



Planning your new kitchen

Planning a new kitchen can be exciting yet daunting at first, as there are many elements to consider. It's a room that needs to fulfil many functions and not taking the time to thoroughly plan your new kitchen, could be a costly mistake. The way you use your kitchen will affect the design choices you will make so to help you on your journey, we've put together this guide.

How do you want to use your kitchen?

- Is it a social space or a functional space only?
- Do you need room for eating in the kitchen? Is there room for a kitchen table? Or do you have a separate dining room?
- Who will use the room? Are there any young children or other users who may have special needs?
- How often do you shop – this will affect the amount of storage you need – daily, weekly, monthly, in bulk?
- What large appliances will you need?
- Do you want to keep any existing appliances? Could your old kitchen cabinets/appliances be sold?
- Do you have pets that affect how you utilise your space?
- Does your floor need to be replaced or can you keep/refinish the existing floor?
- Do you need space in the kitchen for tasks that are not cooking related, like working on the computer, supervising homework?
- Are there additional areas such as a utility room or walk in pantry to update?
- Have you determined your budget? Identify what's most important to you, be it cabinet finish, worktops, or appliances. Establishing how much you can realistically spend will help prioritise your needs.

Which layout would best suit your needs?

- The main types of kitchen layouts are: Single wall, Galley, L Shape, U Shape, Island, and Peninsula. Which layout will fit best with your kitchen space?
- Will you use the existing kitchen layout, or is there scope/benefit to changing it?
- Is it feasible to add space by removing a wall or adding an extension to your home? Would planning permission be required?
- Are your sink, fridge and hob roughly the same distance apart? This makes it easier to move around your kitchen as you cook, and designating clear-cut zones for preparing food, cooking and washing up.

What styles do you like?

- What works in the existing space and, could those featured be incorporated into the new design?
- What do you like and dislike about your current kitchen? What would you like to keep or change?
- What do you like about other kitchens you have seen?
- Which style are you aiming for? Shaker/In-Frame, or Modern/Contemporary? Or a blend?
 - Shaker: Inset panel and/or in-frame cabinetry bring warmth and sophistication. Classic cabinetry, neutral colour schemes, and high-quality materials offer a foundation that can be updated with accents over time. This approach keeps your kitchen fresh, reducing the need for future renovations.
 - Modern/Contemporary: Choose flat-panel or handle-less doors in sleek, high-gloss or matte finishes. Minimal hardware and clean lines add to the streamlined, modern feel. Use neutral colours like white, black, or grey, complemented by striking accents for a modern contrast. This style thrives on minimal but impactful colours. Contemporary kitchens embrace current design trends and may include a mix of bold colours, materials, and textures.
- Think about what other colours you have in your home. Which colours are you drawn to the most?
- Consider dual tones for your wall mounted and base cabinets. Using two tones in your kitchen means you can be more experimental with colour without it feeling overpowering, i.e. light colours on top, and richer colours on the base, or a different coloured island.
- Your choice of handle will have a big influence on the look and feel of your kitchen. There are bar, cup, bow handles and knobs. The range of finishes is even bigger. Mix it up with cup or bar handles on drawers, and knobs on cupboard doors.

Space for Storage

- Do you have enough fridge and freezer space? Many households choose 70/30 but there are other ratios available.
- Is there space for small appliances i.e. toaster, coffeemaker, mixers. Will they sit on the worktop or in a cupboard?
- Will you require standard height or tall cabinetry?
- Explore space saving solutions such as Le Mans, Space Tower, Pull out larder & baskets, integrated rubbish & recycling bins.
- Have you considered whether there are items in your existing cabinets that you haven't used for some time and no longer need to keep?

Preparing Food & Cooking

- How much work surface space do you need for meal preparation?
- Consider your cooking preferences – eye level cookers, combi/microwave, standard ceramic, gas or induction hob?
- What size cooking surface do you need – 2, 4, 5, 6 ring or combinations?
- Adequate kitchen ventilation is required under building regulations. Extractor hoods take air through a grease filter and extract it to the outside via ducting. This removes virtually all steam and cooking odours, while washable filters trap airborne grease.
 - Chimney hoods and hoods over an island are usually the most expensive options, but act as a visual centrepiece to the room. Retractable or telescopic kitchen extractors are also available which slide out of sight when not in use

- What size sink do you need? Single, single and a half, double, triple bowl? For finishes: stainless steel, porcelain, composite?
- Do you need a dishwasher? If so, what size?

Worktop Usage and Wall Protection

- Do you have a preference for worktop surface material and finishes?
- Worktops endure heavy use, so select materials that balance durability and aesthetics:
 - Quartz - our most popular choice; a considerable portion of the kitchen cost but it's tough, looks great and you can have matching window sills, upstands and splashback, with surrounding walls covered in a wipeable paint.
 - Solid Wood - a beautiful option however you need to be prepared to maintain it with regular oiling. You'll also need to appreciate the personality it takes on over the years. Some marks can be managed with a bit of wet and dry sanding.
 - Laminate - a good choice for range of colours and textures as well as being kindest to your budget. You can order upstands to go on the wall to match and complete the look. Laminate is water resistant but be mindful of just how much water is exposed, especially around any seams or joins in the worktop. These parts can be more susceptible to water escaping through them, so it is important to dry your worktops if you spill any water.
- How will you protect the walls from splashes, with a surface that's quick to clean? Consider easy-wipe materials, such as glazed tiles, glass, or quartz.

Electrical & Lighting

- Do you have enough electrical points? Are they in suitable locations for small appliances (toaster, kettle, coffee machine etc?)
- Integrated cooker hoods are used in fitted kitchens and blend seamlessly into the design of the room. They are fitted between wall cabinets and concealed with false door fronts.
- Lighting – is there enough light to work by or will you need a whole new lighting system, consider:
 - Ceiling lighting i.e. spotlights are a must for a kitchen
 - Under cabinet lighting
 - Pendant lighting (over table or island)
 - Plinth lighting

Sinks, Taps & Plumbing

- Options for sink fitting: in-flush, flush frame, under mounted? For finishes: ceramic, resin, stainless steel?
- Tap style options: Swan neck, Hose pull-out, Single or dual lever, Standard, Boiling Water (e.g. Quooker)
- Tap finishing options: Chrome, Stainless Steel, Bronze, Copper, Pewter, Brushed Nickel ... and so on
- Plumbing: are you moving the location of sinks or dishwasher? Adding fridge freezer components such as a water dispenser?