

## Did a stone-safe oil stain remover bleach my quartzite?

**Q.** I used an oil stain remover made for natural stone on my light whitish-gray quartzite to remove a very faint oil ring. I did only one section and the area turned white, almost bleached. From what I could tell, the stain was gone. I contacted the manufacturer of the poultice, and they said that the residual solvent would take approximately 72 hours to return to the normal color. After 72 hours, the bleached spot from the commercial poultice was still there, but I think it had darkened a bit. The rest of the grease ring stain (not covered by the poultice) had also faded but was just barely there and was still noticeable to me. I tried two homemade poultices in an inconspicuous area over the weekend: cornstarch and hydrogen peroxide and baking soda and distilled water. The distilled water poultice left a darkened water spot that I think will dry. I did use a neutral pH cleaner as well. I actually applied the poultices to a hidden area behind my microwave. That part of the counter was sealed and the area where the grease stain/light spot occurred also was sealed before the stain occurred. However, this part of my countertop is a highly used area and I think it could've been resealed to prevent this. The counters were installed in December of last year, and I resealed them twice before the stain occurred. I am debating using one of these on the remaining oil ring as they have not bleached the stone as the commercial poultice did. I feel like I need to exhaust my possibilities to try to attempt to lift the remaining oil stain ring before I seal the counters again. The area of the countertop where the stain is is between the sink and microwave and is used a lot. This whole debacle has definitely taught me to reseat this section of countertop more often than the rest of my kitchen. What do you think of my ideas? Thanks!

A. Natural stone is a strange and wonderful material that doesn't always respond as predicted to various products. In your case, waiting it out like the manufacturer said and seeing what would happen was a good idea. To summarize your situation, you applied three different poultices in an inconspicuous area, one purchased and two homemade. The purchased one created a discoloration (making the stone appear lighter). You have not yet attempted to apply a poultice to a conspicuous area. It could be that there is a layer of grease from cooking near the surface of the stone and an additional grease stain that has penetrated deeper into the stone. If this is the case, then it would make sense that the place where you applied the poultice would be lighter than the surrounding stone. A poultice covering a large area would be required to lift the thin layer of grease from the stone, and additional poultices would be required to lift the deeply penetrated stain. It is also possible that you may be dealing with a moisture issue or some other problem that is difficult to diagnose with an email consultation. I went over everything with one of our stone experts, Fred Hueston, [Stone Forensics](#), and he agreed that for this particular problem, it would be best to have a professional stone restoration contractor provide an in-person consultation. If you do not already have a stone restoration contractor, we may be able to recommend one in your area. Visit <https://surphaces.com/contact-us/> and use the "Request an estimate" option instead of the "Ask our PROS" option. Sorry that we are not able to make a recommendation via our Knowledgebase. I know that would have been more convenient for you.

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