



Get rid of limescale in 3 easy steps

An Arrow County
How to Guide

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Limescale affects any building or facility which uses water, so is a common problem for facilities management companies, education, hospitality, healthcare, catering, food manufacture, local government, etc. For the hospitality industry in particular, the presence of limescale can cause negative impressions of cleanliness and lead to patrons feeling reluctant to return, assuming that if the bathrooms are unclean then so must be the kitchen, according to research by the National Restaurant Association.

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About the author

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Edward collaborates with customers to understand and define their challenges in achieving cleaning and hygiene standards, and then delivers innovative solutions, be it through products or services.

He works with frontline cleaning teams and management teams, work forces and executives to ensure customer-driven solutions.

Introduction

Limescale occurs in environments where water is heated such as bathrooms, kitchens, wet-floor areas e.g. poolside flooring & changing rooms, wet-rooms, spas, communal shower areas, etc.

As the water evaporates it leaves behind a hard, white substance made predominantly of calcium carbonate which can become a breeding ground for bacteria, destroy pipework and stop equipment such as kettles and taps from working efficiently. In critical environments this can lead to the risk of infections such as Legionnaires disease. The problem is persistent and unavoidable, particularly in areas with hard water supplies such as big cities, although areas with softer water will also notice a build up over time if not properly managed.

To remove limescale, contact time and an acidic based cleaner are key. However choosing which cleaner to use is very important as acid can not only remove limescale, but can attack mineral based materials such as grouting or tile surfaces; particularly natural stone. Limescale cleaners can be hazardous and can dissolve certain plastics and damage human skin.

This “how to guide” will give you insights for effective methods and products for removing limescale from different surfaces.

Safety Note: it is important to wear personal protective equipment such as gloves and goggles when handling strong chemicals.



**British Water estimates
that just 1.6mm of
limescale accumulation
can increase a heating
system's energy
requirement by up to
12%**

60% of the of the water
used across the UK is
affected by hard water
issues

1. Select treatment by surface type

Surfaces to be cleaned and treated can be divided into two main types porous and non-porous.

➤ Porous

- Stone
- Grouted tiling (spas / hotels / leisure facilities)

Cleaning more porous and natural surfaces can be problematic as the chemicals used for removing limescale often dissolve these materials at the same time with permanent and irreversible effect. For stone in particular, it is essential to use a cleaning chemical especially made for that surface such as Selden's C006 Stonebrite neutral terrazzo cleaner.

➤ Non-porous

- Glass
- Porcelain
- Stainless steel (bathrooms / kitchens)

Removing limescale from smooth non-porous surfaces is relatively easy and there are plenty of specially formulated cleaning products on the market that are particularly effective in tackling limescale problem areas like the bathroom suites, shower doors, porcelain tiles, etc. dirt particles from damaging the floor.



2. Porous Surfaces

- ▶ A regular cleaning routine will have significant benefits to reducing the build-up of limescale on these surfaces. The use of a good stiff brush to agitate the cleaning solution into the surface will help to dislodge any limescale or other grime from textured or porous surfaces. And when done correctly can make the surfaces look like new again. When it comes to natural stone, prevention is always better than cure.
- ▶ You can create your own cleaning solution by combining a gallon of hot water in a mop bucket and adding a cup of white distilled vinegar for use as a daily cleaner. Simply apply to the area and allow for a contact time of three to five minutes before agitating with a stiff brush. For particularly hard limescale deposits, apply additional vinegar to the brush as you agitate as this breaks down the scale. To finish, rinse with fresh water, mopping up the excess.
- ▶ To ensure that limescale does not return, always leave surfaces dry after cleaning so no moisture is left behind which the limescale can hid in. The use of a squeegee or towel on surfaces to collect any excess liquids after cleaning can greatly improve the finish.



“The use of natural stone has grown by 20% between 2011 and 2017....particularly with marble, granite and limestone in the public interiors and restrooms ”

3. Non-Porous Surfaces

- ▶ Removing limescale from smooth non porous surfaces is relatively easy and there are plenty of specially formulated cleaning products on the market that are particularly effective in tackling limescale problem areas like the bathroom suites, shower doors, porcelain tiles, etc.
- ▶ If you have a tough build-up of limescale to remove, we recommend using a cleaning chemical designed for this situation (such as Andarta 3 in 1 sanitiser, deodoriser, cleaner) for the effective removal of crusty limescale. These products should be streak free and safe to use on stainless steel.
- ▶ Dilute the 3 in 1 Sanitiser, Deodoriser, Cleaner 1:40 in warm or cold water for cleaning walls, floors, etc.



- ▶ Apply neat by cloth to remove scale, bodyfats, etc. around shower areas and sinks, then rinse off with clean water.
- ▶ For general or everyday maintenance, a foam based cleaner is particularly useful in bathroom areas as it clings to vertical surfaces, providing an improved contact time before gravity takes hold. The foaming bactericidal cleaners are extremely effective as long as they have low pH level which makes them suitable for use on sensitive surfaces like grouting.

- ▶ Shake the bottle well and spray onto surface as required, wipe away grime with a clean paper towel or cloth for general cleaning. For heavily soiled areas such as limescale deposits, allow a contact time of 2 minutes before wiping or rinsing off with water.
- ▶ For more stubborn limescale build-ups a stronger acid is required to cut through the limescale so that regular bathroom cleaning products can access the dirt and bacteria hidden below. The Extra Strength Toilet Cleaner & Descaler is perfect for this with a contact time of 5 minutes.
- ▶ Use neat for ceramic surfaces. Squirt product onto surface, leave in contact for approximately five minutes, then agitate with a brush. Rinse with water. Dilute approximately 1 to 4 with water for cleaning stainless steel surfaces.





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