



While it is tempting to choose a countertop based on looks alone, a material's durability, maintenance and cost are also important factors to consider when making a selection for your new kitchen. Creative Kitchens at Curtis Lumber offers thousands of countertop colors and options to fit your specific taste and needs. Be sure to ask our salesperson about what countertops we offer with professional installation. No matter your choice, Creative Kitchens at Curtis Lumber ensures a perfect fit every time.

## CHOOSING THE RIGHT COUNTERTOP

You need to assess the way you live before you settle on a countertop choice. For instance, if you have children who are frequently spilling grape juice, a light-colored granite top is not the best choice for your lifestyle. However, with the range of choices today, it is likely that you can still achieve your look with one of the many other materials available.

## COUNTERTOP CHOICES

**Granite** is available in a variety of shades — such as blacks, whites, greens, corals and beiges — and no two pieces are exactly the same. Granite is available in two finishes. A polished finish, the most popular, results in a shiny look and often darkens the appearance of the stone, while honed and leather finishes are soft and matte. Costs for granite depend on many variables, including color, finish and origin of the stone. Professional installation is included in the pricing and qualifies as a tax exempt capital improvement in New York State.

Other natural stone materials, like slate and soapstone, are softer than granite and require delicate use and greater care. All stone countertops must be sealed periodically.

**Engineered stone** countertops come in a wider variety of colors than natural stone countertops, are more durable and are easy to maintain and do not require periodic sealing. Typically these are a quartz material and may be easier recognized by brand names like Cambria, Zodiaq, & Silestone. These products tend to be colored much more uniformly than granite and the product is frequently confused for granite. However, engineered stone won't save any money over granite: the two materials cost roughly the same. Like Granite, these products also include professional installation in their pricing and qualify as a tax exempt capital improvement in New York State.

**Solid surface** countertops, most commonly known as Corian, have a lot of appeal. They come in countless colors, are seamless, resist stains and scratches can be buffed out. The sink can even be molded into the countertop for a seamless installation. Costs can vary depending on color, layout, sink & backsplash options. Professional installation is also included in the pricing of this surface and qualifies as a tax exempt capital improvement in New York State.

**Wood** countertops, like butcher block, come in a variety of woods and can instantly warm up a kitchen. They are easy to clean and any scratches can be sanded out. Water can damage unfinished butcher block quite easily, so unfinished wood countertops must be oiled monthly to seal the surface. High quality wood countertops come with a waterproof finish. Overall, these are a very high maintenance option. This product can be installed by contractors or handy homeowners.

**Laminate** is the most affordable countertop material on the market and comes in thousands of colors and designs. With high definition printing and textures, many of today's laminates simulate granite so well they can fool even trained eyes. Like wood, laminate pricing can include installation or can be installed by a contractor or a crafty do-it-yourself homeowner.

## ON THE EDGE

Square and beveled are the most common edges on countertops, but decorative edges like radius, bull nose, and ogee — while a bit more expensive — are another way to customize a kitchen. Availability of edges varies based on countertop materials.

## MIX AND MATCH

Can't decide on just one material? Then mix and match surfaces. Designers often use a different material on islands than the rest of the countertops to differentiate the space. Another option is to inset another material into a countertop for specific tasks. Butcher block is common for chopping as is engineered stone for baking. The designers at Creative Kitchens are countertop experts and can help you select the right surface for your needs and budget.

Before making a decision on countertop material, see the surface in person, by visiting a Creative Kitchen showroom at a Curtis Lumber near you.