

How to remove a basket stain on marble?

Q. I have a brown stain on my marble caused by a basket that a house plant was placed in. The stain is brown, the color of the basket. I will use a poultice, but what ingredients should make up this poultice?

A. The brown stain on your marble is likely from one of two sources. It could be an organic stain, caused by the plant material itself—soil, leaves, or moisture trapped under the basket—or from natural tannins or other colorants in the basket material. However, if the basket was dyed, then the discoloration may actually be a dye stain that has transferred into the porous marble surface.

You're right that a poultice is the best next step. For both organic and dye-related stains, the chemical of choice for your poultice is hydrogen peroxide (30–40 volume, clear type).

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

This stronger variety of peroxide is available at beauty supply stores. The standard 3% drugstore hydrogen peroxide is too weak to be effective. Your dry poultice ingredient should be diatomaceous earth or baking flour. This poultice should draw 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](#).

If the stain remains, repeat the poultice process until it lightens or disappears. In some cases—especially if the basket dye was particularly strong or if the stain behaves more like ink—denatured alcohol or rubbing alcohol can be more effective than peroxide, so you may want to test that on a small area if peroxide doesn't do the trick. **NOTE: Do not mix chemicals.**

After the stain is lifted, clean the area with a pH-neutral, stone-safe cleaner.

To inhibit future staining, place coasters, trays, or other non-porous liners under baskets, plant pots, or any decorative items. Even “dry” baskets can wick moisture or release tannins over time. Also, apply a high-quality, penetrating stone sealer made for marble. Sealing doesn’t make marble stain-proof, but it slows absorption so you have more time to wipe up spills before they soak in.

We recommend having a professional stone restoration contractor select and apply the most appropriate sealer for your stone. To find a vetted PRO in your area, visit www.surfacecarepros.com and click on **Find a PRO**.

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