

How can I remove an old oily candle wax stain from sandstone?

Q. I have what appears to be an oily stain (which I think is from candle wax) on sandstone hearth. It's been there several years. Is there any hope of getting it out? I tried acetone, and it did nothing. Any help for advice you can provide is much appreciated! Thank you!

A. Sandstone is very porous, so oils and waxes sink below the surface where normal cleaning agents (like acetone) can't reach. To draw the oily residue out of the sandstone, you will need to apply a paste-like mixture called a poultice. It is made by combining a liquid chemical with an absorbent material like diatomaceous earth or flour. In your case, use paint thinner as your liquid ingredient.

Always work in a well-ventilated area when using paint thinner or any solvent. Wear gloves to protect your skin. For detailed, step-by-step instructions on how to mix and apply a poultice correctly, check out our free [Stain Management App](#).

This poultice will draw the oily stain out of the sandstone over time. After the poultice has dried completely, carefully remove it and clean the surface with a neutral pH stone cleaner and water. Old stains, especially several years old, may not lift completely on the first try. If the stain remains, you may need to repeat the process several times. If the stain persists, consider contacting a professional stone and tile restoration contractor. To find a vetted PRO in your area, visit www.surfacecarepros.com and click on **Find a PRO**.

Once the stain is gone, consider sealing your sandstone hearth with a penetrating stone sealer or asking your PRO to perform this service for you. This makes it less absorbent and much easier to clean if candle wax or other oils spill in the future.

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