

How to remove apple juice stain on a bluestone patio?

Q. Apple juice stain on bluestone patio that has not been sealed. Stain is new.

A. Fresh organic discolorations on bluestone are almost always removable, especially when they're addressed immediately. Good thing you're tending to the apple-juice stain right away.

Before getting into this, it will help to understand the difference between a stain and etch damage. A stain is discoloration caused by liquid or pigment soaking into the stone's pores. An etch is actual surface damage. It usually looks more dull and lighter than the surrounding stone. Etch damage is caused by acids reacting with minerals in the stone. Bluestone, a type of sandstone, doesn't etch as easily as calcium-based stones like marble, but it is not impervious to etch damage.

An apple juice stain on bluestone can usually be removed with cleaning or a poultice. Start with a good rinse and a gentle scrub using a pH-neutral, stone-safe cleaner or a mild detergent and water. This usually lifts a new organic stain completely.

If the discoloration remains, apply a simple poultice, which will 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](#).

The chemical of choice for your poultice will be hydrogen peroxide, the 30/40 volume type, available at your local beauty salon.

NOTE: Follow the manufacturer's safety precautions.

The hydrogen peroxide from the drugstore is too weak, at 3.5 volume. Your dry poultice ingredient will be baking soda or diatomaceous earth. You may need to reapply the poultice several times to remove all the staining agent.

Etching is rare on bluestone, but if an area does look chalky or slightly altered, it typically means the surface grains were affected. That kind of damage can't be cleaned away, but a professional stone restoration contractor can hone, blend, or lightly re-texture the area, depending on what kind of finish you have or want. To find a vetted PRO in your area, visit www.surfacecarepros.com and click on **Find a PRO**. DIY abrasion is not recommended because it's very easy to create a mismatched area.

After everything is clean and dry, consider applying a penetrating sealer so future spills don't have time to settle in. Your PRO can select and apply the most appropriate sealer for your stone.

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