

Bench Top Comparisons

Here we cover the range of materials available and try to simplify your options by talking about the advantages, disadvantages and relative pricing of each product.

Material	Advantages	Disadvantages
High Pressure Laminate (Formica, Wilsonart, Laminex, Duropal)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The most cost effective product. • Huge Colour selection (over 300). • Bench top arrives with kitchen cabinets so there is no delay in installation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More prone to heat and impact damage compared to other products. • Can be perceived as a cheap alternative in more expensive homes.
Stainless Steel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reasonably priced if used in straight runs. • Available in a range of different finishes. • Very impact and heat resistant. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can become an expensive alternative if site joins (welds) are required. • Brushed and polished stainless are reflective and show scratches. • There is a time delay between cabinet and bench installation.
Natural Granite	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some colours are very competitively priced. • A good colour selection. • Good heat and impact resistance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some colours are expensive. • Light colours can show stains if not regularly resealed. • Some people find surface too hard to work on. • There is a time delay between cabinet and bench installation.
Engineered Stone (Caesarstone, Silestone, Smart Stone)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Depending on thickness price can almost compete with laminate. • A good colour selection. • Reasonable heat and impact resistance. • Gives a contemporary look. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thick tops can be relatively expensive. • Less heat and impact resistance than granite and stainless. • Dark colours can look flat when compared with granite. • There is a time delay between cabinet and bench installation.
Acrylic (Corian, Hi-Macs, Infinity)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Similar in price to granite and engineered stone. • Has no visible joins so long bench tops are possible. • A good colour selection. • Can be repaired and re-polished. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scratches easier than stone and concrete bench tops. • There is a time delay between cabinet and bench installation.
Concrete	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Similar in price to higher priced stone. • Good heat and impact resistance. • Can be coloured to suit. • Gives a contemporary industrial look. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can be expensive compared to granite. • Can stain if not resealed on a regular basis. • Can develop small cracks that are cosmetic rather than structural. • There is a time delay between cabinet and bench installation.
Solid Wood	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gives a warm natural look. • Can be used as a highlight when mixed with other bench top materials. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expensive compared to most other alternatives. • Timber surface bruises easier than most other products.