

Countertop Considerations

So, you're renovating your kitchen. By now, I'm sure you have come to the realization that there are a lot of decisions to make. All of which, affect the over all quality, atmosphere, and cost of your kitchen. When renovating, consider the complement of materials. A good place to start is with the cabinets. Once you have selected a cabinet, start looking into countertops. There are more options on the market than you might think. Look below to see some of your options:

Material	Approximate cost (installed)	Advantages	Disadvantages
Laminate	\$20-\$30/sf	Affordable, easy to clean, stain resistant, hundreds of colors to choose from	Hard to repair, damaged by heat and sharp objects, scratches and dulls where used
Ceramic Tile	\$10-\$50/sf	Durable, heat and moisture resistant, easy to clean, pattern, color, style options	Grout lines can make surface uneven, installation is labor intensive
Granite Tile	\$25-\$50/sf	Durable, heat and moisture resistant, look of granite without the cost of slabs	Requires periodic sealing with protectant, can be damaged by acidic foods
Solid Surface	\$50-\$75/sf	Durable, easy to clean, stain resistant, damage easily repaired, no seams, pattern and color options	Scratches and dulls where used a lot, can be scorched by heat
Granite	\$60- \$200/sf	Durable, heat proof, scratch and stain resistant, easy to clean, good work surface	Requires periodic sealing with protectant, can be damaged by acidic foods, may chip
Quartz	\$75-150/sf	Extremely Durable, heat proof, scratch and stain resistant, many colors available, look of granite	Seams somewhat conspicuous
Marble	\$75-\$200/sf	Heat proof, easy to clean, classic styling, good for rolling out dough	Soft and porous, may stain and scratch, may fracture, requires frequent sealing and care
Soap Stone	\$75-\$200/sf	Nice texture, absorbs sound, heat resistant, distresses to a patina over time	Limited color selection, porous, requires frequent sealing, may stain
Concrete	\$60-150/sf	Can be cast in place or pre-cast of site, inlays possible, contemporary	Hard to find experienced contractor to make & install, may crack & stain
Stainless Steel	\$65-100/sf	Durable, sanitary and easy to clean, heat and stain resistant	Noisy work surface, may scratch & scuff, finger prints, custom fabrication

information in the column above provided in part by Renovation Style Magazine

Select the countertop which fits both your budget and your lifestyle. If you have children, marble and soapstone are not good options. Quartz is the way to go if you want a product that is nearly impossible to damage. Do your homework and shop around. You may be surprised how much prices vary from one distributor to the next. All of the options above are viable when used in a kitchen with a good compliment of materials. Good luck on your renovation.