

# A new counter top can be an easy home improvement

Does spring cleaning bring out your inner home improvement guru? A quick, convenient and inexpensive way to spruce up your home, be it your kitchen, wash-room or laundry room, can be as easy as installing a new counter top. New counter top packs an impressive punch without the hassle of an extensive renovation.

Counter top options are seemingly (ha ha!) endless in today's market. Current design trends incorporate everything from sleek simple design, to mixes of materials for an eclectic effect. Worktop materials include laminate, laminate counter with different edging materials, tile, solid surface, granite, marble, butcher block from a variety of wood species, and stainless steel!

Many modern kitchens have under-mount sinks, a great way to keep things clean and sleek. With today's new and improved materials, this option works with almost all countertop choices, including laminate. Each counter top type has its pros and cons, but the amount of choices provide flexibility to match your lifestyle needs.

In terms of price, the least expensive replacement counter tops are laminate. New design trends and textures, including stone simulations, are beautiful and elegant. Laminate counters require the least amount of time investment, as well as being great value for your dollar. Installation usually takes one day and includes removal of the existing counter tops and plumbing work. Laminate counter tops can also be made with different edging options, from solid surface edging in a complimentary color to the laminate, to oak or maple with a custom stain. Although adding

an edging does increase the cost, it creates a counter top that is uniquely yours.

Solid surface counter tops are another popular option for work surfaces. Solid surface counters are made from a mix of materials, with varying amounts of acrylic, dependent on the manufacturer. Price varies accordingly. Solid surface countertops are not porous, which means that they can be buffed if they get scratched or become dull over time. Unlike stone countertops, solid surface countertops are not cold to the touch. Replacing your counters with solid surface counter tops requires one day for templating and approximately two weeks for your custom order to be prepared and ready for installation. Installation usually takes one day.

Quartz counters are made from ground quartz suspended in an acrylic base. Quartz counter tops give you the shine of natural stone, with the benefits of a non porous surface. Although quite striking in appearance, each piece of quartz is made to specification, so you do not get the natural variation in appearance you will get with stone. Quartz counter tops are one of the most expensive replacement counter top options, but with low maintenance and the sparkle of stone, this may be exactly what you are looking for.

An excellent investment, which is sure to add true "Wow" factor to your home, each piece of granite is unique. Replacing your counter tops with granite is a significant investment, but well worth it. Granite is nature's hardest surface, won't scratch (in fact it will dull your knives if you cut on it), and the natural variations are endless.

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