



## **SANDING & POLISHING METHODS FOR DETAILING EPOXY COUNTERTOP FINISHES**

**Updated 7-2020**

### **GRANICRETE CARRIES ALL THE PADS FOR SALE TO OUR CUSTOMERS**

We have long recommend detailing of your sample boards and countertops. You have a couple choices for detailing. You can either apply a protective coating of WB-P53 or perform a process of sanding and buffing. WB-P53 has a gloss or satin (slightly less than gloss) option.

Detailing both reduces the scratching of the surfaces and moves the gloss appearance to be closer to polished stone. If your countertops are of dark finish (especially black) this detailing is an absolute must as surface scratches are more readily apparent over a dark finish.

Detailing by sanding yield an exceptional feel of a super smooth honed surface rather than an epoxy plastic-like surface.

Detailing your sample boards makes for smart marketing. Have your prospects select from a truly finished product that has been detailed both ways. The “or” close becomes their choice and knowing that choice you can then establish your estimate for service.

### **Granicrete’s Abranet-Abralon Method: Updated ... 7-2020**

Why our Mirka Method: We have tested many different sanding pads. We find the Mirka method to be best because the Mirka pads a “sponge-like” material. Even with the epoxy being “level” there may be some low spots and the sponge pad will get those.

The other reason for the Mirka Method is that these pads are less likely to “burn through” the top deck edges when your sander is held level or slightly leaned back to the deck. Burning an edge is cutting through the epoxy and topical colorant leaving a “white edge” which then needs color touch up and either epoxied again or sealed.

- A method for dry or wet sanding and buffing is as follows using a 5” or 6” random orbital sander (at highest speeds). These pads are used with Festool professional polishers too.
- Your epoxy must be completely tack free before starting the sanding and detailing process (typically 18-24 hours).

- **If sanding and polishing new epoxy, you may start with Abralon 500 or 1000 grit wet and then work up.**
- **If sanding and polishing older epoxy with scratches you may need to start with 180 or 360 dry and move up and at 500 grit go wet. Or use the Abranets 400 and 800 dry.** Deep scratches can be targeted.
- Sanding dry, not wetting the surface, allows for the remaining scratch to be completely apparent as a white line. Note: You should sand the entire surface with the same disc that you used to target the scratch but do so without the aggressive targeting used at the point of the scratch.. If you used the 180, graduate to the 360 and then the 500 grit. If you used the Abranet 400, graduate to Abranet 800 and then wet Abralon 1000 over the entire surface and work up.
- NOTE: Do not skip graduation of one pad grit level to the next for in doing so it is difficult to get a uniform final finish.
- Wetting the surface should be done with just water. As you move up to a finer grit pad, clean the entire surface with water and towel dry. A wet surface will achieve desired results and extend the use of your pads for multiple projects.

**Be careful with the edges of your surface.** Best to avoid coming to the deck edges until you have the 1000 Abralon wet pad or above. To play it safe, you may choose to get close to the edges with the 2000 or 4000 pads. Be sure to keep the pad level to the deck and not at an angle out at the edge. Do not corner of edges. If a flat level is not kept, the sanding pad could burn through the epoxy and clip off your coloring.

## **SANDING AND POLISHING DETAIL KIT:**

1. 400 grit Abranet: dry sand is used for deep cuts and imperfections. More for target use rather than being used across the entire countertop.
2. 800 grit Abranet: dry sand to begin polishing up the 400 grit or to start target sanding of cuts and imperfections not as severe as would be targeted by the 400 Abranet. The value of dry sanding is the sanding debris settles into the cut until the cut disappears.
3. 180 and 360 grit Abralons: used dry or wet and safer near deck edges and comparable to the 400 grit Abranet.
4. 500 grit Abralon: used wet is great to use for detailing new cured epoxy. Your series is to use Abralons 500 then 1000 then 2000 then 4000.
5. Then progress to Mirka Abralon pads...
  - a. 1000 grit Abralon wet sand with water wipe of surface before and after and will only need one pad for several projects. This pad should be the first you can be comfortable to use when held level to the outside deck edge so as not to burn through the epoxy and score out the coloring below.
  - b. 2000 grit Abralon wet sand with water wipe the same and pad life the same. If can avoid the need for
  - c. 4000 grit Abralon wet sand with water wipe the same and pad life the same.

- d. Finish polishing by spraying and wiping by terry towel the Bee's Wax. This will give you a nice polished finish of honed stone. But if you want to go to higher shine, skip the Bee's Wax and go to #6 below.

Be sure to clean residue after each sanding level using water and terry towel or Windex and terry towel.

6. As for the edge fascia, do de-gloss the fascia of the deck edges from the onset. This can be done by using the above Abralon pads freely in your hand (no sander) or using a finer Scotch-Brite soft pad. Use Then either polish as above with 4000 Abralon and finish with either Bee's Wax or Polarshine. If you have a chiseled edge you will apply Granicrete WB-P53 (Satin / Gloss) to the edges to bring to a similar finish as the top.1 coat will be applied depending on the shine of the top

## **BUFFING AND POLISHING KIT:**

7. **After the 4000 polishing, you can take the shine to a higher level using a 7" handheld polisher with AT 1800 to 2000 rpm. This polisher is needed to take the shine to a much higher gloss** (like the original Crystal Top finish) using the 7" twisted wool pad followed by 7" foam polishing pad, and then finished with the soft white 7" lamb's wool pad.
  - a. It is important to de-lint the twisted wool before using it. Turn on the polisher and with a flat edge of a margin trowel to fluff and de-lint.
  - b. Then apply dabs of Polarshine on the twisted wool (about 6-8 dabs across the pad making an "x". Then smear the wool pad into the countertop surface to minimize sling off and begin to burnish the surface. Keep the wool damp but not soaked with polish. Extra polish can be wiped away with micro-fiber towel. Work the section and then repeat dabs as needed when more polish is needed for the next section..
  - c. After completing the entire top with the twisted wool, then use the Black Foam polish pad. Again a few dabs on the pad and smeared into the surface and then begin to burnish/polish. Wipe extra material with micro-fiber. Repeat dabs as needed when more polish is needed. Repeat this process until deck is finished. Be sure to wipe off any cream that that may build up on the edge fascia.
  - d. Finish with a lamb's wool pad (**dry do not add polish**) for an extra shine and more consistent shine.

When sanding let the pads work for you. Do not over apply pressure to the sander.