

**Limestone** with its unique characteristics, subtle beauty and great versatility have made it a popular choice for any design style.

GROUP	Sedimentary	COMMON ROCK-FORMING MINERAL GROUP	Calcareous
COMPOSITION	Calcium Carbonate (Calcite) or the double carbonate of Calcium and Magnesium (Dolomite). Contains a variety of accessory minerals; silica, pyrite, iron oxides, clay minerals and bituminous matter from organic materials (plant & animals).		
HARDNESS	Soft to Hard. Some varieties are as hard and dense as granite.	MOHS' SCALE	2 - 5
POROSITY %	0.6 - 31.0	ABSORPTION %	0.2 - 12.0
WEATHERING CHARACTERISTICS	Depends on the environmental conditions and the type of limestone. Exterior installation, in warm humid regions limestone weathers easily. If iron oxides or pyrite are present rust spots or runs may appear and if it contains bituminous matter dark blotchy spots or runs also may appear. Limestone surfaces in any climate may weather irregularly due to the mineral composition of the stone.		
TENDENCIES	Absorbs oils and other liquids, softer varieties have low scratch resistance. Acid sensitive as a rule. However, the Dolomite Limestone varieties are least affected. Some varieties have large pores while others have an open pitted textured surface capable of catching and holding dirt and soil.		
COLORS	Range is in the pastel colors from white to creams through beige to pinkish, soft yellows through browns to rich crimson, medium green to dark blue-green, gray to black. Patterns vary from solid to variegated.		
FINISHES	Any finish that is available is possible, depending on the variety. NOTE : Not all limestone's can be polished. As a general rule the lower the clay and silica content the better the limestone will take a polish.		
NOTATIONS	Due to the high absorption factor of the majority of limestone's it is highly recommended for practical maintenance considerations and to minimize staining, that the stone be treated with a water and or oil repellent. It is important when choosing the treatment product that the solid content be carefully evaluated or a treatment product that has been specifically formulated for large pored stones be used. Some limestone's surfaces will roughen over time. This is not a form of decay, but merely the surface of the stone developing a natural patina.		



Limestone is considered the most abundant chemical sedimentary rock. Many different types exist, yet the mineral composition of all limestone is similar. Most of them are of marine origin, formed in ancient warm shallow seas directly and indirectly from the life processes of marine plant and animal organisms. As these organisms died their calcareous remains, shells and skeletons accumulated in these sea beds building up vast deposits. Accompanying this process algae and other lime-secreting plants precipitated calcium carbonate in very fine clay to silt size particles which mixed with these fragments to form a calcareous ooze (mud). During these processes a wide variety of foreign materials ranging from clay minerals, quartz sand, iron oxides, and other minerals along with the remains of other plants and animals were being added to this sedimentary brew. As the waters receded these deposits consolidated to form limestone rock masses. In some limestone's the partial or complete fossilized remains of these extinct organisms can be seen.

Commercially those Limestone's that can be polished have been classified as a "Marble" and are sold as such. It can be very difficult to visually distinguish some of these limestone's from a true metamorphic marble.