

How to choose a worktop and a splashback

Process

There are many different types of material that can be used for worktops, countertops, splashbacks. Such materials include granite, marble, quartz or quartzstone, glass, recycled glass, other man-made materials. Choosing the right material is a fairly straight-forward process that can, however, become time-consuming due to the variety of options available.

- 1) Decide on and prioritise the key criteria that are important to you, including:
 - a. Colours and patterns
 - b. Technical characteristics
 - c. Budget constraints
 - d. Eco-friendliness
 - e. Sizes and thickness of slabs (sheets) available
 - f. On-trendiness
- 2) Especially in circumstances where budget is the key factor, measure or estimate approximate measurements of the worktops or splashback you are interested in.
- 3) Search online for local or national suppliers or fabricators that use materials of your choice. Shortlist (e.g., experience of dealing with a particular material, quality of craftsmanship, etc.) and visit (some of) them to see either examples of finished products (e.g., a worktop) or full size slabs to get a better idea of what your worktop or splashback will look like. Bring along measurements to the fabricators and ask them for a quotation. Alternatively, you can email a quotation request to most fabricators.
- 4) Negotiate. Most fabricators are usually prepared to give you a discount off the quoted price. Do not, however, lose sight of the importance of the quality of craftsmanship, especially when you are after a bespoke worktop or splashback.
- 5) Enjoy your worktop.

More details on the criteria listed above

- a. Colours and patterns. There is plethora of colours and patterns across all types of materials suitable for worktops surfaces, countertops and splashbacks. Glass comes in an almost unlimited range of colours. Natural stones like granite and marble often provide unique patterns. Quartz also comes in a variety of colours.

- b. Technical characteristics. If you are going to use your worktop often then ease of maintenance and cleaning are very important. Glass, including recycled glass, is possibly the best option in this respect. Also, you want your worktop to be durable and hard wearing. Again, glass, as well as quartz are primary options to consider.
- c. Budget constraints. Generally speaking, certain types of granite and quartz are budget options, whereas marble, glass, recycled glass are more high-end options.
- d. Eco-friendliness. There is a major drive to use eco-friendly materials where possible. London's Ecobuild is one of the most successful annual trade shows in the building industry and it features exclusively ecologically friendly products.
- e. Sizes and thickness of slabs (sheets) available. Most coated glass comes in thicknesses less than 20mm, i.e. may be a bit too thin for a worktop to have a dramatic effect. And, if slabs are not long enough then there will be a need for joints. Generally speaking, fewer joints mean better aesthetics.
- f. On-trendiness. Glass, especially recycled glass, and quartz are now more popular and possibly practical choices for worktops and splashbacks than the traditional granite.

A brief example of choosing the right material for a bespoke glass worktop and a splashback that are coloured, durable & eco-friendly

Colour. There are many glass fabricators who offer standard colour glass splashbacks but not worktops.

Size limitations. Splashbacks are in most cases come in standard sizes rather than cut to size. These are potentially serious limitations for someone who wants to have a bespoke kitchen worktop.

Eco-friendliness. Glass itself is not an eco-friendly material, unless it is made of recycled glass products.

If above criteria are important then consider using Stoneville Recycled Eco Glass, a type of coloured glass that is not only beautiful and eco-friendly but also comes in large slabs or sheets that are 20mm or 30mm thick and therefore can be used for both bespoke kitchen worktops and splashbacks. It is made of fused cullets of recycled glass. There are ten main colours and colour combinations. However, if white recycled is combined with LED lighting then almost any colour is achievable. It also has a 3D effect, especially when backlit.