

## Concrete worktops

Concrete for kitchen worktops is a relatively new product. It comes as a 40 mm thick slab made up of a 15 mm thick top surface with a 40 mm thick front downstand backed with a 25 mm MDF core which makes the slab less heavy and provides an easy surface for fixing from the underside.

The tops are factory made and finished with a two-part polymeric satin-finished sealant system which chemically bonds to the concrete and which the manufacturers claim makes it waterproof, alcohol resistant, UV stable, heat tolerant to 230°C with excellent wearing properties.

The colours available range from chalk-white through to limestone/sandstone colours to black.

maximum length: 3 m

maximum width: 1.2 m

thickness: 40 mm standard  
30–100 mm also available

weight: 44 kg/m<sup>2</sup> for 40 mm thick slab

Concrete worktops will need good support to carry the weight.

Front edge profiles can have 3 mm *pencil-round* edges as standard or 45° *filed arrises* or be *bull-nosed*.

Holes cut for sinks and hobs must have at least 90 mm surrounding to maintain stability of the slab.

10 mm × 500 mm soft-edged draining grooves can be made for under-mounted sinks.

**Source:** Cast Advanced Concretes

## Slate worktops

Slate is formed from the metamorphosis of sedimentary shale, clay and other minerals formed up to 590 million years ago. It is exceptionally durable, unaffected by normal extremes of temperature, resistant to acid, alkalis and other chemicals, retains its colour, is waterproof and non-combustible.

Traditionally used for larder shelves and draining boards, it makes a handsome material for a kitchen worktop which is particularly suitable for pastry making due to its cool surface.

However, it is dark in colour ranging from dark blue-grey and heather-grey from Wales to green-grey from Cumbria – and will show up food residues and will not reflect light. Therefore slate worktops must be well-lit, both naturally and artificially.

Slate slabs for worktops are usually finished *fine rubbed* and polished *matt flat*. Exposed edges may be rubbed down to a *pencil round* or a *semi bull-nosed* profile.

At least 100 mm should be left round holes for sinks and hobs. If this is not possible, units can be made of smaller pieces, pre-drilled in joints for dowels and assembled on site.

Slate worktops are heavy and must be well supported

maximum length: 1.8 m – larger sizes may be available but  
are difficult to transport and install

maximum width: 900 mm

thickness: 25 mm as standard

weight: 71 kg/m<sup>2</sup> for a 25 mm thick slab

Slate needs no sealant and should not be oiled as it sits on the surface and gathers dust.

Wash with a neutral pH detergent, rinse and wipe dry. Scouring powders with abrasives may dull the surface. Minor scratches may be rubbed down with wet-and-dry sandpaper.

**Source:** Wincilate Ltd and Welsh Slate