

How do I remove rust stains from a travertine pool deck?

Q. My pool deck is travertine (unfilled) and my patio furniture has left rust stains. How do I remove the stains?

A. That's a frustrating but common situation. The good news is that rust stains can usually be improved or removed if handled the right way.

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

Before you attempt to remove these stains, there are a few things you should know:

- Do not use clay powders for your poultice. Use diatomaceous earth or poultice powder.
- Never use bleach on rust stains, because it will make them worse.
- Avoid common household cleaners, acids, or abrasive tools. Products like vinegar, muriatic acid, or CLR may remove the color of the stain but can increase porosity that can make future staining worse.
- Alkaline cleaners can also be problematic, as they may introduce salts that lead to additional discoloration over time.
- Rust remover, although necessary, may cause etching, which will require professional honing and polishing to remove.

For light rust stains, careful application of a rust remover and gentle scrubbing with a soft brush may be enough. Rinse the stone thoroughly with clean water.

For deeper or older stains, a poultice is often needed so the product can dwell long enough to draw the rust out of the stone. For detailed, step-by-step instructions on how to mix and apply a poultice correctly, check out our free

Stain Management App. Your poultice chemical ingredient will be rust remover. Multiple applications are sometimes required, and patience is important. If you have to apply a poultice, chances are you may need to contact a stone restoration professional to remove any etch damage caused by the rust remover.

If a rust remover poultice doesn't achieve the desired result, you can try using hydrofluoric acid as your poultice chemical ingredient instead.

If the stains are widespread, very dark, or have penetrated deeply into the stone, this is a good time to consult a professional stone restoration contractor. To find a vetted PRO in your area, visit www.surfacecarepros.com and click on **Find a PRO**. A PRO has access to specialized poultices, controlled cleaning methods, and finishing techniques that can remove stains while preserving the integrity of the stone. They can also assess whether sealing is appropriate for your specific pool environment and help prevent the problem from recurring.

Once the stains are addressed, use non-metallic glides or protective pads under furniture legs and keeping the stone as dry as possible. This will go a long way toward protecting your travertine from future rust stains.

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