

Tips for a Well-Built Kitchen

Whether you are renovating your kitchen or starting from scratch, follow these tips to increase its usability and durability, minimize maintenance, and keep your home healthy.



1. Design:

- Open walls between kitchen and family areas.
- Add more windows for natural light.
- Add lights over work areas.
- Insure good working room on counter around sink and stove, as well as adequate room for canisters, coffee makers, etc.
- A kitchen must have dishwasher, modern appliances, and new fixtures for good resale value.

2. Rough-in:

- Install GFCI outlets around countertops (to protect from shock), and new dedicated circuitry for appliances.
- Old plumbing waste and vent lines should be clear of all blockages and be of adequate size, or replaced with new ones.
- Old lead plumbing supply lines should be replaced or have isolation joint with new copper pipes.
- Vent the stove fan to the exterior with rigid pipe and not into attic above, to prevent mold, smoke, grease and odor in the attic.

3. Cabinets:

- Set countertop height with laser level and verify height at sink and stove.
- Maintain 18" between countertop and upper cabinets for appliances.
- Avoid composite wood cabinets and trim around sink.
- Buy good hardware for doors and drawers; you'll be using them every day.

4. Green Tips:

- Before remodeling, test for asbestos vinyl flooring and lead-based painted windows and trim (especially if home was built before 1978.)
- Consider water saving fixtures, energy star appliances and LED lights.
- Countertops are a great place to use innovative green products – from composites such as Richlite, to recycled metal tiles, or salvaged wood from a bowling alley!

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