

Removing candle wax stain on natural stone

Q. Wax from a citronella candle spilled onto my outdoor natural stone bench. Please advise on a remedy to remove this.

A. Candle wax can present a few issues. The candle wax that has melted onto the surface and into the pores of the stone and will need to be removed, then if any staining has been left behind, that will need to be treated.

To remove wax from a stone surface: Begin by scraping any solid wax material from the surface of the stone with a plastic scraper. Avoid using metal or any tool that can scratch the stone.

To remove candle wax that melted into the pores of the stone: Use a hot clothing iron (preferably one you don't mind getting wax on) and white paper towels to melt and lift any remaining wax. Place the paper towel over the stain and iron it with the hot iron. As the wax softens, it will be absorbed by the paper towels. Be sure to use new paper towels if needed.

Removing residual stains: After you have scraped the wax off and used the iron and paper to absorb embedded wax, soak a clean cloth in water, wring it out and apply a few drops of either degreaser or ammonia. Wipe the stone with the cloth to eliminate the remaining candle residue. Finish by rinsing the surface with water and air dry.

If any staining remains you will need to use a poultice to break down and draw out the stain. Try a poultice with hydrogen peroxide 40 volume (the kind you get in a beauty supply for processing hair color, not the kind you get in the drug store).

If that doesn't work after a couple of tries, use paint thinner as your chemical.

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