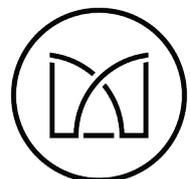




Care & Maintenance Guide
Mitchell Bink Concrete Design



C O N T E N T S

PAGE 4 OUR PRODUCT

PAGE 4 IS GFRC RIGHT FOR YOU?

PAGE 5 CARE & MAINTENANCE FOR ALL PRODUCTS

PAGE 7 ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE: BATHROOM

PAGE 8 ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE: KITCHEN

PAGE 9 AFTER DELIVERY, INSTALLATION OR COLLECTION

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OUR PRODUCT

At Mitchell Bink Concrete Design, we specialise in Glass Fiber Reinforced Concrete (GFRC or GRC) with all products being manufactured from our workshop in Hume, Canberra.

What is GFRC? In short, GFRC consists of cement, fine aggregate, acrylic co-polymer, water and glass fibers.

Why GFRC? GFRC has been used for the past 30 years by decorative concrete artisans who have discovered the benefits of GFRC.

It gives much higher flexural and tensile strengths than normal concrete, this enables us to apply it to a wide range of requests.

GFRC is a lightweight, natural stone material that can be cast into kitchen benchtops (for both indoors & outdoors), commercial countertops, bathroom vanities, basin bowls, tabletops, fireplace surrounds, bench seats, wall panels and much more. As our products are a third of the weight of standard concrete no reinforcement is required to your floors or cabinetry.

It takes a long time for anyone to be proficient with GFRC. At Mitchell Bink Concrete Design, since 2013 we have been solely focused on GFRC as a custom concrete product for benchtops and furniture and we have a team equipped with the skill set to produce GFRC at the highest standard.

IS GFRC RIGHT FOR YOU?

As GFRC is a natural stone, we understand and agree that this type of product is not for everyone as it does require extra care, this is why we provide our Care & Maintenance Guide, Terms & Conditions as well as encourage all clients to come into our workshop to view our work and educate them about what they can expect from the product. It is important clients understand just because it is a hard service and hard product that it is not indestructible and whilst concrete is a popular trend and looks incredible, its about whether you can, will and want to take that extra care to look after it.

There are certainly many advantages to the product such as it being completely custom made for you, that it is locally handmade so you are supporting a local small business and the flexibility and versatility of the product itself such as achieving oversized pieces with no joins and many thickness options just to name a few.

Whilst the product is sealed multiple times before it leaves our workshop, it is scratch and stain resistant to a degree, however it is a natural stone, it is possible for it to scratch or stain overtime. Over the years, your benchtop/piece can develop scratches, stains and signs of general ware, advice on how to avoid this, minimise this and fix this is included in our Care & Maintenance Guide or if you have any questions at all, please just ask.

Our goal is to provide clients with a piece that will look beautiful for many years, not short term, so we want to educate all of our clients on this information, we want to make sure the product is right for them.

CARE & MAINTENANCE FOR ALL PRODUCTS

Maintenance

No maintenance is required when a client looks after their concrete product from Mitchell Bink Concrete Design. The below advises on the best way to protect and maintain your original concrete product.

Scratching

Do not drag, slide or throw objects on to the concrete piece. This includes (but not limited to) items such as handbags, groceries, washing basket, ceramic serving dishes, mugs, chopping boards, boxes, pans, firewood. Scratches in the sealer could occur if this happens. It is always best to pick up and place an object down. Be gentle when placing items down onto the piece or moving them across the piece. Never cut directly onto the piece. Once the sealer is scratched/pierced this is when it becomes more susceptible to staining. By being aware and avoiding putting anything hard, heavy, rough or dragging items across your top, will help avoid marks or scratches in the sealer. Using items such as placemats, decorative mats or tea towels as a protective barrier can assist. Small stick-on felt pieces can be applied to the bottom of objects to minimize possible scratching. Should you scratch your piece, please refer to [After Delivery, Installation or Collection](#) on how this may be repaired.

Cleaning

Cleaning couldn't be easier. Damp soft sponge, very mild cleaners or other water-based cleaners are all you need. Do not use products that contain trichlorethane, methylene chloride or have high alkaline/pH levels. Avoid cleaners with a citrus cent, citrus ingredients, acidic based, bleach-based, gumption or Jif. Abrasive cleansers or scrubbers should not be used. Staining/discoloration can occur overtime when using products mentioned (or similar). After cleaning the surface, ensure it is dry before placing objects on top of the surface. Avoid forceful scrubbing if you notice stains or marks as this will result in damage to the sealer. Do not wipe over the piece with the cloth you use to wash the dishes as this may transfer oils and other contaminates.

Staining

We recommend our clients wipe up spills, foods or liquids when they are noticed. Try not to leave spills, foods or liquids on your piece for a period of time. Acidic liquids or products with staining agents such as (but not limited to) lemon juice, balsamic vinegar, oil, red wine, turmeric, coffee etc. can result in staining/discoloration if left on. For products such as cooking oil, hand soap, hand cream, liquid foundation, bio oil, hand sanitizer etc., place these objects onto a decorative dish/plate and not directly onto the top, that way if they drip down or leak, the dish/plate will catch the residue and not seep into your concrete over time. Should you stain your benchtop, please refer to [After Delivery, Installation or Collection](#) on how this may be repaired.

Trapping water or other liquids

If you have items such as (but not limited to) a vase, pot plant, hand soap, bottle of oil etc. sitting on your surface, it is best to place something underneath, like a decorative dish/plate. When water or other liquids drip down or through these objects, the water or liquid can become trapped between your surface and the object, with nowhere for the liquid to go but into the concrete. Depending on the object, once the object is removed, your piece/sealer may be able to breathe out this moisture, but if it has been there for a while or the liquid contains staining agents, it may mark or cause discoloration. If you notice areas like this, don't cover them up, leave them uncovered and try to let it breathe. Should you mark your benchtop by trapping a liquid, please refer to [After Delivery, Installation or Collection](#) on how this may be repaired.

Hairline Cracks

Hairline cracks are defined as cracks, generally smaller than 1mm in width that do not threaten the integrity or stability of the piece nor prevent the continued and normal use of the concrete product. Hairline cracks are possible and are considered an inherent part of the product, not a defect. It is possible for hairline cracks to occur at any time during the life of the concrete product, but are not a common occurrence.

Chips

While durable, both concrete and natural stones like marble are 'brittle' materials, as opposed to 'elastic' materials (since it's not plastic). Whilst it is difficult to chip, it is possible, so we recommend being careful around the edges. Should you chip your piece, please refer to [After Delivery, Installation or Collection](#) on how this may be repaired.

Weight

Avoid excess weight being placed on your concrete product (for e.g. standing on your concrete piece). This more so applies for areas with no support underneath such as overhang on a kitchen benchtop, the center or edge of a dining table top or benchseats.

Heat

As with almost all types of benchtop surfaces, do not place hot pots or pans directly onto the benchtop. You should use trivets or chopping boards.

ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE: BATHROOM

Bathroom Vanity Tops, Trough Sinks, Basin Bowls, Integrated Sinks

Whilst following the Care & Maintenance Guide for all products, there are a couple of other tips for products in the Bathroom. In particular, the areas around cleaning and trapping water and other liquids.

For Integrated Sinks in Bathroom Vanity Tops or Trough Style Sinks, if your sink has a waste plug, it is important you don't use strong/harsh cleaning products to clean your waste. Avoid using a rough sponge or scourer to clean your waste. How you clean your waste, will also affect the concrete area around the waste, so follow our same steps under Cleaning in Care & Maintenance for cleaning your waste. Avoid forceful scrubbing on or around your waste as this will result in damage to the sealer.

If you see water pooling down the sides or at the bottom of your integrated sink or trough style sink, wipe over it. This will aid in long term appearance and minimise possible discoloration.

It is important to follow the steps under Trapping Water and Other Liquids to ensure certain objects aren't sitting directly on your benchtop or have some form of decorative dish/plate underneath to minimise the chance of marking or discoloration.

If you use products such as oil-based foundation, oil-based body products, nail polish remover or products with staining agents and you drop or spill this on your top, wipe it up as soon as you notice it. Leaving this could cause marking or discoloration.

ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE: KITCHEN

Integrated Kitchen Sink & Drain Grooves/Ramp

Integrated kitchen sinks and drain grooves/ramp are certainly possible and features we have done for previous projects, but we like to let our clients know the ongoing upkeep these particular elements may need to ensure they look as-new for years to come.

Concrete is a product that needs a little extra care to alleviate things like scratching or staining as it is a sealed natural stone. This care is more so required when we do integrated sinks and drain grooves/ramp in kitchens as these features are specifically there for draining liquids and foods as well as normally placing heavy, sharp or hot items into them.

In terms of indoor kitchens, we recommend a second standard sink in a pantry (if possible) for majority of cleaning and kitchen traffic. For indoor and outdoor kitchens, where this may not be an option, this sink will be your main point for cleaning and it will be a high traffic area for foods, liquids, heavy, sharp and hot items.

At Mitchell Bink Concrete Design, we offer one kitchen integrated sink and drain grooves/ramp that have been designed in a way to be tapered to help drain liquids but in everyday use (or so) there will more than likely still be pooling (as there is in a normal kitchen sink). Pooling of certain liquids and foods is what can lead to marking and staining overtime, as well as throwing objects into the sink (rather than gently placing them) or putting hot pots and pans into the sink.

We understand this can be too much ongoing care for some, and others choose to be aware and make a habit of wiping over their sink and being extra cautious.

Aesthetically they are both beautiful features, but the practicality can be too much work or hassle for some clients which we completely understand.

AFTER DELIVERY , INSTALLATION OR COLLECTION

How exciting, your new concrete product is about to be delivered, installed or collected from our workshop!

After the first few days/weeks of your custom piece being delivered, installed or collected, the sealer may still be curing and hardening to provide a tough protective surface so we always suggest you take a little extra care in the first few weeks.

By using a little extra care in the first few weeks and getting into a routine of how to care for your piece, you will ensure that your piece remains beautiful for years to come.

If you have trades onsite, completing other work throughout your home, it is important you ask your trades to not use your concrete piece (especially if it is a concrete benchtop). Trades can often use it as a bench to put their food or tools on, not knowing about the benchtop or product. Please ask your trades to stay off your concrete piece. If it is damaged by trades, the below sand and re-seal (Item 4) is an option.

Should you or someone in your home scratch, stain or chip your piece, or overtime you see general ware, there is an option to have Mitchell come out to try and repair your piece. Firstly, we ask that you send us a couple of photos.

For chips, Mitchell can create a grout mix to fill the chip. The grout mix is designed to fill the chip. It will not completely disguise the area but will certainly patch what has been chipped away.

If you have stained or scratched your piece, in most cases, Mitchell will need to sand back and re-seal your piece.

The sooner we can be notified about the above, the better chance Mitchell will have to repair the concern. If you are noticing general ware and want your benchtop to be freshened up, this is also the opportunity to have Mitchell sand back and re-seal your benchtop.

During the sand and re-seal process, whilst everything will be done to repair your piece and bring it back to its original condition, this will depend on the extent of damage done to the piece, we will endeavor to repair your piece to the best of our ability. As the piece will be sanded back to a certain point, new variations and pinholes could appear. Any pinholes would then be filled by the sealer.

COSTINGS

Chip Fix

Based on 2x site visits in the ACT, Mitchell to attend site and apply grout mix to fix chip: \$250.00

Sand and Re-seal

Based on 2x Site Visits in the ACT, Mitchell to sand and re-seal

Under 1m² = \$490

Between 1-3m² = \$790

Between 4-6m² = \$990

7m²+ = Price on request

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