

# MAINTAINING YOUR CARVESTONE

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Cleaning and sealing your Carvestone surface should be done on a regular basis, just like any other home maintenance. The frequency will depend on a variety of factors like vehicle and foot traffic in the area, landscaping, substrate, chemicals used around the Carvestone, and even the weather. And as with any cementitious product you'll need to be especially careful in the first days and weeks after the project finishes. So we've put together this care guide to give you information on initial care, maintenance, and resealing.

## After the installation

Carvestone and the other materials we use on our projects take time to dry and gain strength, so special care needs to be taken over the first month. Here are a few recommendations.

**For the first (24) to (48) hours**, avoid walking on the surface. Of course you can and should walk around while the crew is there to help you look over the finished product. But the mastic in our expansion joints can take up to **(48)** hours to dry, so if you or a pet accidentally tread in it during that time, you'll have a few cleaning options. If the product has already dried before you realize what happened, you can mechanically remove it with a razor blade and the like. If the mastic is still wet, though, we recommend using a chemical cleaner like mineral spirits to clean it up. Rinse the area immediately afterwards. A razor blade also works to clean up the edges when the mastic has overrun its joint: because our mastic is self-leveling, overruns are sometimes difficult to catch while we're on site. See "Joints" on the back of this page if you're having difficulty with stains or the sand along the top of your joints.

**For the first (6-7) days**, and in fact for the first **(1)** month, the Carvestone surface itself will continue to gain strength rapidly. Driving, moving heavy furniture, and dragging sharp items across the surface are far more likely to cause damage during these first few days than at any other time, so our recommendation is that you wait on these activities if at all possible. If you have to move your furniture or do other heavy work out there, we recommend that you lift and set objects, rather than dragging them.

## Resealing

To be on the safe side, we recommend re-sealing every **(2)** years. In fact, the warranty requires this cleaning and re-sealing process because a sufficient coat of sealer helps protect the product and preserve its beauty. Sealing helps prevent staining, sun damage, and water and frost penetration. This reduces the damage caused by cracks, spills, and other forms of everyday wear and tear. Resealing with the types of acrylic sealers we use also reinvigorates the colors of your job. To determine if you need to reseal your Carvestone outside of the regular two year cycle, you can sprinkle water on the surface. While some darkening is to be expected, watch to see if the water is rapidly absorbed: if the water is absorbed and makes the surface noticeably darker within three seconds, the surface may need more sealer. If it does not absorb and seems to sit on top of the surface for a few seconds, it's probably in good shape for a while longer. When the time comes to reseal your project, please contact us to discuss the process and your resealing options.

## Product care

Just as you routinely wash and wax your vehicles or have your carpets cleaned, your Carvestone surface requires cleaning attention to maintain its beauty. Please see the back of this page for detailed information.



Just as you routinely wash and wax your vehicles or have your carpets cleaned, your Carvestone surface requires cleaning attention to maintain its beauty. When cleaning Carvestone surfaces between sealing applications, please keep the following in mind.

## Dirt

Most normal cleaning can be easily accomplished with a garden hose or a power washer. Use dish soap or a medium nylon bristle broom to remove residue. Apply, scrub, and rinse thoroughly to remove residue. Exterior surfaces may be hosed or low pressure washed (maximum pressure 1500 psi). Be careful: if you bring the pressure washer too close to the surface or use too much pressure, you risk stripping off sealer and even color.

## Stains

Decorative surfaces like Carvestone are stain resistant, but not stain proof. The sooner stains receive attention, the easier they are to remove. Stains can remain permanent if they are allowed to penetrate into the surface. Residue such as tree sap or road tar may be spot cleaned with either Goo Gone or Dissolves-It and then rinsed with water afterwards. Tire marks on driveways or garage floors can be removed with driveway cleaners or engine degreasers. Again, rinse well with water afterwards.

## Joints

Avoid solvent cleaners when cleaning the mastic—normal dish soap and the like will actually clean off most dirt and stains. Replacing or refilling the mastic is also an easy DIY project: we use a commercial version of Sikaflex's Self Leveling Joint Sealant, which is widely available in the concrete section at Home Depot in a tan and gray. If sand was used on the joints of your job, you may find that some of it blows or washes away (sometimes immediately, but sometimes further down the road). This is normal, but if it's bothering you please feel free to use a strong adhesive (even glue) to bond more sand to the top of the joint. The joints can also be painted if you decide you want a new look.

## Hard water deposits

Placing plastic mats or carpets over your Carvestone is not recommended because they hold in moisture, which contributes to the buildup of minerals contained in water and makes them next to impossible to remove. If you have hard water then normal puddling, too, can leave a light residue. Products such as Lime Away can often remove the deposits or at least reduce their appearance.

## Cracks

Cracks, new or pre-existing, may appear in your Carvestone surface. If they do, often the best response is to simply monitor them. The majority will appear (if they're going to) within the first year or so of installation and remain exactly as they are; a minority will appear and begin to cause limited damage to surrounding stones. This minority is usually worth fixing—we can often simply grout or re-grout the lines to create new stones, or place a colored elastomeric sealant (caulk) into the crack to reduce its appearance and limit further problems. Costs for these types of repairs are minimal.

## Rust & scrapes

Carvestone is extremely durable and our sealer is stain-resistant, but we still recommend using protective caps on furniture legs to avoid scraping off high points in our texture or causing rust stains. And just as running a lawnmower or weed-whacker against any other part of your hardscapes or home may cause a gouge or scrape, avoid contact between sharp landscape equipment and that decorative finish. Carvestone itself is very strong, but that top layer—the sealer—is still, in the end, plastic.

## Chemicals

Carvestone is highly chemical resistant when sealed, but not chemical damage proof. Care should be taken to avoid contact and promptly clean any concentrated pool treatment chemicals as soon as possible to prevent surface damage and discoloration. Treated swimming pool water itself will not hurt a surface, of course, as long as it has been diluted properly. If concentrated fertilizer contacts your concrete, we recommend it be rinsed away immediately.

## Cleaning solutions

Cleaning agents themselves must be rinsed thoroughly from the Carvestone, and we would recommend avoiding all contact between Carvestone and cleaning agents that have an orange citrus or otherwise acidic component. Failure to do so will result in discoloration and etching over time. To emphasize: even for non-acidic cleaners, special care must be taken to properly meter all concentrated solutions, and after cleaning homeowners must thoroughly rinse the Carvestone to remove the cleaning material residue.