

# PRODUCT INFORMATION

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## ALKE PORCELAIN WASHBASIN COUNTERTOPS

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### COMPOSITION

The sanitary porcelain washbasin countertops in the ALKE range are made from glazed fire clay (= clay that can be fired) and comply with the NBN EN 14688 standard for washbasins for domestic use (including use in hotels, student accommodation, etc.). Among other requirements, this European standard stipulates the minimum load, moisture absorption, the effect of temperature fluctuations, chemical and stain resistance, and durability. If the washbasins are fitted with overflow protection, they will at least comply with the overflow class CL10 (overflow of minimum 0.1 litre per second). Clay, sand and other natural substances are ground, dried to a certain degree of moisture, brought to the desired shape and then fired at temperatures between 1000 and 1250°C. Porcelain washbasins are subject to dimensional tolerances because of the firing process. Complaints regarding dimensional fluctuations and unevenness are therefore not taken into account.

### MAINTENANCE TIPS

ALKE porcelain sanitary ware is characterised by a very smooth and hard glaze that facilitates easy maintenance. It can be cleaned quickly and effortlessly every day using a damp cloth and clean water. For limescale deposits and stubborn dirt, we have compiled the following cleaning tips. Note! Don't use abrasives or solvents to clean the porcelain washbasin countertops. Don't pour boiling water onto the washbasin countertops as this could cause the glaze layer to burst. Don't let any heavy objects fall on them.

Don't use abrasives or solvents to clean the porcelain washbasin countertops. Don't let any heavy or hard objects fall into them. Avoid using excessively hot water. In some countries, the hot water temperature exceeds 60°C. The glazed surface may burst if this hot water is used continuously. By installing a control valve, you prevent the water from exceeding 60°C.

### DIRT RESIDUES

The dirt left on sanitary ware and especially washbasins is often caused by soap scum and skin oils deposited on the glaze. The so-called all-purpose cleaners are the right cleaning agents for that. These are cleaning agents with an alkaline, i.e. non-acidic, composition. Another distinction can be made between soap-based all-purpose cleaners and all-purpose cleaners based on synthetic detergents. The latter group usually has a better cleaning effect than the first one. If the sanitary ware is very dirty, a special bathroom cleaner is usually more effective than an all-purpose cleaner, but the environmental impact is much greater.

Normally, an all purpose-cleaner is more than enough, has a lower environmental impact, and can be used for multiple cleaning jobs. A solution of ammonia diluted in water is also sufficient to remove soap residues and skin oils. The ammonia must be diluted with water in a 2-3% ratio to avoid irritating the olfactory organs. The use of sand-based abrasives is not recommended. The lower layer of the glaze usually contains very small gas bubbles. Scouring repeatedly with these agents has the effect of wearing off the top layer of the glaze, allowing dirt to penetrate in the gas bubbles. Chalk polishing agents can be used on ceramics; chalk is actually so soft that it has a polishing effect and is not abrasive.

Finally, another warning regarding amine fluoride toothpaste. If this toothpaste is allowed to dry in the washbasin, the glaze will be irreversibly affected after a number of hours, with the appearance of a dull spot. Toothpaste with amine fluoride is good for teeth, but harmful to sanitary ware. Always make sure to clean the porcelain surface whenever residues of this toothpaste have fallen into it.

### LIMESCALE

Limescale deposits are the biggest problem affecting sanitary ware. This is caused by the adhesion of lime to any kind of material after the water has evaporated.

Vinegar-based cleaners are the best solution for stubborn stains and limescale. These are also the least aggressive and least harmful to the environment, our hands and mucous membranes. In the case of extremely stubborn deposits, you should place a sheet of toilet paper or a cloth soaked in vinegar on the affected area and allow it to work overnight. After that, all you need to do is brush off the residue. In addition, there are the trusted limescale solvents available in the supermarket.

Hydrochloric acid is very effective in tackling very stubborn limescale, but it is also very bad for the environment. In some areas, the iron content in the water is very high. This can leave brown stains on the glaze. These can be most effectively removed with a hydrochloric acid solution. The hydrochloric acid must be diluted with water to a ratio of about 5-10%. Always rinse with water!

The permissible defects in terms of appearance and dimensions comply with BS3402: 1969 standard. See table below::

Location	Staining or defect	Definition	Maximum allowed
GENERAL	Cloudy appearance	A defect in the top finish manifesting itself as multiple undulations in the glaze. An irregular or mottled finish.	None on all visible sides.
	Twisting / warping		Twisting or warping of the washbasin countertop is allowed up to maximum 6mm along each of the sides.
	Discoloration	Coloured spot larger than 6mm or a concentrated number of dots that have the effect of a colour defect.	None on all visible sides.
SURFACE OF THE COUNTERTOP, INSIDE OF WASHBASIN, FRONT OF WASHBASIN	Blisters and pinholes	<b>Blister</b> = a raised area in the surface of no more than 6mm. <b>Pinhole</b> = a small hole in the glaze surface smaller than 2mm.	No blisters are allowed and maximum 3 pinholes.
	Bumps and speckles	<b>Bumps</b> = raised areas in the washbasin surface with a diameter smaller than 1mm. <b>Speckles</b> = areas in contrasting colour not more than 1mm in size (speckles smaller than 0.5mm do not constitute a defect).	In total, not more than 6.
	Polishing trace	A spot with a maximum size of 10mm where small blisters were sanded down and the surface polished.	None permitted.
OTHER VISIBLE SIDES OF THE WASHBASIN	Blisters and pinholes	<b>Blisters</b> = a raised area in the surface of no more than 6mm. <b>Pinholes</b> = a small hole in the glaze surface smaller than 2mm.	In total, not more than 6.
	Bumps and speckles	<b>Bumps</b> = raised areas in the washbasin surface with a diameter smaller than 1mm. <b>Speckles</b> = areas in contrasting colour not more than 1mm in size (speckles smaller than 0.5mm do not constitute a defect).	In total, not more than 6.

