

Counter Top Selections Pros vs. Cons

	Pros	Cons
Granite & Natural Stones	<p>Sinks can be under mounted. The surface can handle hot pans. It can resist most stains if properly sealed.</p>	<p>Granite can be scratched. Leaves watermarks if not cleaned up immediately. Seams are very evident, especially if the surface has a clear pattern.</p>
Quartz & Engineered Stones	<p>These stones are scratch resistant. This nonporous stone makes it hard to stain. It's made of crushed natural stone and resins, and doesn't require sealing.</p>	<p>Expense is No.1 Some consumers feel it's too uniformed in look. It contains seams and doesn't always guarantee heat resistant</p>
Laminates	<p>Low cost. Easy maintenance. Wide range of colors and patterns. Some imitating natural stone.</p>	<p>Hot pans and knives could damage the surface. Not easily repairable. Long term moisture problems can cause the laminate layers to separate.</p>
Solid Surfacing	<p>Nonporous counter hard to stain. Can be made in almost every size and shape seamlessly. Maintenance to repair scratches or burns can generally be repaired.</p>	<p>Some solid surfacing can be pricey. It has potential to melt with hot pans placed on them. The finish may also need to be rebuffed as it dulls down over time.</p>
Wood	<p>Natural look for the kitchen that can be easily repaired. Can be custom designed with patters & designs using different woods. Can be given a look not available with any other materials.</p>	<p>Can have problems with expansion issues around water if not properly put together. It is also just as vulnerable as most material in regard to heat and scratches.</p>
Concrete	<p>Can be formed into just about any shape and has a unique feel to it. Can be polished for a high shine. Or can be matted down for a dull finish.</p>	<p>Can be pricey, and easily stained. Requires high maintenance. With time, concrete may chip and crack and even with color and additive options has more of a cold, industrial look to it.</p>
Ceramic Tile	<p>Comes in a variety of colors and styles. Lower cost than most counter top materials.</p>	<p>Grout areas can be hard to get completely clean and can stain. If not properly installed, tile can have a greatly uneven surface. Dull or scratched tiles can stand out amongst high gloss tiles.</p>

Information taken from: **Qualified Remodeler**, May 2005