

How to remove a dark stain left by a colored towel on a stone countertop?

Q. I spread a dark blue hand towel on the countertop and was working on it, when I removed the towel a couple hours later a darkened stain/discoloration was left behind that outlined where the towel was. I tried a stone cleaner on it, but it won't go away. It's now been hours and the stain/discoloration looks the same. My wife is going to kill me! I have no idea what happened. Help!

A. What you're seeing is likely a reaction between the dye in the towel and the stone surface, or it could be a mild chemical reaction with moisture trapped under the towel, especially if your countertop is porous. Regular stone cleaners may not remove this because the discoloration has penetrated into the stone.

To address this, you'll need to use a poultice, which is a paste that draws the stain out of the stone over time. For detailed, step-by-step instructions on how to mix and apply a poultice correctly, check out our free [Stain Management App](#).

Your poultice ingredients will include a liquid chemical and an absorbent medium. For the liquid ingredient use a strong hydrogen peroxide solution, ideally the 30/40 volume type sold in beauty supply stores. This is stronger than the standard hydrogen peroxide from a drugstore and can penetrate deeper into the stone.

NOTE: Follow the manufacturer's safety precautions when using chemicals.

For the absorbent medium, use diatomaceous earth or flour. You want to create a thick paste that can sit on the stain without running.

Repeat the process if the stain is still visible; some discolorations take multiple applications to lift completely. If the stain persists despite multiple attempts, it may be worth consulting a professional stone restoration service, as they have specialized tools and techniques for stubborn discolorations.

To find a vetted PRO in your area, visit www.surfacecarepros.com and click on **Find a PRO**.

After the stain is removed, consider sealing the stone to prevent future staining, or better yet, ask your PRO to perform this service for you. Porous stones like marble, limestone, or certain granites can absorb dyes and liquids very quickly, so a good sealer acts as a protective barrier.

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