

How to remove deeply embedded soot stains on fireplace stone?

Q. I cleaned soot off my fireplace stone, but it won't come out where it has seeped into the stone.

A. Smoke and soot are made up of very fine carbon and oily particles that can become absorbed into the surface of porous stone. Once that happens, scrubbing alone usually will not remove the stain.

The goal will be to clean what is on the surface first, then draw the soot and oils back out of the stone. Even after an initial cleaning, smoke residue often leaves behind a thin layer of oily material. Before trying to pull the stain out of the stone, the surface should be cleaned again to remove anything that could block the pores.

Start by wiping the area with a clean, dry white cloth. Avoid rubbing hard, as this can push soot deeper into the stone.

Next, clean the stone using warm water mixed with stone soap or a mild dishwashing soap. Gently scrub the area. If the stone is rough or textured, use a stiff bristle brush. Rinse thoroughly and allow the stone to dry.

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

If the stain remains or feels greasy, clean again using a degreaser mixed with warm water. This helps break down the oily residue left by soot. Rinse well and let the area dry completely.

If discoloration is still visible, a poultice will be needed. A poultice works by pulling soot and oil out of the pores of the stone as it dries. For detailed, step-

by-step instructions on how to mix and apply a poultice correctly, check out our free [Stain Management App](#). Your chemical ingredient will be degreaser. Deep stains may require more than one poultice application.

When smoke staining does not improve with repeated cleaning and poulticing, professional help is often the safest next step. A qualified stone restoration contractor can evaluate the type of stone and use professional-grade methods to improve the appearance while avoiding permanent damage. To find a vetted PRO in your area, visit www.surfacecarepros.com and click on **Find a PRO**.

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