

## How To Choose The Perfect Granite Work Surface

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Natural stone is graded as to its suitability for a given task. It is also graded regarding the region of the world it originated from. This is a grade for general use but more for stone professionals to advise architects, surveyors etc which products to use for maximum efficiency in the building or home.

When buying on the internet you are usually shown samples of the very best, Granite, Marble, Limestone etc. You must be aware that this stone is probably not what you will receive. Firstly, the stone is batched. You need batched stone to get the consistent pattern throughout the surface. If you were to buy stone today and return for stone a month later to complete your project you will invariably get a mismatch that can look horrendous especially with the larger crystals such as blue pearl granite.

Always make sure you are receiving the same batch and have it itemized on your order. Also if the installer chips a corner or scratches the surface you will generally need a replacement piece. If the batch isn't available you may have a problem.

I have received numerous calls lately concerning the fading of black granite counter tops. Black granite should not fade. Black granite imported from Asia is sometimes doctored with dyes and oils to darken the surface. The fading is nothing more than the dyes and oils being removed. Unfortunately, the only fix is to re-polish the top. This can be costly.

Before purchasing a granite top perform the following test to find out if it has been doctored.

Get a clean white cloth and apply some acetone (nail varnish remover) to the surface of the granite. If any residue or black color is observed on the top, do not accept it, it has been dyed.

Take a piece of the "granite" you want to test and spill a few drops of lemon juice onto it. If you see that under the drops of lemon it develops very quickly dark spots, it means that it's a very absorbent stone and I would advise you against it. If it takes, say, a minute or so to be absorbed, then you're dealing with a level of absorbency that's easily controllable with the application of a good quality impregnating sealer.

So, in short be careful where you place your order and always seek specialist advice. The void between a good stone and a bad stone is huge, the price between a good stone and a bad stone is smaller than you think but can be costlier.

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