



Homeowner's Guide

How to Plan a Kitchen Remodeling Project



Introduction

If a kitchen remodeling project is in your future, planning may seem overwhelming. Most people look at magazines, browse a showroom or big box store, maybe even make an appointment with a kitchen designer but find it hard to start their project. If you feel overwhelmed, you're not alone! Just take a deep breath and take your time with the planning phase of your project.

There's no need to feel pressured. We've seen customers at RW Shaw take a year or more of planning, prep work, and reviewing details before they start their remodeling project. Also, materials might take some time to select, order/purchase, and delivery times vary.

So . . . where do you begin? When we meet with customers, we begin by asking a variety of questions designed to help us and them understand how they are currently using their kitchen. We'll go over ideas or concepts you may have already selected, researched, or would like to potentially see in your space.

We'll talk about current problem areas or possible obstacles you have with the current layout – is something just not working or is it frustrating to prepare a meal due to the fridge being in the wrong spot? All of these issues are discussed during this time. We also work through the differences you would like to see in the new space, help set priorities, take measurements and photos of the existing floor plan, and start a budget.

We have prepared this planning guide to address common questions we hear from homeowners as they begin a kitchen remodeling project. The guide walks you through various areas to begin the remodeling process – what features to consider, setting a budget, preparing your home/family/pets for the work and surviving the construction phase(s).

We invite you to view our website (www.rwshawservices.com) or follow us on Facebook.

We hope you will find this information helpful and would welcome any questions/comments you may have.

Enjoy!

Rick

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President

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Questions to Answer Before You Start Your Project

Below are some of the key questions that'll help you start planning your kitchen remodeling project. Consider these questions and make notes to share with your contractor and/or kitchen designer to help them plan and design a kitchen that will best meet your family's needs.

1. How many people are in your household and how will they use the kitchen?

- a. If you are a working couple, it may be important to have a message center in your kitchen or an area set up for a quick grab & go area. If you have children, they may need a place to dine informally or get caught up on homework. Snacks are important to families; an area maybe in your pantry that is specifically reachable for the little ones.
- b. Don't forget to include your pets . . . you may need a place for food storage, feeding area, supplies or even a litter box.

2. Who is the primary cook?

- a. That person will want to specify how the kitchen should function for preparing meals and/or entertaining. The height and way the primary cook operates in the kitchen, and whether he/she is left or right-handed, should be factored into the design of the space and placement of cabinets and appliances? Should you design your kitchen for more than one cook?

3. How do you use your current cabinet storage space?

- a. What do you store? For example, types of cook ware, utensils, dishes, food, cleaning supplies? How much do you currently store in your kitchen? Do you envision storing less, more or about the same? Pantry needs? Baking supplies? Do you want to display something . . . maybe an antique or a collection of something?

4. Do any of your family members have physical limitations?

- a. If so, are any specific accommodations required? Many options are available to comply with ADA requirements.

5. What type of cooking do you normally do?

- a. Heat and serve meals? Bulk cooking on weekends and freezing meals to be consumed during the week? Full course meals? Vegan meals? Gourmet or ethnic meals? Specialty items?
- b. Keep your activities in mind as well – is there a busy time during the year that meals are more grab & go?

6. How often do you entertain?

- a. Are the meals you prepare for guests formal or informal? How many guests do you normally accommodate?

7. Is your kitchen a place for socializing?

- a. If so, how? Kids, adults, meetings, groups, events? What about any activities your family is involved in?



8. Where do you plan to sort recyclables?

- a. Will you need space in the kitchen, or do you prefer to sort recycling items in the laundry room or perhaps the garage?

9. What type of feeling would you like your kitchen space to have?

- a. Design tastes can range from many different areas – contemporary, traditional, rustic, country, formal, industrial, log cabin, etc.
- b. Pinterest is a great tool to start looking at ideas or concepts, styles, etc. Create a board or download a few photos of what you like AND what you don't like. This helps our design team focus on your likes as well as your dislikes.

10. What other activities will take place within your kitchen?

- a. Will you need space for dining, homework, a desk, laundry area, wine bar, possible greenhouse window for herb plants?

11. How often do you shop for food?

- a. How much space do you need for fridge/freezer or food storage?

12. What do you DISLIKE the most about your current kitchen space?

- a. Create a top 5 list of the areas that you absolutely hate about your current workup . . . for example:
 - i. I can't stand a corner cabinet in my current kitchen because to find something in the rear of the cabinet space, I practically have to crawl inside the cabinet and pull everything out.

13. What do you LIKE the most about your current kitchen space?

- a. Create a top 5 list of areas that you would 100% want to keep or replicate in your new kitchen . . . for example:
 - i. I have a small 10" cabinet to the left of my stove that has vertical storage for cookie sheets, muffin pans, and jelly roll pans.



Remodeling Your Kitchen ~ An A-to-Z Wish List Guide

Most people begin a kitchen remodeling project with a “wish list” – everything you NEED and WANT in your dream kitchen.

To help start your wish list, we’ve developed this handy A-to-Z Wish List Guide; it includes many of the features you’ll want to consider as you plan and budget for your project.

A. Appliances

- Research appliance makes & models – your choices will impact the design of your kitchen and your budget. Look at a variety of stores (big box and specialty stores); double check all specs and interior fittings.
- If you plan on ordering your appliances, do so ahead of time so you have some wiggle room on delivery. Verify delivery dates . . . check with the salesperson on backordered items or delays in shipping.
- Double check if the appliance store provides installation or just drop-off? Will they bring the appliance(s) into the space? Haul-away the old unit(s)?

B. Built-Ins

- Make a list of items you would want built into the design of your kitchen. Appliances now are made in counter depth sizes to fit into standard cabinetry.
- Other types of built-ins to consider are banquettes for breakfast areas and appliance “garages” to house microwave ovens, coffee makers, and kitchen mixers. Don’t forget to factor in a broom closet if your space allows for it.
- Coffee-bars are starting to get popular alongside a small beverage fridge. Storage for coffee cups or disposable materials, coffee, tea, electric tea kettle, coffee maker, etc.

C. Cabinets & Countertops

- Visit showrooms to identify the type of cabinets and countertops you want to use in your project. Note the line, style, material, color, and finish for cabinets and the type of material, edging, and color choices for the countertops.
- Think long term about adding a tile backsplash and/or a hood vent for above your cooktop or stove. Color of your countertop may contrast with the potential tile you select. Same goes for a vent hood . . . splashy wall mounted unit that makes a statement might not fit with either the tile and/or countertop.

D. Drawers & Desk Areas

- Pull-out drawers are great for under-countertop storage. Check them out when you visit showrooms – are they something you like or dislike? Drawers have become extra popular vs. open shelves; it’s easy to pull out the drawer and see everything that may be stored within instead of crawling inside a shelf area so to speak to track something in the rear of the cabinet.
- Many kitchens feature a desk area for a computer and for doing paperwork such as bill paying or meal planning. On the desk you could include a charging station for cell phones/tablets.

E. Electronics

- In addition to kitchen appliances, computers/tablets and TV’s have found a home within the kitchen. Think about adding these to your space along with any internet and/or cable service.

F. Flooring

- Flooring within kitchens include a variety of options, including wood, ceramic tile, vinyl, laminate, concrete, and carpet. Other materials used are granite, bamboo, and marble.
- Flooring should not only be attractive but also easy to maintain and practical. Go to showrooms, online research and read product reviews.
- Take into consideration what you do every day, who walks on the floor, traffic coming in/out, pets, small children, etc.
- Look at warranties and any safety specs for the flooring you select. Also keep in mind the space that the new floor will be adjacent to or bumped along side (doorways into other spaces).

G. Galley or Gathering Space

- Think about the space in your home. An efficient galley kitchen is a great asset for food prep for a serious cook while space for informal meals and family gatherings is important to households with children or for those who like to entertain.
- Take storage/pantry space into consideration while determining your space. If you enjoy entertaining, it comes with its own amount of materials to keep on hand. Children take up space with all their “stuff” so where are you storing or keeping kid’s items on hand. Don’t forget the pets! They too have items that are important.

H. Hardware

- Select hardware that is attractive, easy to clean and fits within your budget. If you’re planning to live in your home for a long time, consider easy to use products like cup shaped pulls on drawers and lever handles on doors where appropriate.
- If you have kids and/or pets, think about safety as well. You’ll want to keep certain items (i.e., cleaning supplies) out of reach.

I. Islands & Peninsulas

- Islands and peninsulas are the workstations of a kitchen. Generally, they are designed for food prep, informal dining, and storage.
- Families like to use an island for a breakfast bar addition as well – quick meal or snack.

J. Jewels of the Kitchen

- The “jewels” of a kitchen are the items you add for aesthesis such as pendant lighting, glass cabinets, custom tiles on a backsplash, in-cabinet or in-drawer lighting, and areas for displaying a collection.
- Keep accessories in mind too – do you want to have a theme (color or style) throughout your kitchen? Example could be all red appliances (tea kettle/coffeemaker, toaster, blender, knife block, etc.)

K. Kitchen Triangle

- The kitchen triangle considers the placement of the stove, refrigerator, and sink/dishwasher area in the design of a kitchen so that a cook can work efficiently.
- Think about your existing kitchen . . . do you like the flow when preparing a meal from the fridge to gather materials, the sink to wash/prepare, workspace to prepare, and stove to cook.
- Think cleanup & trash location as well – do you walk across your current kitchen with a handful of garbage to throw away?

L. Lighting

- Lighting is essential to the function of a kitchen! Plans should be taken into consideration the amount of lighting over a workstation or island, dining areas, and under cabinet.
- Options for lighting include fluorescent, halogen, and LED. Fixtures to consider for the kitchen are pendant and recessed lighting.
- If you are thinking of going rustic or eclectic . . . shop local antique stores or lighting shops. Many options are out there to repurpose old into new items too!

M. Moldings

- Moldings add architectural interest to a kitchen but also finish off cabinetry, doors, and flooring. Pay attention to ornamental moldings when you are looking at photos of kitchens.
- Also keep in mind the theme you have selected. Any flooring you have chosen often comes with matching trim and transition pieces.

N. Nooks

- Nooks or alcoves are recessed areas of a room that can be used for dining or displays. They add interest to a kitchen but also provide functional space.

O. Outlets

- Add extra outlets to your wish list. If you don't, you'll wish you had considered the height and placement of outlets as well as the number to include when you operate small appliances and gadgets in your kitchen.
- There are a lot of specialty outlets too that include a USB outlet along with a 3-prong cord option. Others include a countertop popup or undercabinet outlet strip.

P. Pantry & Pull-out Storage

- There is nothing more frustrating than reaching into the recesses of cabinets to find food, pots/pans, and dishware.
- Look for drawers and cabinets with pullouts to make for easy access to these items.
- Pantry storage is so important; look at you existing items that you store (food, appliances, snacks, etc.) and ask yourself, could you use more space? Different heights? Depths? Do you store your foot items in their original packaging or a plastic container?

Q. Quick Access

- Consider adding carousels (Lazy Susan's) to corner cabinets for spice & food storage; these can be added to both upper & lower cabinets.
- Under cabinet trash/recycling pullouts should be included in your plan.
- Also, instead of having shelves in your lower, base cabinets, think about drawers so you can quickly grab and go instead of having to search.

R. Recipes & Cookbooks

- Plan an area to organize your cookbooks and display family/handwritten recipes.
- If you have a designated space set aside to plan meals and prepare your grocery shopping/ordering, it makes for a less hectic schedule.

S. Sinks

- Sinks are the most important fixture of a kitchen! Choose wisely – think about sinks that you have used at a relative’s house or talk to family/friends about what they like or don’t like about their current sink style.
- Consider depth, faucet type, utility, and ease of cleaning. Don’t forget to select a waste disposal system and dishwasher.
- The most common sink has become a single bowl sink with a high-rise faucet that has a pull-down option. If you like to cook/bake or use a lot of mid-sized countertop appliances such as a crockpot, it makes washing these items a lot easier.

T. Tiles

- Floor and backsplash tiles can be used very creatively – they can turn a relatively simple looking kitchen into a showplace. When selecting your tile, also take into consideration grout color; a white subway tile with a dark gray grout can pull colors from your countertop.

U. Under Counter Appliances & Storage

- If you are adding additional refrigerator space, consider installing a beverage fridge under the counter and creating a coffee and/or drinks bar.
- A mixer can be stored in a base cabinet with a pop-up shelf to free up counter space.

V. Ventilation

- When selecting a cooktop or oven, consider the ventilation that goes along with it or required by inspection.
- Ventilation hoods come in a range of styles, colors, or finishes, and can be very elaborate & fancy to very simple and streamlined.
- Range hoods are considered an appliance in some states and will need a dedicated electrical outlet, similar to your dishwasher, fridge, range/oven, cooktop, and microwave.

W. Wet Bars & Wine Storage

- If you desire a designated space for wine/beverage storage; many cabinet makers offer a cubby-like option.
- Some custom options may be available as well depending on your space and overall layout.

X. Xtra Ideas

- A kitchen remodeling project is a large investment and it takes time to read various product reviews, especially when it comes to appliances and cabinet makers.

Y. Your Personal Touch & Style

- Go with your gut! Choose fabrics, colors, décor, kitchen collections, etc. that suit your interests and lifestyle. Have fun picking out new items or repurposing old ones.

Z. Zones

- When you put together the plan for your kitchen, think about the way you want to use your space and then plan around the “zones” to include food prep, clean-up, dining, storage, baking, beverages, paperwork, etc.

How to Set a Budget & Priorities for Your Project

We are often asked “how much should be budgeted for remodeling a kitchen?” The answer, in our opinion, depends on what you plan to do with your home and over what period of time. Some folks suggest that your budget should not exceed a certain percent (ex. 15%) of the current value of your home. While that may be a helpful guideline for someone planning to sell their home in the short term, it doesn’t exactly apply to all situations.

To get started in setting a budget for your kitchen remodeling project, you’ll first want to answer a few questions to get a base of where to begin.

1. *First and foremost, what are your plans for your home?*

- a. If you purchased the home as a “fixer-upper”, remodeling may have been factored into the price you offered for the home. You may be planning to raise a family in the home, or you may be designing the space for your retirement years. The house may be a starter home or even your dream home.

2. *Is the home a long-term or short-term investment?*

- a. If you plan to live in the home for more than five years, you may want to add amenities that you will enjoy over time.
- b. If the home is a short-term investment and you plan to sell within less than 5-years, you will want to plan your project to appeal to prospective buyers. Don’t overuse the “trends” that are current in today’s market (i.e., farmhouse white) if your planning on a less than 5 year investment.

3. *Is return on investment a primary concern to you?*

- a. If so, you will want to maximize the home’s equity by considering recent sales comparable to homes in your area, the price you paid for your home and the money you have already invested when budgeting for your project.

4. *Do you plan on renting your home in the future?*

- a. If this home is an investment property, your remodeling project should address a renter’s basic needs as well as the period of time you can expect “payback” on the investment. Some can be recouped but you’ll also want to make a profit.

5. *What do you like about your kitchen?*

- a. There may be items that you will want to use or salvage as you plan out your project. Listing your likes/dislikes will help you determine a design for your space.
- b. Look at as many sources as you can – reach out to friends, family, neighbors, use social media to post questions. Walk through a variety of stores/showrooms including but not limited to the big box stores (IKEA, Home Depot, Menards, Lowes, etc.) but also make arrangements with smaller and/or local companies to get ideas.

6. *What do you dislike the most about your kitchen?*

- a. Start tracking all the negative things about your kitchen . . . meal prep, baking areas, storage, power/electrical sources, counter-height, space between the upper & base cabinets, foot path, etc.
- b. Research different ideas, talk to people, join different social media avenues to ask questions, use Pinterest to begin a “wish list” of concepts you would like to implement into your new design.

The next step is to set priorities for your project by determining the “needs” and “wants”. Needs are the things that are essential purchases (fridge, stove) for your kitchen project. Wants are things that are desirable but optional to your plan and budget.

Here is a checklist of items that are typically part of a full-kitchen remodel.

Item	Need	Want	Make/Model	Price
Cabinets				
Countertops				
Flooring				
Wall Oven/Stove				
Refrigerator				
Freezer				
Cooktop				
Microwave				
Dishwasher				
Sink/Faucet				
Garbage Disposal				
Lighting Fixtures				
Cutting Surfaces				
Recycling Area				
More Workspace				
More Storage				
Pantry				
Wet Bar				
Window(s)				
Eating Area				
Media/TV Center				
Other:				

The final consideration is your TIMETABLE for the project; average kitchen remodel takes about 8-10 weeks, so you’ll need to be prepared ahead of time. So, plan accordingly on when you get started and the goal in completing.

6 Things to do BEFORE Meeting with a Kitchen Designer



After you have made a kitchen wish list and considered a budget with priorities for your kitchen remodeling project, we recommend working with a professional designer to create a plan for the project. Many kitchen showroom and home centers offer design services including a free in-home consultation. There are many design/remodeling contractors, including RW Shaw Construction Services, who will include the cost of design in the total cost of the project.

Before meeting with a kitchen designer, you can prepare using the questions below:

1. Make a checklist of major and minor problems that you have with your current kitchen. Consider the following:

- a. Are you happy with the traffic flow through your kitchen? Is there adequate counter, storage, and floor space in the present configuration of your kitchen?
- b. Is your kitchen efficient? New appliances may have more efficient features/settings and can help save money on energy costs.
- c. Are there individuals with impairments living in your home? If so, the kitchen designer should address safety and access for these individuals.
- d. Do you like the location and design of your kitchen? What are the best features? What would you like to keep and/or change?



2. Collect ideas & information. Read magazines, books, go online, join social media venues, visit showrooms, etc. Make a clip books/save links of the ideas that reflect your wishes, personality, etc.

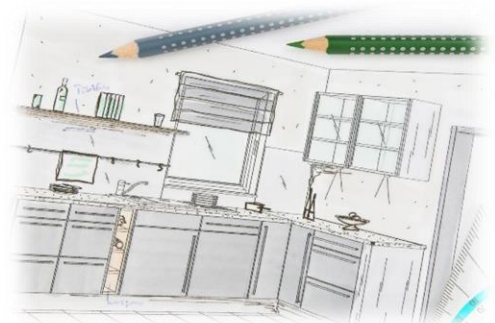
- a. [HGTV](#)
- b. [Better Homes & Gardens Kitchens](#)
- c. [Pinterest](#)
- d. [Facebook](#)
- e. [IKEA](#)

3. Visit showrooms & retailers

- a. By visiting showrooms and potential retailers, you can start developing a list of appliances, cabinetry, countertops, flooring, and other products you will potentially be using within your kitchen. Gather information about dimensions and installation if you can. Many retailers provide product information brochures to consumers and most manufacturers have product information posted on their individual websites. It will be helpful to begin identifying appliances – their dimensions will be factored into the design.

4. Discuss your budget expectations with the designer

- a. Your designer will make suggestions to help you achieve your desired outcomes and will help stay within your budgetary limits.
- b. Be prepared to have some surprises while completing the project; you'll want to discuss this with your designer. All depending on the level of remodeling you are tackling . . . if your doing a full gut, down to the studs or removal of soffits you may have some issues hidden behind the scenes.



5. Questions to ask your designer:

- a. How can the efficiency of my kitchen be maximized?
- b. Where can appliances be placed? What needs to be altered to the plumbing and/or electrical to make this happen?
- c. What built-ins can be used within the design?
- d. How can a pantry (or specific storage) be incorporated into the design?
- e. How should the cabinets be organized? Discuss the purpose of each unit; consider stackable shelves, rollouts, cup/plate racks and dividers to meet your specific needs. If you have a collection, would you like to display these? Think of glass front doors, corner display units, possible built-ins to showcase your items.