

# IDEAL KITCHEN DESIGNS

*—Remodeling Guide—*



More of What You Need to Know to Successfully  
Plan for a Home Remodel

# Ideal Kitchen Designs

## What You Need to Know to Successfully Plan for a Home Remodel

By John Murphy

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*The Kitchen is  
the Heart of the  
Home*

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There is little question that your kitchen is one of the most important rooms in your home. Some would even call it the heart of the home. It's possibly the most used room in your house during waking hours because it is used for so many things other than serving meals. It's the social hub for the family, the second home office for some and the birth place of many a school art project.

Since the kitchen has so many functions in everyday living, it's important to "get it right" when you're planning to build or remodel. So where do you start? With what's ideal for you.



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## What do you want?

Your kitchen, like the rest of your home, should reflect your personality and your lifestyle. So it's important to ask what you want your kitchen to look like and how you want it to function. That means weighing two sometimes complementary and sometimes contradictory considerations: Form and function, or style and usability.

## Addressing Style

Leaf through any custom home magazine and you'll find a wide variety of styles: Art Deco, Asian, Classical, Contemporary, Country, French Colonial, Lodge, Mission, Modern, Rustic, Shaker, Traditional, Transitional, Tudor, Tuscan, and Victorian—just to name a few. Some are more classic and some are more traditional. Some will grab your eye and make you long to spend time there. Others will do nothing for you, and still others will make you long to spend time somewhere else. Because there are so many different styles, it's important to narrow your choices a bit so that you can come up with a design that fits your preferences.





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So how do you know that style is right for you? The following questions can help get you moving in the right direction. Jot down the answers to these questions to help you identify what style of kitchen you really want. This isn't an exhaustive list of questions by any means, so add your own questions to this list.

- What is my general sense of style? Do I gravitate toward things that are contemporary? Or do I prefer things that are traditional, country, or rustic?
- What's the style in the rest of my home? If the rest of the house is traditional, do I want to carry that style over into the kitchen?
- Are there things I hate about my current kitchen? (This can easily get into the function or usability area, so try to focus on style issues for now)
- Is there an overall theme in the house that I want to bring into the kitchen?
- Are there particular colors or color combinations I like?
- How much natural versus artificial lighting do I want?
- What kind of fixtures do I like?





## Determining Usability

Having a kitchen that looks great is nice. But your kitchen also needs to be highly functional. Here are some questions to consider about your kitchen's functionality or usability.

- How does my family use the kitchen?
- Is it a gathering place?
- Is it a homework haven?
- Do we do laundry here too?
- Do we use a computer, TV, other devices?
- Will we be eating some meals in the kitchen?
  - How much storage space will we really need? What about an in-kitchen pantry?
- What appliances (and what kind) do we really want? Do we want/need any of the following: Range, Oven, Cook-top, Microwave, Coffee/Esspresso machine, Freezer, Dishwasher, Trash compactor, Washer/Dryer? How do these appliance fit with the overall look of the kitchen (a tie-in to style)?
- What kind of flooring do we want? What kind of traffic do we have in the kitchen? Are there pets or young children to consider?
- How do I want my workspace organized? Do I want an island? Do I need multiple sinks?
- What kind of cooking do we normally do? Do we need to accommodate "gourmet" style preparation?
- Do we entertain a lot? Will we need to make sure we allow room for "observers" in the kitchen?



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## Where's the pain?

Deal with the pain first before you think too much about the dream state of your new kitchen. There is an order, a chronology to design that must be followed if the scope of your project will truly solve the issues at hand.

What are the one or two things about my current kitchen that drive me crazy? Forget about colors and décor for now. Be honest with yourself and each other if a couple. What isn't working? What do you just hate? What have you always wished were different?

Perhaps your family has grown and the issues are all about storage, sightlines and accessability. Or maybe your needs have shrunk and it's less about storage and more about high performance appliances and low maintenance surfaces.

## Look at what you like

Answering questions like the ones above are essential for determining the basic scope of your project. But for a lot of people, knowing what ideal is a matter of "I'll know when I see it." You can look at friends' kitchens. Visit home shows. Read custom home magazines. Or, save a lot of time and effort by simply going online to Houzz.com, which is the world's largest image library of remodeled rooms. Start your own idea book on Houzz and build your own project profile you can share with anyone.





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## Kitchen Trends to Consider

Staying current with trends can provide inspiration and ensure your kitchen remodel feels contemporary and stylish:

1. Open Shelving and Glass Front Cabinets: These features create an airy, open feel in the kitchen while showcasing curated collections of dishes or decorative items.

2. Mixed Materials: Combining different materials such as wood, metal, and stone adds depth and texture to the kitchen design, creating visual interest.

3. Bold Colors and Patterns: While white kitchens remain timeless, bold colors like navy blue, deep greens, and rich earth tones are gaining popularity for cabinetry and accent walls. Similarly, geometric patterns in backsplashes or flooring can make a striking statement.

4. Multi-Functional Islands: Islands are evolving beyond extra counter space to include built-in appliances, additional storage, and seating areas, transforming them into central hubs for cooking, dining, and socializing.

5. Smart Storage Solutions: Innovations like pull-out pantry shelves, drawer dividers for cutlery and utensils, and corner storage solutions maximize every inch of available space, keeping the kitchen organized and clutter-free.



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*If we are not  
supposed to have  
midnight snacks,  
why is there a light  
in the fridge?*

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The ideal kitchen design blends practical functionality with aesthetic appeal, reflecting the needs and lifestyle of its users. As a design/build remodeler, our approach emphasizes collaboration with homeowners to create a space that is both functional and beautiful. By focusing on layout efficiency, quality materials, strategic lighting, thoughtful integration of technology, and embracing current trends, we can transform any kitchen into the heart of the home—a space where culinary creativity flourishes and memories are made.

