



Health & Safety Guidelines

for Removing Caesarstone Quartz Surfaces

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Caesarstone quartz surfaces can be easily and safely removed when renovating or demolishing.

We recommend that removal be performed by a professional as there are technical aspects to consider, such as how to handle heavy surfaces and prevent damage to cabinets when removing sinks and cooktops.

SAFE TO REMOVE

It is safe to remove Caesarstone benchtops and there are no health risks from hazardous dust when safely removing, handling, transporting, storing, or disposing of benchtops. Hazardous dust in concentrations that are dangerous to health is only created by fabrication processes of benchtops, such as cutting, grinding, chipping, sanding, drilling, polishing, etc. **These processes are not required in order to remove benchtops.**

In the vast majority of cases benchtops are removed by cutting the adhesive and removing the whole countertop in one piece as detailed below. In rare and complex scenarios where the remover has no option but to break the benchtop at certain points for ease of removal, **this must NOT be done with power tools that create hazardous dust.** Breaking the benchtop at one or a few points does not create hazardous dust in a concentration that is dangerous to health.

As conditions and circumstances differ from site to site, Caesarstone recommends wearing a dust mask (minimum P2 respirator mask) when removing, demolishing, disposing of or placing Caesarstone quartz surfaces in skip bins.

PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT

Caesarstone recommends the use of appropriate Personal Protective Equipment when removing, handling, transporting, storing and disposing of quartz benchtops such as:

- Dust mask (minimum P2 respirator mask)
- Safety gloves
- Safety goggles
- Non-slip, steel-capped safety shoes

TASK-SPECIFIC TOOLING FOR REMOVING CAESARSTONE QUARTZ SURFACES BENCHTOPS

Removing quartz benchtops will require appropriate task specific tooling to ensure the process is completed safely and efficiently. For example, caulk softeners, putty knives or pliers.

PREPARATION FOR REMOVING THE BENCHTOP

1. Protect the floor

Cover floors with cardboard or a heavy duty cover to prevent potential damage from the benchtop when it is removed.

2. Empty drawers and cabinets

Remove all items from kitchen cabinet drawers and shelves to prevent them getting damaged or dirty during the removal of the benchtop.

3. Disconnect gas and electricity

A licenced professional should disconnect the gas and electricity supply from the cooktop and any other appliances that use gas or electricity.

4. Turn off the water valves

Engage a licensed plumber if required. Turn off both the cold and hot water stop valves beneath the sink tap. Then disengage the water lines between the valves and tap.

5. Detach the taps

First, trace the disconnected water lines to the bottom of your sink. Then turn the hold-down nuts counterclockwise to detach, using pliers. Push the taps upwards from the rim to remove them.

6. Remove the cooktop

In most cases the cooktop is attached to the benchtop with a form of adhesive. After the gas and electricity have been disconnected, cut the adhesive between the cooktop and the benchtop with a box cutter/putty knife. Then remove the cooktop.

7. Remove the sink

Find the hold-down brackets located inside the cabinet around the sink's base. Unscrew the nuts on each bracket and remove them. Finally, use a box cutter/putty knife to break the caulk sealing the sink to the benchtop, and pull out the sink. This primarily applies to under-mount sinks.

For drop-in fixture sinks, use a box cutter/putty knife to cut the adhesive layer holding the sink to the benchtop.

8. Remove the splashback

The splashback should be removed if it hinders the removal of the benchtop. The splashback is generally joined to the benchtop with silicone or caulk. If it is connected with silicone, first wipe the join with acetone on a cloth. If it is connected with caulk, use a caulk softener. Next, use a box cutter/putty knife to cut the join between the splashback and the benchtop and use industry or task-specific tools to remove the splashback.

REMOVING THE BENCHTOP

After completing the pre-removal steps, it's now time to undertake the main task – removing the benchtop.

In rare and complex cases you may be required to break apart the benchtop at certain points, for ease of removal. In this case, use a manual hammer. **Do not use mechanical tools that create hazardous dust.**

The benchtop may be installed on open cabinets, or on a solid subtop.

Benchtops installed on open cabinets

If the benchtop is installed on open cabinets, try to lift it. If it does not lift off, look underneath to see the connection points with the cabinet rails. There will usually be a little silicone that has seeped out at the connection points. Remove the silicone to detach the benchtop from the cabinet. Work carefully to avoid damaging the cabinet rails.

Benchtops installed on a solid subtop

Insert the pry bar/chisel between the benchtop and the subtop by tapping it gently with the appropriate tooling. Turn gently to break the silicone or adhesive connecting the two.

Tap a wooden shim between the benchtop and the subtop to hold the benchtop away from the subtop. Continue screwing and shimming from the front of the cabinet until the entire slab is disconnected from the subtop and raised on the shims. Work carefully to avoid damaging the subtop.

After separating the benchtop from the cabinets

Prior to lifting the benchtops off the cabinets you will need to assess the appropriate manual handling aids required. This can be done by determining the weight of the benchtop and ensuring either mechanical or physical aids are sufficient to safely handle the load/weight.

Work simultaneously to slowly tilt the benchtop up from the back edge. From here, you can now carefully transfer the benchtop to where you want it stored or disposed of.

DISPOSAL OF THE REMOVED BENCHTOP

When disposing of the benchtop it must be carefully placed to avoid unnecessary breakage that may cause injury. Removed Caesarstone quartz surfaces, whether whole or broken, do not create dust and pose no health risk. However, it is recommended to remove them from your premises as injury may be caused by heavy or sharp broken pieces.

When disposing of quartz surfaces you may be required to advise the waste management provider that the skip bin contains engineered stone waste.

All disposals must be carried out in accordance with all the laws, requirements and guidelines applicable in the location of the user of Caesarstone products.

FAQ's

How can my CS benchtop be removed safely without causing harmful dust?

There is no health risk from hazardous dust when removing, handling, transporting, storing or disposing of benchtops. Hazardous dust in concentrations that are dangerous to health is only created by fabrication processes of benchtops, such as cutting, grinding, chipping, sanding, drilling, polishing, etc. These processes are not required in order to remove benchtops.

In the vast majority of cases benchtops are removed by cutting the adhesive and removing the whole countertop in one piece. In rare and complex scenarios where the remover has no option but to break the benchtop at certain points for ease of removal, this must NOT be done with power tools that create hazardous dust. Breaking the benchtop at one or a few points does not create hazardous dust in a concentration that is dangerous to health.

As conditions and circumstances differ from site to site, Caesarstone recommends wearing a dust mask (minimum P2 respirator mask) when removing, demolishing, disposing of or placing Caesarstone quartz surfaces in skip bins.

Can I remove my benchtop or does it require trained professionals to remove?

You do not need to be a trained professional to remove a quartz benchtop. However, Caesarstone recommends a competent person carry out the removal to ensure all technical aspects of the process are considered, such as how to handle heavy surfaces and prevent damage to cabinets when removing sinks and cooktops.

If my benchtop is broken in the removal process and the broken pieces placed in a skip bin in my yard, is it safe to be on my premises?

When disposing of the benchtop it must be carefully placed to avoid unnecessary breakage that may cause injury. Removed Caesarstone quartz surfaces, whether whole or in pieces, do not create dust and pose no health risk. However, it is recommended to remove them from your premises as injury may be caused by heavy or sharp broken pieces.

As conditions and circumstances differ from site to site, Caesarstone recommends wearing a dust mask (minimum P2 respirator mask) when removing, demolishing, disposing of or placing Caesarstone quartz surfaces in skip bins.

Disclaimer

This Guide is intended for use by persons having expertise, professional experience and technical skills, at their own discretion and risk. We accept no responsibility and disclaim all liability for any harmful effects that may be caused by removal of our products. The information and recommendations contained herein are based upon data believed to be correct as of the date of publication, based upon our knowledge and experience, and that of our professional partners, based on the most common events recorded while working with Caesarstone slabs. While every precaution has been taken in the preparation of this document, we assume no responsibility for errors or omissions, or for damages resulting from the use of information contained in this document, and in no event shall we be liable for any loss of profit or any other commercial damage caused or alleged to have been caused directly or indirectly as a result of any person relying upon any information contained in this document.

Due to the fact that we cannot foresee or relate to all the different situations that may occur when working with Caesarstone slabs, the instructions in this Guide should be seen purely as a working guideline. Before performing any removal works of quartz surfaces a pre task trial should be carried out to ensure all possible safety hazards have been identified and risk mitigated to the best of your knowledge, skill and understanding. If you have any questions pertaining to this document please contact safety@caesarstone.com.au where your enquiry will be responded to by the appropriate department representative.

This Guide should not be regarded as a list, an interpretation, or a summary of any laws, standards, rules, orders or safety requirements and they should not be relied upon solely. Stonemasons and installers of Caesarstone slabs must be familiar with the relevant local laws and standards, including, but without limitation, Occupational Health and Safety laws and laws relating to the protection of the environment. Any use of the data and information must be determined by the user to be in accordance with any applicable laws and regulations.

No guarantee or warranty of any kind, express or implied, is made of merchantability, fitness for a particular purpose or otherwise.

More information about the product characteristics, risks and safety measures appear in Caesarstone's Safety Data Sheet and Good Practice Guide - Steps to Avoid Health Hazards Related to Crystalline Silica Dust at: mos.caesarstone.com.au.

