

Can color-enhancing sealer be applied to recently-sealed travertine?

Q. We recently placed travertine on our fireplace surround and applied a sealer. We are not happy with the color. It is dull. Can we use a color enhancer sealer and get results? How long do we need to wait?

A. It's understandably disappointing when your travertine installation doesn't turn out as you envisioned, especially after taking the time to seal it. The good news is, with natural stone, there are often more solutions available than with other types of surfaces.

When a sealer leaves travertine looking dull, it's often because the product was not designed to enhance the stone. Less than desirable results may also happen if the travertine is highly polished. Let's dive a little deeper into each of these possibilities.

Chances are you used a penetrating or natural-look sealer, which means it protects the stone but doesn't change its appearance. That's good news in one sense—it means your travertine probably isn't permanently altered, and you may still be able to achieve the richer, warmer look you're after.

A color-enhancing sealer might be a great solution, but first, consider your travertine's finish. The type of finish it has will play a big role in how well it will absorb an enhancer. With honed or textured travertine, the pores on the surface are more open than polished travertine. Honed or textured travertine tends to absorb enhancers well. With polished stone, the pores are more closed off. Polished travertine often resists color enhancement.

We highly recommend that you hire a professional stone restoration contractor to set eyes on your travertine and talk to you about the specifics of the sealer you already applied. To find a vetted PRO in your area, visit

www.surfacecarepros.com and click on **Find a PRO**.

A PRO will understand the timing and compatibility of the existing sealer and the enhancer. Applying an enhancer too soon after the first sealer, or using one that isn't compatible, can lead to blotchiness, streaking, or residue. Sometimes, the surface will need to be lightly stripped or prepped before applying a new product.

Product quality and application technique are also huge factors in how things turn out. This is one of those cases where using professional-grade materials, and having experience in how and when to apply them, makes a noticeable difference.

We help clients with this exact issue all the time. It's more common than one might think. And the good news is, in most cases, we can improve the look of the stone with the right product and methods. You don't have to settle for "just okay." Let's get it looking the way you imagined from the start.

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