

tumbled

STONE CARE

Natural Stone Sealing & Maintenance Guide

A complete reference for selecting, applying and maintaining penetrating sealers on natural stone — pairing Tumbled's curated collections with Actichem's premium protection system.

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Introduction

Natural stone is a long-term investment. With the right sealing and maintenance, your surfaces remain beautiful and protected for decades.

This guide explains how penetrating sealers work, how to select the right product for each stone and location, application specifications, coverage rates, anti-slip treatment, and ongoing care. It draws on Tumbled's experience supplying natural stone across Australia and Actichem's premium sealing system — independently tested by a NATA-approved stone laboratory and warranted for up to 15 years when applied to specification.

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How penetrating sealers work

Penetrating sealers protect stone from within. They line the pores with a hydrophobic (water-repelling) and oleophobic (oil-repelling) barrier without sealing the surface. The stone remains breathable — moisture escapes by evaporation — but stains are held at the surface where they can be cleaned up.

WHAT THEY PROTECT AGAINST

- Water ingress and efflorescence
- Food, beverage and oil stains
- Mould and biological growth
- Pollution and general grime
- Salt attack — with the right product on susceptible stones

WHAT THEY DON'T PROTECT AGAINST

- Scratches from grit and abrasion
- Acid etching on calcite-based stones (marble, limestone, travertine)

Acid sensitivity. Marble, limestone and travertine contain calcite and will etch on contact with acidic substances — lemon juice, cola, vinegar, wine, many bathroom cleaners. Penetrating sealers cannot prevent this contact. Clean acidic spills immediately.

Stone types

STONE	CHARACTER
Marble	Elegant metamorphic rock with veined patterns. Calcite-based and acid-sensitive.
Travertine	Porous limestone, naturally pitted. Available tumbled, honed and sawn.
Limestone	Versatile sedimentary rock with smooth texture and earthy tones. Highly porous and salt-sensitive.
Bluestone	Turkish bluestone or basalt — dark grey-blue, dense, available in sawn and honed finishes.
Sandstone	Highly porous and very absorbent. Salt-sensitive.
Slate	Fine-grained metamorphic rock, naturally textured.
Granite / Quartz	Dense igneous stone, less porous. Requires sealers with smaller molecular structure.

Product selection by location

The correct sealer depends on both stone type and location. The tables below summarise recommendations for typical internal and external applications.

INTERNAL AREAS

STONE	KITCHEN FLOOR	BATHROOM FLOOR / WALLS	MAIN LIVING
Limestone	Stone Sealer Gold	PreSeal + Stone Sealer Gold	Stone Sealer Gold
Honed marble	Solv Sealer Gold	PreSeal + Stone Sealer Gold	Solv Sealer Gold
Sandblasted marble	Solv Sealer Gold	PreSeal + Stone Sealer Gold	Solv Sealer Gold
Bluestone sawn		PreSeal + Stone Sealer Gold	

STONE	KITCHEN FLOOR	BATHROOM FLOOR / WALLS	MAIN LIVING
	Stone or Solv Sealer Gold		Stone or Solv Sealer Gold
Slate	Solv Sealer Gold	Solv Sealer Gold	Solv Sealer Gold
Travertine tumbled	Solv Sealer Gold	Solv Sealer Gold	Solv Sealer Gold
Travertine sawn	Solv Sealer Gold	Solv Sealer Gold	Solv Sealer Gold

EXTERNAL AREAS

STONE	POOL COPING	POOL SURROUNDS	ALFRESCO / GENERAL
Limestone	Defender CSD Pure + Stone Sealer Gold	Defender CSD Pure + Stone Sealer Gold	Stone Sealer Gold
Honed marble	PreSeal + Solv Sealer Gold	PreSeal + Solv Sealer Gold	Solv Sealer Gold
Sandblasted marble	PreSeal + Solv Sealer Gold	PreSeal + Solv Sealer Gold	Solv Sealer Gold
Bluestone sawn	PreSeal + Solv Sealer Gold	Stone or Solv Sealer Gold	Stone or Solv Sealer Gold
Slate	Solv Sealer Gold	Solv Sealer Gold	Solv Sealer Gold
Travertine tumbled	Solv Sealer Gold	Solv Sealer Gold	Solv Sealer Gold
Travertine sawn	Solv Sealer Gold	Solv Sealer Gold	Solv Sealer Gold

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Pool coping specification

Pool coping is a demanding application — constant exposure to water, chlorine and, often, salt. Tumbled's specifications carry a 15-year warranty when applied correctly.

APC1

Limestone, sandstone & concrete

15-YEAR WARRANTY

These stones are the most sensitive to salt attack and require the strengthening properties of Defender CSD Pure.

PRESEAL Actichem Defender CSD Pure (AP675)

FINAL SEAL Actichem Stone Sealer Gold (AP177, water-based) or Solv Sealer Gold (AP176, solvent-based)

PROCESS

1. Coping stone must be clean, dry and dust-free prior to sealing.
2. Seal all six sides with Defender CSD Pure. Pieces larger than 400 mm may be sprayed, rolled or brushed; smaller pieces may be dipped.
3. Allow Defender CSD Pure a minimum of 3 days to cure.
4. Complete installation and grouting of the coping.
5. Allow adhesive and grout to cure per the manufacturer's guides.
6. Apply 2 coats of Stone Sealer Gold or Solv Sealer Gold.
7. Keep dry for 12 hours to allow full cure.

APC2

All other natural stone & terracotta

15-YEAR WARRANTY

Granite, marble, cotto and other less salt-sensitive stones.

PRESEAL Actichem PreSeal (AP171)

FINAL SEAL Actichem Stone Sealer Gold (AP177, water-based) or Solv Sealer Gold (AP176, solvent-based)

PROCESS

1. Coping stone must be clean, dry and dust-free prior to sealing.
2. Seal all six sides with PreSeal. Pieces larger than 400 mm may be sprayed, rolled or brushed; smaller pieces may be dipped.
3. Allow PreSeal 6–12 hours to cure.
4. Complete installation and grouting of the coping.
5. Allow adhesive and grout to cure per the manufacturer's guides.
6. Apply 2 coats of Stone Sealer Gold or Solv Sealer Gold.
7. Keep dry for 12 hours to allow full cure.

APPROVED ADHESIVES, SILICONES & GROUTS

ADHESIVES	SILICONE / CAULKING	GROUT
Laticrete 335	Maxisil N	Ardex
Laticrete 254	Mapei Mepesil LM	Laticrete Spectralock Pro
Latapoxy 310 Stone Adhesive	Ardex ST	Laticrete Permacolor NS
Mapei Keraflex Maxi S1	Laticrete Latasil	Kerakoll Fugabella Grout
Davco SMP Evo		Mapei Kerapoxy
		Mapei Keracolor

Only use stone-safe silicone above waterline tile. Recommendations above are a guide; always check manufacturer advice.

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Walling specification

STONE	INTERNAL WALLING	EXTERNAL WALLING	COASTAL / SALT EXPOSURE
Australian SA limestone	Defender WB	Defender WB	Defender CSD50
Imported dense limestone	Defender WB	Defender WB	Defender CSD50
Imported quartz	Defender SV	Defender SV	Defender SV
Imported sandstone	Defender WB	Defender WB	Defender CSD50
Imported travertine	Defender SV	Defender SV	Defender SV

Internal walling does not require re-sealing. Defender CSD50 is particularly effective at strengthening mortar joints to prevent dusting over time.

Coverage rates

Coverage varies with surface porosity. The standard application is two coats; the second coat typically uses about 20% less product than the first as the stone is partially saturated.

SUBSTRATE-SPECIFIC COVERAGE (M² PER LITRE, PER COAT)

SUBSTRATE	WATER-BASED (STONE SEALER GOLD)	SOLVENT-BASED (SOLV SEALER GOLD)	PRESEAL
Bluestone honed	13	10	—
Bluestone sawn / textured	10	8	—
Limestone / travertine honed	12	10	—
Limestone / travertine textured	8	6	16
Travertine sawn	10	—	—
Marble honed	12	10	—
Marble textured	8	6	—
Porphyry textured	12	10	—
Quartz textured	10	6	—
Sandstone	5	4	—
Splitstone	6	5	—
PreSeal (general)	—	—	15

Quick estimate. Actichem's standard calculator uses 10 m²/L for coat 1 and 12 m²/L for coat 2. For a 50 m² area you'd need approximately 5 L for the first coat and 4.2 L for the second — roughly 9–10 L total. Use substrate-specific rates above for accuracy.

Anti-slip treatment

Smooth, polished natural stone can become slippery when wet — particularly around pools, in bathrooms and at building entries. Traction 1.1 provides a premium anti-slip solution by micro-etching the surface.

Traction 1.1 is part of a three-step process used to increase slip resistance on smooth natural stone. It uses a powerful acid blend that cuts through high-gloss finishes and creates an even micro-textured surface — without visibly altering the look of the stone in most cases.

Specialist application advised. Traction 1.1 is highly acidic (pH 1–2) and classified as corrosive. Where possible, engage a specialist applicator. Always read and understand the MSDS and pre-test in an inconspicuous location before full application.

AP148

Traction 1.1 — Anti-slip treatment

PRODUCT CODE AP148

PH 1 – 2 (highly acidic)

SAFETY Corrosive — appropriate PPE required

PACKAGING 5 L

SUITABLE FOR All natural stone surfaces. For very soft stones, dilute 1:1 with clean water.

BENEFITS

- Powerful acid blend effectively cuts through high-gloss finishes on natural stone.
- Provides fast micro-etching action.
- Works quickly and rinses freely.
- Delivers an even finish across the treated surface.

APPLICATION PROCESS

1. Thoroughly clean the floor using Tile & Grout Cleaner Pro or LF at a 1:40 dilution.
2. Rinse with clean water.
3. Apply Traction 1.1 with a mop or sprayer, ensuring even coverage.
4. Leave to dwell for 10 minutes. Longer dwell times produce deeper micro-etching.
5. Rinse the stone surface thoroughly.
6. Conduct a final neutralising rinse with Proneutro diluted 1:100, or Tile & Grout Cleaner Pro/LF at 1:50.
7. If any colour loss is observed, allow the surface to dry completely, then apply one coat of Actichem Intense Hybrid colour-enhancing sealer.

Colour considerations. The micro-etching action can sometimes cause a slight loss of colour on dark stones. This is easily rectified by applying a colour-enhancing sealer such as Actichem Intense Hybrid after treatment.

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The Actichem product range

Solv Sealer Gold

SOLVENT-BASED · AP176

Stone Sealer Gold

WATER-BASED · AP177

Premium penetrating sealer for natural stone and concrete. Nano-molecule structure penetrates dense substrates. Up to 15 years protection. Does not change appearance or slip rating.

Premium water-based penetrating sealer. Ideal for all stone and concrete; particularly effective on limestone. Easy-to-clean finish without changing appearance.

Defender CSD Pure / CSD50

STRENGTHENING SEALER · AP675

Penetrating sealer that strengthens and consolidates stone and mortar joints. Excellent water repellency. Specified for salt-prone substrates: limestone, sandstone, concrete.

Defender WB / SV

WALLING SEALER

Water-based (WB) or solvent-based (SV) walling sealer. Outstanding protection against mould growth and weathering on masonry walls.

PreSeal

PRE-INSTALLATION PROTECTION · AP171

Applied before installation. Prevents moisture ingress and picture-framing, eases grout smear cleanup. Cures in 6–12 hours.

Traction 1.1

ANTI-SLIP TREATMENT · AP148

Premium anti-slip treatment that micro-etches smooth natural stone for improved grip when wet. Free-rinsing acidic formulation; specialist application recommended.

Intense Hybrid

COLOUR-ENHANCING SEALER

Restores and enhances colour in dark or porous stones. Recommended following Traction 1.1 if any colour loss occurs from micro-etching.

RG Neutral Detergent

ONGOING CLEANING

pH-neutral detergent for routine cleaning. Safe for all water-cleanable surfaces, grout and sealer.

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Cleaning & ongoing maintenance

ROUTINE CLEANING

1. Dilute RG Neutral Detergent 1:100 in warm water.
2. Clean using a microfibre mop.
3. Rinsing is not normally required at 1:100 dilution.
4. Wipe up spills promptly — penetrating sealers slow penetration, they don't stop it indefinitely.

STUBBORN STAINS

- Stronger soiling: 1:9 solution of RG Neutral Detergent.

- Tannin stains and mould: 1:9 solution of Chlorosan, or Mould Exterminator.
- Never use acids, solvents or abrasive cleaning methods.
- Do not pressure-clean sealed stone.

DEEP CLEAN — EVERY 6 TO 12 MONTHS IN HIGH-TRAFFIC AREAS

1. Dilute Tile & Grout Cleaner LF 1:40.
2. Apply with a scrubber-dryer. Scrub well and allow 10 minutes activity time.
3. Rinse with clean water and allow to dry.

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Re-sealing schedule

Applied correctly, Actichem penetrating sealers provide 5 to 15 years of protection. Wear, environmental exposure and invasive cleaning will shorten this. To maintain maximum protection:

- **High-traffic and external surfaces:** re-seal every 3–5 years.
- **Lower-traffic internal floors:** re-seal every 5–7 years.
- **Internal walling:** does not require re-sealing.

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Surface-specific notes

POOL SURROUNDS

Salt deposits, leaf stains, food and beverage spills, mould, sunscreen and cosmetics. Spray tiles down with fresh water after pool use to reduce salt build-up. Brush leaves away regularly. On salt-sensitive stone, your applicator may recommend sealing with Defender CSD50/Pure as well as Solv Sealer Gold. Consider Traction 1.1 anti-slip treatment for polished or smooth stones around pool areas.

EXTERNAL PAVING

Mould, leaf stains, bird droppings and food or beverage stains are typical. For stubborn mould, use Mould Exterminator. Consider Defender SV/WB or Defender CSD50 for sandstone and limestone.

EXTERNAL WALLING

Mould, pollution, spider webs and plant stains accumulate over time. Brush away cobwebs regularly and spray the wall with clean water. Defender CSD50 strengthens mortar joints — particularly valuable on older walls.

INTERNAL WALLING

Spiders and other insects can leave unsightly marks. Brush away cobwebs and dust regularly. Defender CSD50 is excellent for strengthening mortar joints and preventing dusting over time.

BENCHTOPS

Food, beverage, cosmetic and general grime stains. Clean spills quickly. Marble benchtops respond well to 3 applications of Solv Sealer Gold. Denser substrates like granite are best sealed with 3–4 applications of Solv Sealer Pro.

BATHROOMS & LAUNDRIES

Soaps, shampoo, cosmetics and bathroom cleaning agents are often acidic. Rinse from stone surfaces promptly to avoid etching. Defender SV/WB or Defender CSD50 may be used as a base layer, with Solv Sealer Pro/Gold over the top for body-fat and oil protection. Traction 1.1 is recommended for polished stone in showers and wet areas to improve slip resistance.

INTERNAL FLOORING

Food, beverages, cosmetics and general grime. Clean up spills promptly. Choose between Solv Sealer Pro/Gold or Stone Sealer Pro/Gold depending on stone type and the desired finish.

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Sealing products manufactured in Australia by Actichem, Newcastle NSW.