

Divine Design – Tips for Creating Your Dream Space by Sara Shragal

Make Your Kitchen Really Cook

Kitchen remodels are one of the most popular home improvement projects, giving you countless customization options when designing the kitchen of your dreams. Between appliances, countertops, cabinets, hardwood or tile flooring and various lighting fixtures – there are any number of choices to suit your unique lifestyle. Before making any purchases, you'll need to determine how your budget and current space mesh with your dream design concept.

Begin by thinking about how you intend to use your [kitchen](#) – and not just in terms of prepping meals and cooking dinners, but also as a place your family will socialize. Write down functional goals for your kitchen with a budget in mind. Next, think about what you love about your current kitchen and what drives you crazy. This will help you decide what to include in your new kitchen and what you can live without. Then start roughly sketching out your ideas on paper, including dimensions – making sure to also include ample walking room.

Decoration vs. Demolition

Remodeling your kitchen might mean simply repainting the walls to give it a completely new look. Or you may opt to upgrade with ultra modern appliances, replace tile with hardwood flooring, or otherwise restructure the entire room. If you host social gatherings or entertain guests often, remodeling could mean structurally renovating your [kitchen](#) to make it more welcoming.

Your Recipe for Success

Remodeling your kitchen is all about adding features you want and subtracting the things that drive you crazy about your current space. After determining what degree of remodeling your budget and family can handle – since your kitchen will likely be quite unusable during the remodeling process - decide which features you'd like to add. Maybe you'd like to install a stainless steel sink to replace your porcelain one? Should you switch from gas to electric? What about an island to increase countertop space or a pantry to free up [cabinetry](#)?

Many homeowners gravitate toward more professional ranges, as well as installing state-of-the-art technology that speeds cooking – such as electric induction. Another popular feature when installing refrigerators or dishwashers is to blend them in to match your cabinetry.

Counter space is a major consideration. Do you have enough for two people to cook or prepare a meal at the same time? When in doubt, opt for more, as you truly can never have too much counter space.

A Toast to the Triangle

Where you put your appliances, food preparation areas, [lighting](#), sinks and [kitchen cabinets](#) can have a huge impact on how functional your kitchen is – and very well could determine your eventual satisfaction with the project.

So when designing your kitchen layout, arrange your refrigerator, range and sink so they form a tight triangle. In your mind you should be able to draw imaginary lines between the three when you're done. With this simple layout, you'll maximize your kitchen's convenience when cooking meals because you won't waste time walking back and forth across your kitchen. Be sure to include ample countertop space nearby to aid in food preparation, as well as room for various culinary appliances.

Functionality vs. Flair

Whether your kitchen is small or large, there are ways to maximize its functionality while updating its aesthetic appearance. Keep in mind no matter how amazing your kitchen looks, you'll still despise the layout if it makes cooking a headache or the counter space is inadequate. Focusing your efforts on increasing functionality will ensure optimal results from your remodel. So only after hammering out the functional details of your new space, should you indulge your creativity by selecting colors for your appliances and walls, materials for your countertops, [flooring](#) and sink and styles for cabinets and lighting.

Regardless of how you ultimately decide to remodel your [kitchen](#), combining modern looks with up-to-date kitchen technology and appliances will make your kitchen a dream come true for many years.

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