cleaning company after they have tried the obvious fixes. They have wiped the surface with store-bought sprays, scrubbed at dull spots, maybe even tried a DIY polishing cream that promised a glossy finish in one afternoon. The countertop still looks cloudy around the sink, greasy near the cooktop, scratched at the edge, or blotchy in the morning light. At that point, the issue is rarely simple dirt. It is often a mix of residue buildup, failed sealer, surface etching on nearby stone, minor abrasion, and old repairs that no longer blend.

Professional stone care is not just housekeeping with better products. A qualified company evaluates the type of stone, how it was finished, the kind of wear it has seen, and what level of correction is actually possible. That judgment matters. The right treatment can restore countertops that look tired and uneven. The wrong one can leave them patchy, overpolished, slippery, or even permanently discolored.

Why granite loses its original look

Granite is durable, but durable does not mean indestructible. In most homes, the changes happen slowly enough that people stop noticing them until a deep clean or a remodel puts the condition in sharp relief. Everyday use is usually the main culprit. Oil splatter around the stove, soap film near the faucet, hard water deposits, acidic spills that sit too long, and abrasive pads all chip away at the appearance of the finish.

A polished slab may begin to look flat in [how to seal marble](#) high-use zones while the outer corners still shine. Honed granite can darken unevenly from cooking oils. Around undermount sinks, I often see a ring of residue that homeowners think is staining when it is really layered mineral buildup bonded to the stone and the caulk line. In bathrooms, hair products and toothpaste can leave a hazy film that normal cleaners do not fully remove.

Another issue is confusion between stone types. Many people use the word granite for almost any natural stone countertop. A homeowner may call for granite countertop repair when the vanity top is actually marble or a softer calcite-based stone. That distinction changes everything. Marble countertops can etch from common bathroom products. Granite countertops usually resist etching better, but they can still suffer from staining, loss of sealer, or mechanical damage. A good company does not guess. They identify the material first, then match the process to the stone.

What a granite cleaning company actually does

The best companies approach restoration in layers. Cleaning is only the first step. They remove residues that mask the true condition of the stone, then inspect for surface and structural issues. If the countertop is simply dirty, the service may end there. More often, cleaning reveals a second round of work, such as poulticing a stain, refining a dulled section, repairing a chip, resetting epoxy at a seam, or applying a fresh penetrating sealer.

This is where homeowners are often surprised. What looked like a giant stain may be topical grime. What looked like permanent dullness may be worn sealer mixed with hard water. And what looked like minor damage may turn out to be a fabrication flaw or a failed past repair. Experience helps separate those problems quickly.

In one kitchen, for example, a dark granite island looked washed out in broad patches. The owner was convinced the polish had failed and expected a full resurfacing. After testing, the technician found heavy residue from an oil-based furniture polish someone had been using for years, plus some heat-related discoloration near a favorite baking zone. Once the residue was stripped and the surface was properly cleaned, only a small area needed additional correction. The countertop did not need replacement, just informed care.

Deep cleaning is more technical than most people expect

Professional stone cleaning is not about stronger chemicals. In fact, harsh products are often the reason the stone looks bad in the first place. A granite cleaning company typically uses pH-appropriate cleaners, degreasers formulated for stone, and non-abrasive methods that remove contaminants without scouring the surface. They also pay attention to dwell time, agitation, and rinse quality, because residue left behind can attract more dirt and dull the finish.



The process varies based on the contamination. Cooking oils, waxy cleaners, soap film, hard water, rust transfer, and biological growth all require different responses. That is one reason store aisles are full of products that disappoint. They are designed to be broadly safe, not specifically effective for the problem in front of you.

For heavily used kitchens, I have seen deep cleaning alone improve the appearance by 50 to 70 percent. That does not mean every countertop springs back to showroom condition. It means that once the layers of residue are gone, the real condition becomes visible, and many surfaces look dramatically better before any polishing or repair begins.

When cleaning is not enough

There is a point where dirt is no longer the issue. If the stone has chips along the sink cutout, a broken corner, open seams, or visible scratching, cleaning alone will not restore countertops to a finished appearance. That is where granite countertop repair comes in.

Repair work on natural stone is a blend of craft and restraint. Good technicians color-match fillers, rebuild edges in thin layers, level cured repairs carefully, and blend the sheen to the surrounding finish. Great technicians know when a repair will be nearly invisible and when it will remain faintly visible because of the stone's pattern, lighting, or damage depth. That honesty is worth paying for.

The phrase countertop repair near me gets searched constantly because damage feels urgent when you live with it. A chipped edge snags towels. An open seam collects grime. A rough area by the sink makes the whole kitchen feel neglected. Local expertise matters because stone repair is part material science and part hand skill. Two companies can use the same resin and get very different results.

Common issues that professional repair can address

- Chips along exposed edges or around sinks
- Hairline cracks and minor seam separation
- Dull traffic patterns or isolated scratch damage
- Staining that requires poulticing or spot treatment
- Uneven gloss from old repairs or worn finish

Not every problem is repairable to perfection. Deep fissures, major structural cracks, and poorly supported overhangs may require reinforcement or partial replacement. Still, many countertops that look beyond saving can be repaired far more successfully than homeowners expect.

The difference between granite care and marble care

A lot of countertop service companies handle both granite countertops and marble countertops, but the work should not be interchangeable. Granite is generally denser and more acid-resistant than marble. Marble is more reactive, especially to acidic food, bath products, and some common cleaners. The methods, abrasives, and protective treatments need to reflect that difference.

If your home includes both stones, the contrast becomes obvious over time. The granite kitchen perimeter may stay relatively stable while a marble island develops soft etching around prep areas. A marble vanity can lose clarity quickly from daily products that would not visibly affect granite. That is why homeowners looking to restore countertops across multiple rooms should hire a company comfortable with both materials, not just one.

Marble sealing, marble polishing, and marble restoration are often requested alongside granite services, especially in larger homes where natural stone appears throughout the kitchen, primary bath, bar, and laundry areas. A seasoned company will usually inspect the entire stone package, because one visit can address several small issues before they become large ones.

Sealing, and the confusion around what sealers actually do

Sealers are probably the most misunderstood part of stone maintenance. Many homeowners think sealer creates a hard shield on top of the stone. Most quality penetrating sealers do not work that way. They reduce absorption below the surface, helping the stone resist staining by giving spills less time to soak in. They do not make the countertop maintenance-free, and they do not prevent physical damage.

The right sealer also depends on the stone and the finish. Dense black granites may take very little sealer or none at all if testing shows low absorbency. Lighter granites and porous marbles often benefit from a premium penetrating product. Some homeowners specifically ask for a more anti etch sealer after dealing with etching on marble or calcite-based stone. That is a reasonable conversation to have, but expectations need to stay realistic. Products marketed this way may improve resistance in some situations, especially when paired with the right finish and maintenance habits, but no sealer makes vulnerable stone immune to acidic exposure.

A good technician usually tests before sealing. If water darkens the stone quickly, the surface may be absorbing more than it should. If it beads for several minutes without darkening, adding more product may do little. Over-sealing can create haze or tackiness on some surfaces, so more is not always better.

Polishing is where skill shows

Homeowners use the word polishing loosely. In stone care, it can mean several very different things. Sometimes it refers to applying a polish product that adds temporary shine. Other times it means mechanically refining the stone itself with diamond abrasives or powders to restore the actual finish. Only the second approach truly corrects surface wear.

For granite, polishing often aims to recover clarity and reflectivity in areas that have gone flat from abrasion or residue. For marble, marble polishing may involve removing light etching and refining the surface to a gloss or satin finish, depending on the design. This is precise work. If the technician chases shine too aggressively on one spot, the repair can flash differently in side light. If they fail to match the surrounding finish, the corrected area stands out instead of blending.

I have seen kitchen islands where a single polished patch looked like a bright coin in the middle of a matte field. The work was technically shiny, but aesthetically wrong. Proper restoration is not about making one area look new. It is about making the whole surface look coherent again.

How marble restoration often overlaps with countertop work

When homeowners call about granite, they often mention another stone issue almost as an afterthought. The bath vanity has water rings. The shower bench looks dull. The marble window sill by the tub has etched spots from cleaning sprays. This is where full marble restoration can make a substantial visual difference across the home.

Marble restoration usually includes cleaning, stain treatment, honing or polishing, and marble sealing. It may also include crack repair, edge refinement, and lippage correction in tiled applications. On countertops, the biggest challenge is often balancing beauty with realistic use. High-gloss marble is striking, but in busy kitchens it can show every new etch. A honed finish may be the better long-term choice for some households. That kind of recommendation is the mark of a practical professional, not just a salesperson.

What to expect during a service visit

A reputable granite cleaning company usually starts with questions that tell you a lot about their process. They may ask what cleaners you use, whether the surface darkens when wet, how old the countertops are, where the damage is concentrated, and whether previous repairs have been done. Those details shape the plan.

On site, they should inspect under good light and, when needed, test discreet areas before proceeding. They may tape off a small section to compare cleaned versus uncleaned stone. If there is a chip repair, they should discuss the likely visibility of the fix. If sealing is recommended, they should explain what it can and cannot do. Clear expectations prevent disappointment.

The actual appointment can be relatively quick for straightforward cleaning, or it can take much longer if repairs and finish correction are involved. A small kitchen with moderate buildup may take a few hours. A large island with seam work, stain treatment, and finish blending may require most of a day or even a return visit, especially if fillers or poultices need curing time.

Signs it is time to call a professional

- Water no longer beads and the stone darkens quickly
- Dull areas remain after normal cleaning
- Chips, rough edges, or open seams are visible
- Stains seem to sit below the surface, not on it
- The countertop looks uneven in sheen under side lighting

Choosing the right company without getting oversold

Natural stone care attracts both true specialists and general cleaners who occasionally work on stone. The difference becomes obvious in the questions they ask and the promises they make. Be cautious of anyone who guarantees every stain will disappear or every repair will be invisible. Stone has limits, and honest tradespeople respect them.

Look for a company that discusses stone type, finish, absorbency, and maintenance habits rather than jumping straight to a package price. Ask whether they handle granite countertop repair in house or subcontract it. Ask how they approach marble polishing and marble sealing if you have mixed surfaces. If they recommend a more anti etch sealer, ask what level of protection it realistically provides for your particular stone.

Photos can help, but they do not tell the whole story. A glossy after shot may simply be wet or freshly coated. What matters is whether the company can explain the method, the trade-offs, and the expected durability of the result.

Maintenance after restoration

Once the countertops have been professionally cleaned or repaired, the goal is to extend the result without becoming obsessive. Most stone does well with simple habits. Wipe spills promptly, especially oils, wine, citrus, vinegar, coffee, and heavily pigmented foods. Use a stone-safe cleaner instead of bleach, ammonia, or acidic sprays. Skip abrasive pads. Keep soap and hard water residue from building up around faucets and sinks.

For kitchens that see daily cooking, a quick evening wipe with a microfiber cloth and a proper stone cleaner goes a long way. For bathrooms, the biggest improvement often comes from changing products rather than adding effort. Many vanity tops look worn because harsh bathroom cleaners are used repeatedly on the stone.

If your home has marble countertops in active use areas, accept that they may develop some patina over time. Restoration can reset the surface, but living well with natural stone sometimes means choosing a finish that ages gracefully rather than fighting for perfection every day.

The real value of professional restoration

Replacing countertops is expensive, disruptive, and often unnecessary. Fabrication, demolition, plumbing disconnects, backsplash touch-up, and the risk of damaging cabinets can turn a cosmetic problem into a major

project. Restoration is usually far less invasive. In many cases, it delivers most of the visual improvement at a fraction of the cost.

That is especially true when the stone itself is high quality but the finish has simply suffered from years of use or poor maintenance. A skilled granite cleaning company can reveal the original depth of the slab, correct targeted damage, and create a cleaner, more consistent appearance that changes how the entire room feels.

People tend to focus on shine, but the real transformation is often subtler. Edges feel smooth again. The sink area looks crisp instead of chalky. Seams stop drawing the eye. Light reflects evenly across the surface. The countertops stop looking tired. They start looking intentional again.

For homeowners searching countertop repair near me because they are staring at chips, haze, or stubborn staining, that is the practical promise of professional stone care. Not magic, not marketing gloss, just informed restoration based on what the material can honestly do. When the work is done well, granite countertops regain their depth, marble countertops recover their elegance, and the room feels settled in the best possible way.