

How do I remove blue candle wax and dye stains from my stone countertop?

Q. A blue candle was left on my stone counter. Heat and humidity caused it to stain the stone blue. How do I remove the stain. If a poultice is recommended, what do I use. Thank you.

A. There are two concerns to address here. The wax itself may have melted into the pores of the stone, and the dyes used in candles may have migrated into the stone's surface. The overall goal is to remove wax first, and then remove dye. Each substance has a different chemistry.

Scrape off any hardened wax with a plastic scraper. Don't use metal. It can scratch the stone's surface. Keep in mind that wax even if all the wax is removed from the surface, it likely has seeped into the pores. Place plain white paper towels over the wax spot, then warm the area using a hot clothing iron or a hair dryer. The heat melts the wax, and the towels wick it up. As you work, replace the saturated paper towels with fresh ones. This step alone can solve most of the wax problem, but dye stains are still a separate issue.

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

Assuming you see evidence of candle dye on the stone, here's how to remove it. Dampen a clean cloth, wring it out, and add a few drops of a degreaser, ammonia-based cleaner, or a solvent like mineral spirits. Wipe the affected area. This should break down any remaining oily film. Rinse the area thoroughly with clean water and let the stone air dry.

If the stain disappears, you're done. If any color remains, a poultice will be necessary.

Before you apply a poultice, please note that various stones react differently to various chemicals. We would provide more specific information, but we don't know why type of stone you have. So here is some general information. Granite typically tolerates peroxide and solvents well. Marble, limestone, and travertine are more chemically sensitive, so peroxide should be used cautiously and solvents should be tested first in an inconspicuous area. Engineered quartz should not be treated with acetone or high-strength peroxide because the resin can be damaged. This is also true of natural stone types that are treated with resin.

Test your poultice chemical in an inconspicuous area first, to see what effect it may have on your stone. A poultice draws the stain out of the stone over time. Your chemical poultice ingredient will be 30/40 volume hydrogen peroxide. For detailed, step-by-step instructions on how to mix and apply a poultice correctly, check out our free [Stain Management App](#). After removing the poultice and rinsing, the stone may look slightly darker until it dries fully. You may need to reapply a poultice several times.

If peroxide doesn't work after a few of applications, switch to a solvent-based approach. Your poultice ingredient will be mineral spirits or paint thinner. Mix it with an absorbent material and apply the poultice the same way.

Most homeowners can safely handle the wax-removal steps and a basic poultice, but if the stain is large, deep, or on a sensitive stone, that's when calling a stone restoration professional is genuinely worthwhile. Pros can identify the stone type, choose the correct chemical, and in some cases use other professional solutions and methods to remove stains without risking etching or dulling the finish. They can refinish the stone, if necessary, and reseal the stone to inhibit future staining.

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

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