

Technical Notes

Stain Removers (Poultice)

Alpha® Stain Removers are premixed poultices designed for easy application. Simply mix with water, apply to the stained area and cover with plastic for 24 hours. As the stain remover dries it draws the stain from the stone. Alpha® Stain Removers afford an easy solution to common stain problems and can be used on interior as well as exterior applications. Also, Alpha® Stain Removers are easily used on horizontal or vertical applications. Professionals and homeowners will love the results they achieve using these stain removers. Alpha Professional Tools® removed the difficulty of mixing specific chemicals to obtain the correct poultice for a specific type of stain by pre-mixing specific poultices. Alpha® Stain Removers are available in two types. Each type is designed for specific types of stains. It is vital that the stain be properly identified before selecting the type of stain remover. It is also necessary to identify where the stain originated from in order to prevent it from reoccurring. Difficult stains may require more than one application before the stain is successfully removed. Alpha® Stain Removers are safe and will not affect the surface of the stone.

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Alpha® General Stain Remover

Designed for the removal of most organic based stains, such as, oil, coffee, tea and food stains. Alpha® General Stain Remover will remove most common stains with ease.

Alpha® Rust Stain Remover

Designed to remove ferrous oxide (rust) stains caused by iron, copper, bronze or other metals. It is important to remember that iron is sometimes present in most types of natural stones and stains from these natural iron minerals will be difficult, if not impossible, to remove.

Part No.	Container	Description
ADGSR-05	5 lbs.	Organic Based Oil, Coffee, Tea, Food
ADRSR-05	5 lbs.	Metal Based Iron, Rust, Copper, Bronze

How to Use

1. Identify the stain and remove the source of stain.

Knowing what type of stain you are trying to remove is half the battle in stain removal.

2. Clean the stained area.

Just because the stain looks like it is deep in the stone doesn't mean that it cannot be cleaned with stone cleaner. Clean the area thoroughly using a good stone cleaner that has a neutral pH. A heavy-duty stone cleaner may also be used, but first try cleaning with mild, neutral cleaner. When attempting to remove any stain on the stone, always use the mildest method first, then proceed to more aggressive chemicals and techniques. Cleaning will also remove any surface residue caused by the staining material, allowing for faster removal if a poultice is later needed.

3. Remove coating.

If the stone has been coated with wax acrylics, urethane, or any other typical treatments, it is important to strip the coating before attempting to remove the stain. Most coatings will interfere with the chemicals used to remove stains.

4. Pre-moisten.

Wet the stained area with distilled water to fill the pores of the stone with water. This isolates the stained area and

allows the chemicals to stay in contact longer with the stain. Pre-moistening will also prevent the chemicals from drying too fast.

5. Prepare the poultice.

Mix the powder with distilled water into a thick paste (consistency of creamy peanut butter). You want the mixture to be wet, but not so wet that it runs.

6. Apply the poultice.

Carefully apply the poultice to the stained area, overlapping the poultice several inches over the stain. This overlapping is important since the stain may be spread further onto the stone than it appears. The thicker the poultice is applied, the longer it will take to dry. Generally, about ¼-in. thick is sufficient for most stains.

7. Cover the poultice.

Cover the poultice with plastic, and tape the edges down. Be careful to use a tape that will not stain the stone. A low-contact masking tape works well.

Covering the poultice with plastic prevents it from drying out too quickly. It is necessary to keep the poultice wet as long as possible to allow the chemical to work on the stain and loosen it from the stone.

8. Remove the plastic cover.

After 24 hours, remove the plastic from the poultice. If the poultice is not dry, leave the poultice uncovered until it's dry. This is extremely important. Remember a poultice works by drawing the stain out of the stone. The drying process causes this pulling action.

9. Remove the poultice.

After the poultice is thoroughly dry, scrape it off with a razor blade or putty knife. Be careful not to scratch the surface of the stone. Clean any residue of poultice from the stain with water and a neutral cleaner.

10. Examine the stained area.

Carefully examine the stained area. If the stain is not removed, re-apply the poultice. It may take several poultices to remove difficult stains.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

What is a Poultice?

A poultice is an absorbent material applied to a surface to draw out a stain. It can be a powder, paper, or gel. The most common poultices in use today are powders. A number of powders are very absorbent and are ideal for stain removal. The following are some typical powders used in poultices.

- ? Clays (atteapulgate, kaolin, fullers earth)
- ? Talc
- ? Chalk (whiting)
- ? Sepiolite (hydrous magnesium silicate)
- ? Diatomaceous earth
- ? Methyl cellulose
- ? Flour

What types of stains are Alpha® General Stain Remover designed for?

General Stain Remover Poultice is designed for the removal of organic based stains such as oil, coffee, tea & food stains.

What types of stains are Alpha® Rust Stain Remover poultice designed for?

Rust Stain Remover poultice is designed to remove stains such as iron (rust), copper, and bronze.

How long should I continue to poultice a stain?

There is no rule for the number of times that a stain needs to be poulticed. If the stain is slowly disappearing, continue poulticing. The average number of poultice applications will be about five.

I have heard that using distilled water in a poultice is better than tap water. Is this true?

Yes. Use distilled water if it is available. Tap water can contain minerals such as chlorine, iron, and others that can retard stain removal.

What's the difference between the following two products supplied by Alpha Professional Tools®? Alpha® Rust Poultrice and RSR-2000 (rust stain remover in gel form)?

Alpha® Rust Poultrice is a powder poultrice, which needs to be mixed with water when making the poultrice into a paste. This poultrice paste generally takes an average of 24 hours in order to remove the stain. Also, powder poultrice may take several applications before removing the stain from the stone, which may take several days.

Alpha® RSR-2000 comes in gel form already premixed for immediate use. RSR-2000 takes an average of 5 – 10 minutes to remove the rust stain from the stone.

How important is it for a poultrice to dry thoroughly?

It is very important. If the poultrice is removed while it is still wet, it may not draw the stain from the stone. The drying action causes the stain to be removed.

Can I speed up the drying time of poultrice?

Yes. Only if the poultrice has stayed wet for at least 12 hours. If the drying time is too rapid there may not be adequate time for the chemicals to react. Placing fans near the poultrice can accelerate drying time.

If I seal a stone with an impregnator and the stone becomes stained, will a poultrice work?

Yes. A poultrice should work as long as the stained occurred after the stone was sealed. If the stain was present before the sealer was applied, there is a good chance the stain will be sealed into the stone making removal difficult. In this case, the sealer will have to be removed by first using a strong solvent such as methylene chloride, then applying a poultrice to remove the stain.

I am having trouble applying a poultrice to a wall. It keeps running down.

How can I get it to stick to the wall?

The easiest way to apply a poultrice to a wall is to use less water in the poultrice. This will keep it from sagging. You should also apply the poultrice in a thin layer. Another technique is to apply the poultrice to a piece of plastic first, then place the poultrice and plastic combination on the wall with the poultrice portion facing the wall. Immediately tape the bottom of the plastic and then the remaining sides. It may also help to place a piece of tape along the bottom of the plastic prior to placing it on the wall.

I have a very large wall to poultrice, several thousand square feet. How can I apply the poultrice to this large area?

If you use a poultrice that is fine enough, it can be sprayed on with a texture gun. Texture guns can be purchased at supply houses that specialize in stucco spraying. Mix a large quantity of poultrice in a 5-gallon bucket using a slow rpm drill and mixing paddle. Pour the mixture into the spray gun hopper and spray.

Can a poultrice be used on other surfaces besides natural stone?

Yes. Most poultrice powders can be used on any porous surface such as concrete, terrazzo, Mexican tile, ceramic tile, porcelain tile, etc

Once I remove a stain, what are the chances of it coming back?

This depends on how deep the stain is or what caused the stain in the first place. If the stain is coming from behind the stone, chances are it will come back. If this is the case and the stain reappears, replace the stone whenever possible.

How do I dispose of used poultrices?

This depends on what chemical was used in the poultrice. The Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS) which is supplied with the product should describe how to dispose of the chemical.

Can a poultrice be used outdoors?

Yes. Be sure to cover it with plastic in case of rain. The poultrice may also dry too rapidly outdoors. In this case, try covering it with black plastic to block the sunlight.

What is the ideal temperature for a poultrice to be applied?

There is no ideal temperature; however, a poultrice will work best at temperatures above 75 degrees (F). Do not apply a poultrice in temperatures below freezing.

When I remove the poultrice, the area on the material is darker than the rest of the material.

This dark area on the material where the poultrice was positioned could be moisture within the material. Keep this area dry for about 48 hours and the moisture should evaporate allowing the stone to become its natural color once again.

When I remove a poultice there seems to be a ring or halo around the stained area. How do I remove it?

A residue of poultice usually causes the halo or ring. Clean the halo area with the chemical you used in the poultice, and be sure to rinse it with plenty of water. If this does not remove the halo or ring, it is possible that the surrounding area is dirty and the poultice has cleaned the stained area. In this case, clean the entire area with a good heavy duty cleaner.

Sometimes fabrication shops may use a coloring dye to make the surface of the stone darker than the original color. If a poultice is used to remove a stain on material which has been dyed, the dye will be removed from the stone also. If you remove a stain and after a couple of days notice the area which the poultice was on is lighter than the rest of the material, this may be a case which the stone was dyed. In this case please contact the place which this material was purchased for their suggestion.

What are the recommendations for use of Alpha Professional Tools® Stain Protectors?**Who do I call for a Chemical Emergency concerning Alpha® poultice?**

CHEMTREC at 800-424-9300 for spills, leaks, fire, exposure or accidents.

Helpful Hints

- Always wear personal safety equipment when using Alpha® Stain Removers.
- Contents may settle during shipping or storage, mix thoroughly before removing from container.
- Always test product in small areas before using.

Reference

For more product information, visit us on the web at www.alpha-tools.com.