



Happy renovations start here.

Kitchen Renovation Guide



Making meals and memories

No matter which way you slice it, the kitchen is the heart of a home. It's a central gathering place where you eat, share, catch up, entertain, and more.

A successful kitchen remodel requires knowledge, expertise, and flexibility. Before you start tearing out cabinets and ripping up tile, think about the state of your current kitchen and what needs to change. Do you need layout and design help? Does the plumbing or electrical need to be moved? Do you need someone to manage the project?

If you're just getting started, then this guide is for you. From hiring a contractor to the latest flooring materials, we'll touch on everything you need to know before tackling your kitchen remodel.

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Planning

In most homes, the kitchen is the central hub – you want it to be as aesthetic and functional as possible. Let's get an idea of what you want your new kitchen to look like.

What to consider in a kitchen remodel

Even if you don't spend a lot of time in the kitchen, having a space that fosters good workflow and meets your aesthetic needs is important – you want something that caters to your lifestyle, after all! Here are some [factors to consider](#) when mapping out your new space.

LAYOUT

Let's talk kitchen layouts. It's all too easy to start daydreaming about wall-to-wall cabinetry or an island with hidden storage, and many forget that your kitchen layout ultimately depends on the size of the room you're working with. A [kitchen designer](#) or an [architect](#) can help you determine the best layout for your space.



L-shaped kitchen

One of the most common options available, this layout provides ample counter space and leaves you with plenty of room to add a kitchen table or island later.



One-wall kitchen

No mysteries here – all the cabinets, counters, and appliances are placed along one wall. This layout is common in small spaces and provides unobstructed traffic flow.



Galley kitchen

This layout consists of two walls that face each other. While it's common in small spaces, it can feel too restrictive if you have more than two people cooking at the same time.



U-shaped kitchen

Three walls are needed to form the classic U shape for this kitchen layout. It makes working in a kitchen easy and efficient, which is ideal if you love to cook.

LIFESTYLE

Your lifestyle plays a huge role in what features you choose to include in your kitchen remodel. If you love to entertain, then you'll want extra seating and a wine fridge. If you love to bake, then ample counter space will take priority. Some folks may need to consider [accessibility features](#) while others long for the latest [smart technology](#). At the end of the day, it comes down to how and how often you want to use your kitchen.

AESTHETIC

Paint colours, countertop materials, backsplash designs, finishing touches... deciding how your kitchen will look is a thrill. Odds are you have a strong understanding of your personal aesthetic already, but it doesn't hurt to spend a few more hours googling [kitchen trends](#). Compile a list of materials, colour palettes, and accessories that you like. This will give you some direction.



BUDGET

Staying within your budget during a kitchen renovation can be difficult. You might start with the best intentions, but unforeseen issues and one or two [luxury items](#) can quickly cause your renovation bill to skyrocket. Luckily, there are several ways you can save money on your kitchen renovation.

Ways to save on your reno



Refinish your cabinets instead of replacing them



Reuse materials if renovating two rooms at once

Your budget will ultimately decide the materials used to achieve your aesthetic. Here are a few examples of what you can get with each budget. Check out our cost tool for more information.



Shopping

It's time to personalize your kitchen decor. From colours that mirror your personality to ceramic tiles that stand out from the crowd, you're sure to find something that suits your style.

What you'll need in your new kitchen

Your kitchen's character will develop with each purchase you make, so you'll need to plan carefully. Make sure that your material choices align with your desired aesthetic and appliances physically fit in your layout. Don't be afraid to use decorative accessories and lighting to create a relaxing effect, as well!

KITCHEN CABINETS

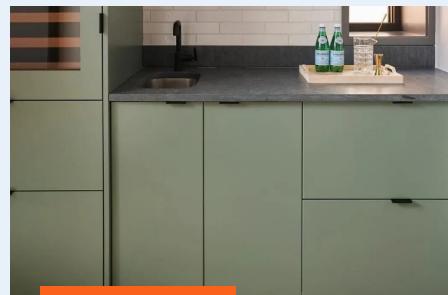
Kitchen cabinets are an essential element of any good kitchen. Not only do they house important items like dishes and cooking appliances, but they also influence the look and feel of the kitchen. Here are a few [kitchen cabinet styles](#), [materials](#), and [finishes](#) to choose from.

KITCHEN CABINET STYLES



Shaker cabinets

Simple yet aesthetic, shaker cabinets work well in almost any kitchen. They're constructed using a frame and panel technique and feature recessed panel doors.



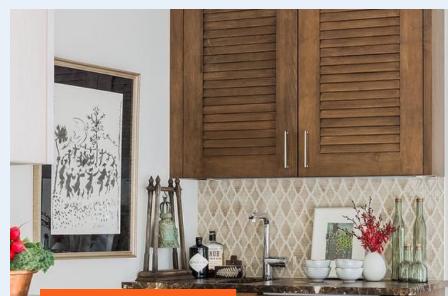
Slab or flat cabinets

Often made using medium-density fibreboard (MDF), slab cabinets are simple, sleek, and easy to clean. They come in a variety of finishes to suit your tastes.



Inset cabinets

If you want a clean look, inset cabinets are a great choice: their doors lay flush with the frame when closed. They may be harder to install and are a more costly option.



Louvred cabinets

If your cabinetry is near a radiator, you might want to consider louvred cabinets. They're made with a series of horizontal slats that light and air can pass through!

KITCHEN CABINET MATERIALS



Hardwood

Hardwood is a common choice for cabinets because it's durable and long-lasting. It's also easy to paint and stain and can easily be customized to fit your needs.



MDF

MDF is a cost-effective material that's often covered with some type of veneer. It's commonly used in furniture from places like IKEA and is easy to customize.



PVC

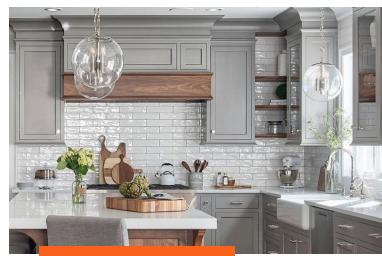
Polyvinyl chloride (PVC) cabinets have a hollow or foam base, making them extremely lightweight and easy to install. They also don't need a finish.



Melamine

One of the most affordable options, melamine cabinets are constructed using paper and resin. With them, you can get the look of wood at a much lower price point.

KITCHEN CABINET FINISHING TECHNIQUES



Glazed finish

Glaze is commonly added after a base coat of either paint or stain. Its purpose is to highlight details and grooves, especially in wooden cabinets.



Painted finish

Paint is a popular choice because it allows you to choose from a wide variety of colours. Certain types of paint will work better than others.



Distressed finish

A distressed finish gives your cabinets an intentionally aged look, which is ideal for a rustic aesthetic.



Stained finish

Stains are used on top of wooden cabinets to change the colour and enhance the wood's natural features. You may need to add multiple coats to get the desired effect.

KITCHEN PANTRY

Your pantry doesn't need to be a massive walk-in closet that serves as your own personal grocery store (although it can be). It can be as simple as a designated cupboard or a few floating shelves on the wall. As long as you have enough space to store your favourite comfort snacks, there are lots of possibilities! Here are a few options to check out.

KITCHEN PANTRY STORAGE TYPES



Slide-out pantry

In a smaller kitchen, you might opt for a slide-out pantry that's built into your existing kitchen cabinets and drawers.



Wall pantry

Another small space option is a wall pantry that's made by installing several shelves onto a designated wall. This style is simple, but keep in mind all of your food items will be on display.



Walk-in pantry

If there's a room or closet off the kitchen, you can convert it into the pantry of your dreams. With this style, there's more room to incorporate custom shelves and doors.

KITCHEN PANTRY MATERIALS



Plywood

Plywood is a common pantry material because it's affordable, easy to customize, and durable. Unlike similar budget-friendly options, it won't bend when you pile canned goods on top.



Stainless steel

If your pantry lives in the basement, you might consider using stainless steel. This material is sturdy and won't be damaged by any potential spills or floods.



KITCHEN ISLANDS

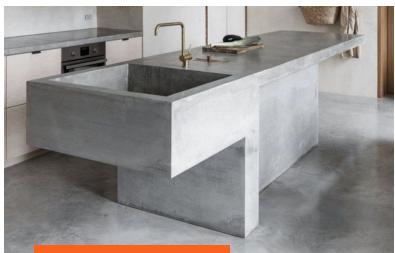
Kitchen islands come in many shapes, colours, and sizes. They provide that extra bit of counter space, storage, or room for appliances and help maximize efficiency and functionality. Portable or permanent, with or without seating, whatever you choose, make sure that your [kitchen island](#) aids the workflow of your kitchen.

KITCHEN ISLAND TYPES



Converted cart island

If money and space are in short supply, consider converting an old bar cart into your kitchen island. You can move it in and out of the kitchen as needed.



Full-function island

Full-function islands have sinks, drainage, stoves, electricity, and more. If you're an experienced cook, this style of kitchen island will nearly double your workspace.



Waterfall kitchen island

The waterfall island includes a countertop that extends past the base of your island. This style is designed for you to have a place to sit and eat.



Table island

There's no rule stating you can't use a basic kitchen table as your island. Typically, this style can only be used for food prep and won't add any storage solutions to your kitchen.



Multi-tiered island

A multi-tiered kitchen island usually features two tiers: one for working and one for eating. It acts similar to the waterfall style but separates the work and eating spaces.

KITCHEN ISLAND VENTILATION AND APPLIANCES

Kitchen islands can be as simple and compact as a bar cart or they can be huge centrepieces featuring built-in appliances. If you have the space for it, you can integrate stoves, sinks, bar fridges, and so much more. Some of the most high-tech kitchen islands even include TVs and touch screens.

If you plan on including a cooktop on your kitchen island, you'll need to add ventilation. Overhead range hoods are common but can get quite costly without a wall for support. Alternatively, you can opt for downward or upward vents, which are more affordable.

KITCHEN COUNTERTOPS

The [countertop](#) plays a vital role in your kitchen: it stores your coffee maker and serves as your primary food prep station. When designing it, consider your needs and desired aesthetic. Mix vintage and modern, add suspended lights, use butcher block and quartz... create the perfect workspace!



Laminate

A popular and budget-friendly option, laminate can get you the look of stone without the high price tag. Keep in mind that it's not as durable or heat resistant as other options.



Granite

Easily one of the most popular choices for kitchen countertops, granite is durable and sleek. It comes in a wide variety of colours and grains, so it can match every style.

Marble

Timeless, classy, elegant... marble is the go-to choice for luxury. It's available in many different colours and styles, is heat resistant, and requires regular care.

Butcher block

Create a dedicated food prep area by making part of your counter butcher block. It can be made of maple, oak, and even cherry, and it adds extra functionality.

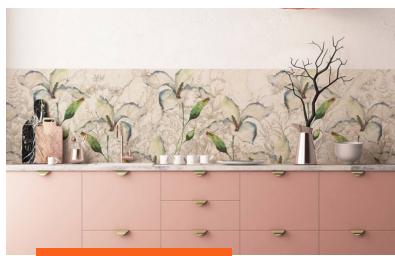
Stainless steel

Incredibly durable and heat resistant, stainless steel is typically used in professional kitchens. It can withstand heavy use and is easy to keep clean.

KITCHEN BACKSPLASHES

You may not think kitchen backsplashes are a big deal, but the truth is they tie the entire room together. Not only is your kitchen backsplash a fun and simple way to add colour and personality to the room, but it also serves to protect your walls from splashes, spills, and stains. Don't treat it like an afterthought! Check out these popular options.

KITCHEN BACKSPLASH MATERIALS



Wallpaper

A patterned wallpaper backsplash is a fast and affordable way to fill your kitchen with personality. Keep in mind that it won't protect your walls quite as well as other materials.



Tile

A staple for kitchen backsplashes, tile is great because it's easy to clean and never goes out of style. Play around with shapes, colours, and materials, as well as the arrangement of your tiles.



Stone slab

Simple and minimalistic, solid slab backsplashes can help open up your kitchen without drawing too much attention. It's a great option if you have a lot going on design-wise.



Metal

From plain long sheets to tiles with bold geometric patterns, metal backsplashes come in a variety of finishes and textures. It's easy to clean and can help brighten up your kitchen.



Wood

Shiplap, beadboard, reclaimed wood... wood backsplashes match every style, from Japandi to cottagecore. Love the look but not the high maintenance? Opt for porcelain wood tiles.

KITCHEN FLOORING

We all know that the kitchen is no place for carpet. With potential spills looming around every corner, you'll need something that's durable and easy to maintain. There are lots of [materials](#) to choose from, with both subtle and bold designs, so there's something that fits your style no matter the direction you want to take.

KITCHEN FLOORING MATERIALS



Hardwood

Wood floors bring such a warm and cozy feel to a kitchen. With so many types of wood and stains to choose from, they'll instantly add cachet and brighten up the space.



Slate

If you need some contrast to tie your modern or industrial kitchen together, consider slate. It comes in various shades of black and grey and adds a nice natural touch.



Epoxy

From metallic blues to matte black, epoxy comes in a variety of finishes and colours. You can layer and blend different kinds to create a unique look or pour it over an existing material.



Ceramic

A classic, ceramic comes in all sorts of shapes, textures, and colours. It's easy to clean, and you can mix and match tiles to create different patterns. Its versatility makes it a popular choice.



Linoleum

Inexpensive, easy to clean, eco-friendly... there's a lot to love about linoleum. It comes in a variety of colours and styles, so you can always get the aesthetic finish you're looking for.



KITCHEN DOORS, WALLS, AND WINDOWS

From grand French doors and massive bay windows to sliding Barnhouse doors and little garden windows, there are endless window and door styles for you to choose from in your kitchen remodel project. While you're at it, be sure to pick out a colour or two for your walls and ceilings.

KITCHEN DOORS



Barnhouse doors

Barnhouse doors are perfect if you want the country kitchen aesthetic. These wooden doors slide along a track and are easy to customize with paint and other finishing techniques!



Double French doors

Looking for class and elegance? Then you can't go wrong with French kitchen doors. While not ideal for small spaces, these doors look amazing in a variety of kitchen designs.



Patio doors

If your kitchen opens to your outdoor deck, sliding patio doors will make it easy to pop in and out. This comes in handy especially if you're grilling something on the BBQ for dinner.



Glass doors

If you want your kitchen to be as bright and open as possible, opt for glass doors that let the light shine through.



Reclaimed doors

Using reclaimed materials like barn walls will give your kitchen a rustic DIY feeling.

KITCHEN WALLS AND CEILINGS

Kitchens are traditionally painted white, but don't be afraid to switch it up and add texture.



Pantone Colour of the Year



Sage green



Shiplap



Square coffer



Wallpaper

KITCHEN WINDOWS

If your kitchen is lacking natural light and fresh air, then consider adding a [window](#).



Bay windows



Garden windows



Sliding windows



Double-hung windows

KITCHEN HARDWARE

Having quality kitchen hardware is important. Not only do these items contribute to the overall functionality of your kitchen, but they also add a touch of personality. You can have a lot of fun with knobs, storage, and sinks, so pick out some styles and finishes that bring the theme of your kitchen together. Here are a few options to choose from.

KITCHEN SINKS AND FAUCETS



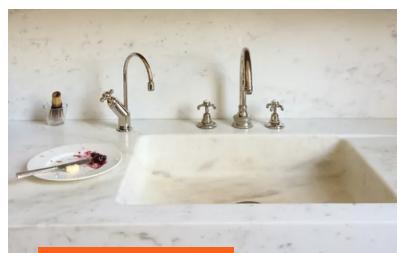
Farmhouse sink

Deep and wide, these sinks are excellent for soaking large pots and pans.



Workstation sink

Starved for space? Consider installing a sink that can be easily covered with cutting boards, colanders, and other items you might need while preparing food.



Integrated sinks

For a modern or seamless look, try installing a sink that's the same material as your countertop.



Decorative faucets in black or gold

Even on a budget, you can find kitchen faucets that use colour and style.



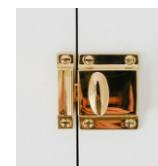
Touchless faucets

If you're opting for a smart kitchen remodel, then touchless faucets are the way to go.

KITCHEN KNOBS, PULLS, AND FINISHES



Satin black finishes



Latches instead of knobs



Square bar pulls



Matte champagne



Subtle industrial

KITCHEN AMENITIES



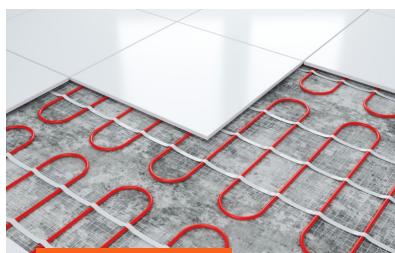
In-counter storage

This storage solution provides easy access to all of your kitchen tools while keeping your countertops free of clutter.



Undercounter composting unit

Whether you're looking to make your home greener or reduce food waste, an indoor compost bin will keep your food scraps out of landfills and nourish your garden.



Heated floors

If you're tired of walking on cold tile floors, consider getting heated flooring. It's also an energy efficient way to warm up your kitchen and keep you cozy.



Instant hot water dispenser

Love your tea but hate waiting for water to boil? Get an instant hot water dispenser for that extra bit of practical luxury and make your hot beverages in seconds!



Warming drawer

Busy families may not have the time to eat together or cook several meals in a day. Make a big batch of something and stick it in a warming drawer – let folks serve themselves.



Undercounter wine fridge

Folks that host parties or have a glass of wine with meals will love having a built-in undercounter wine fridge. Free up fridge space and keep all your wine in one location.

KITCHEN ACCESSORIES, APPLIANCES, AND MORE

One of the last steps in the remodelling process is picking out the accessories and appliances that will fill your kitchen. From light fixtures to placemats and everything in between, there's plenty of fun to be had and trends to look out for.

KITCHEN LIGHTING TYPES



Ambient lighting

Fill the room with light using windows, oversized ceiling fixtures, and even track lighting. If possible, get dimmer switches so you can adjust the brightness throughout the day.



Task lighting

Invest in some under-cabinet or recessed lights for each food prep area. It'll help reduce eye strain by providing the right level of light while you work.



Accent lighting

Play with track lights, sconces, and recessed lights to highlight your favourite display shelves, glassware, or artwork. It'll add to the atmosphere and provide extra brightness if needed.

KITCHEN APPLIANCES



Built-in wall stoves



Space-saving column fridges and freezers



Built-in dishwashers



Hidden microwaves in cabinets



Building

It can't be said enough: renovating your kitchen is a big, overwhelming project. Luckily, working with the right professionals can take most of that stress off your plate.

Who to hire for your kitchen remodel

The search for a kitchen contractor often begins online, but don't click on the top Google result and think you're good to go. Finding a contractor online means reading as many reviews as possible and poring over portfolio work. The best way to find a quality contractor is word of mouth.



QUESTIONS TO ASK YOUR KITCHEN CONTRACTOR

You might have to interview a few contractors before you find one you feel comfortable working with, but the benefits of working with a contractor are undeniable. To get you started, here are a few [essential questions](#) to ask.

- Are you licenced, bonded, and insured?
- Will I be able to use my kitchen at all during the remodel?
- How many kitchens have you renovated?
- Can I have an itemized bill?
- How long will the remodel take?

QUESTIONS TO ASK YOUR KITCHEN DESIGNER

Much like with kitchen contractors, you may need to talk to a few [kitchen designers](#) before finding the one that feels right. Here are a few questions to get the process started.

- What are your qualifications?
- Can I see examples of your past work?
- How often will we communicate?
- What's your plan to make my dream kitchen a reality?

KITCHEN SERVICES

In some cases, you'll need more than your contractor and designer. If you need to add new outlets or light switches, you'll need to hire an electrician as well. Tearing down a wall? You'll need a [structural engineer](#) to assess it. In most cases, though, the general contractor overseeing your project will handle this as part of your renovation.





FAQ

It's best to be prepared when planning your kitchen remodelling project. Here are a few of the most common questions about the process and what to expect.

Answers to all your project questions

We've gone over what to consider when planning a kitchen remodel, the functional and design elements you (and your contractor) will need to consider, and how to vet professionals so that you hire the right person for your project. It's time for the finishing touches: timing and the remodelling process.

HOW DO YOU KNOW IT'S TIME TO REMODEL YOUR KITCHEN?

While there's technically no wrong time for a kitchen remodel, there are a few telltale signs that indicate your kitchen needs an upgrade. Keep your eye out for things like aged or broken appliances, leaks or electrical damage, outdated aesthetics, or lack of storage and prep areas. Additionally, if your kitchen doesn't follow the triangle rule or if your cupboards still appear dirty after cleaning, it could be time to renovate. If you plan to sell your house, having a remodelled kitchen may increase buyers' interest as well.

WHEN IS THE BEST TIME OF YEAR TO START YOUR KITCHEN REMODEL?

Because your kitchen remodel is an indoor project, there are virtually no restrictions regarding the time of year you can renovate. That said, some months work better than others. If you plan on adding a fresh coat of paint, for example, it would be best to work in a warm month where you can have the windows open for hours at a time. [Hiring a contractor during the off-season](#) also has its perks.

WHAT TO EXPECT DURING A KITCHEN REMODEL

You know what they say about the best-laid plans... In any kitchen remodel, regardless of the scope of the project, you should expect the unexpected. Each stage of the remodel will come with its own [timeline](#), but unplanned issues can and will arise and cause delays. Generally speaking, a basic kitchen renovation will take roughly six weeks. If you're including custom work, expect 10 weeks or more.

HOW CAN I SAVE MONEY ON MY KITCHEN REMODEL?

The kitchen is the place we gather together to make memories, and it's also the place that often needs the most love. Damaged electrical, layout changes, and even one too many luxury items can make or break your budget. Here are a few tips to get the look you want and [save money on your kitchen remodel](#).

- Reuse what you have, such as nice countertops or furniture
- Refresh your cabinets with paint or get them refinished
- Use lights to brighten up the room
- Pick one place to splurge
- Reuse materials if [renovating two rooms at once](#)
- Setting an unrealistic budget
- Forgetting ventilation requirements
- Overlooking extra storage opportunities
- Lack of lighting
- Designing a space that doesn't promote good workflow

KITCHEN REMODEL MISTAKES TO AVOID

A kitchen remodel can be a huge undertaking and you're bound to make a mistake or two along the way. Here's a list of common [mistakes to avoid](#).



LINKS

No matter what stage of the kitchen remodelling process you're at, there's always content worth exploring to help broaden your horizons.

Helpful resources for your remodelling project

Remodelling a kitchen can be a ton of work, but at the end of the day, the payoff is undeniable. Whether you need a space that's more functional or simply one that features up-to-date appliances and materials, we're here to help. Check out these articles for tips on maximizing kitchen workflow, choosing the right countertop, and more!



PLANNING

Kitchen trends and inspiration

- [12 Kitchen Design Examples](#)
- [50 Dream Kitchen Designs](#)
- [Outdoor Kitchen: 7 Tips for a Great Outdoor Space](#)
- [10 Ways to Make the Most of Your Kitchen's Space](#)
- [The Modern Kitchen: 10 Tips to Upgrade Your Design](#)

Kitchen renovation costs

- [What Does a Kitchen Renovation Cost? Toronto vs. Montreal](#)

SHOPPING

Kitchen cabinets and pantry

- [15 Kitchen Cabinet Ideas](#)
- [Kitchen Cabinet Refacing: An Economic Way of Renovating Your Kitchen](#)
- [Kitchen Must-Haves: Functionality and Aesthetics](#)
- [The ABCs of an Organized Pantry](#)

Kitchen countertops

- [Best Countertop Materials for Your Kitchen](#)

Kitchen backsplash

- [13 Inspirational Ideas for a Gorgeous Kitchen Backsplash That'll Turn Heads!](#)

Happy renovations start here!

You can reach our renovation
advisors by telephone from
Monday to Friday from 8:30am
to 8:00pm.

Toronto 416-548-7943

Ottawa 613-454-6012

Montreal 514-360-RENO (7366)

Quebec 418-476-RENO (7366)

Toll free 1-888-670-9742

HEAD OFFICE

RenoAssistance
251 Consumers Rd., Suite 1200
Toronto, ON M2J 4R3

MONTREAL OFFICE

Réno-Assistance inc.
4329, Aut. des Laurentides
Laval (Québec H7L 5W5

info@renoassistance.ca
renoassistance.ca

