

STEP BY STEP KITCHEN RENOVATION

After 15 years of continuous involvement in hundreds of residential kitchen renovation projects we have learned, from achievements and mistakes, what the best steps of this process are, and how to best take those steps.

This is what we recommend in order to keep the kitchen renovation as a unique, wonderful and exciting experience, rather than a stressful and frustrating one:

Step 1: HARMONY. Let's first get a fair agreement among all "voting" members of the family about the kitchen renovation as necessity, timing, extent, budget, financing, etc.

Step 2: RESALE VALUE. Define from the start how much the "resale value" should influence your renovation project.

Step 3: THE ROOM. The room can stay exactly as is or undergo minor or major changes in all its components: walls, windows, doors, floor, ceiling and bulkheads, plumbing, electrical, heating, mechanical, etc. In any case, you should produce accurately scaled drawings with detailed final measurements. At this stage, if structural changes are involved, we need to know if a BUILDING PERMIT is mandatory in our city. Also local bylaws may require some changes at the time of the renovation as external walls insulation, upgrade of electrical, plumbing or mechanical systems. An application for building permit has to be submitted if necessary and our drawings are final only after the permit was issued.

Step 4: WHAT ELSE IS IN THE ROOM? Let's decide what objects other than the kitchen cabinets, counters and appliances, you must have in the kitchen room: an antique piece of furniture that you love a free standing drinking water tank or waste container, some accommodation for a pet, etc. All have to be listed along with their shape size and preferred location in the room.

Step 5: EATING IN THE KITCHEN. Your requirements for seated eating have to be clearly defined now: free standing or fixed table, bar top surface and exactly how many chairs and/or stools will be permanently kept in the kitchen? The table and/or bar top have to be specified as shape, size and preferred location in the room. Only now we know the space left for the appliances and the new kitchen cabinets.

Step 6: APPLIANCES. A complete list of appliances with accurate dimensions, installation requirements and preferred location has to be drawn now: fridge, stove, cook top, oven(s), microwave oven, sink, dishwasher, hood, warming drawer, built in or free standing coffee maker, etc., even small counter top devices like a toaster.

Step 7: MAIN COUNTER TOP. This is the part of the counter top where most of the food preparation will happen. You must realistically ask for a minimum length (2 to 6 feet let's say) and specify its location (ideally between the sink and the cooking surface, but not necessarily).

Step 8: CABINETS CONFIGURATION. The kitchen designer will guide us through the decisions to be made. For the base cabinets you will be asked how many cutlery drawers and how many pots and pans drawers you will need, how do you want to access the corner cabinet(s) and what accessories and organizers are required? For the upper cabinets you will have to decide how tall you want them, how far from the counter top, how far from the ceiling and what decoration (if any) will be between the top of the wall cabinets and the ceiling. Also what solution you prefer for the corner(s).

Step 9: ACCESSORIES AND DECORATION. Now that you know the sizes of all your new cabinets, you can choose from a large collection of accessories that will make it easier to reach in deep cabinets and corners, help with the waste management and recycling, organize cutlery, pots and pans, lids, trays, utensils and spices, etc. It is also the right time to choose the decorative components as under wall cabinets lighting, the crown or ceiling moulding, glass doors, corbels, pilasters, island legs, etc. This is best done with the assistance of a professional kitchen designer. A good start to get educated on what is available is this website: www.richelieu.com. We distribute all Richelieu products and more.

Step 10: CABINET DOORS STYLE AND FINISH. This is the soul searching and challenging stage when you have to find the right mood that best matches your taste and personality and to answer questions as: modern, transitional or classic style? Plain or heavily decorated? Do you want to see wood grain or a solid colour? A Light, medium or dark general look?

Step 11: FLOOR, COUNTER TOP, WALL PAINT, BACKSPLASH. This is the most common sequence of decision making (after you chose the finish of the cabinet doors, of course). Ceramic tiles and hardwood are the most popular choices floors, granite and quartz for kitchen counter tops. Beside the paint, you can add different accent treatments for the walls as exposed brick or stone, glass blocks, etc. Ceramic or glass tiles are the most popular finish for backsplash, but others are available.

Step 12: PLUMBING, ELECTRICAL, MECHANICAL, LIGHTING. Licensed and specialized trades will advise you about the options and the best solutions for our project. They will make sure that the electrical panel can safely handle all the new required circuits that you have enough plugs above the counter or on the island to power all your devices that all the necessary switches for different lighting scenarios are in the right places. The kitchen or lighting designer can suggest solutions for the general, local and accent lighting, and help you chose the fixtures.

Step 13: DRAWINGS AND SPECIFICATIONS. This is an essential step that you cannot afford to miss. Now you need a complete set of construction drawings to fully describe the final shape of the room, electrical, mechanical, plumbing and lighting drawings with all necessary specifications. The kitchen designer will produce the final kitchen layout showing all the cabinets, counter tops and various other components in floor plan, elevations, details with precise dimensions and eventually 3Ds. Caution: 3Ds may help to visualize, but they do not offer as many specific details as the floor plan and elevations with final dimensions.

Step 14: BUDGET. In most cases the kitchen renovation's accurate budget is the sum of 3 major components:

1) **CONSTRUCTION:** includes the demolition and disposal, construction (walls, windows, doors, floor, ceiling, baseboards and trims, painting, backsplash, etc), plumbing, electrical, mechanical, lighting, etc. A general contractor will give you a quotation based on your drawings and specifications. You can add materials and fixtures that the contractor did not include in his price.

2) **INSTALLED KITCHEN CABINETS AND COUNTER TOPS:** The kitchen cabinets company will provide a quotation based on the final and approved project.

3) **APPLIANCES:** Any appliance distributor will give you a firm quote for all the new appliances you need. You can add the cost for a new sink and faucet, eventually for a new kitchen table and chairs and/or stools. In some cases, when a structural solution and building permit are necessary, the fees for a licensed structural engineer and building permit application may have to be added to the sum of the above items .

Step 15: EXECUTING THE KITCHEN RENOVATION PROJECT. You will essentially use 3 companies for the completion of your project: a general contractor (alternatively, you can be your own general contractor and hire different trades), a kitchen company, and an appliance distributor, all based on written and detailed contracts, with work and payments schedule, and warranty provisions.

As we have seen, the renovation is a very complex process. This is why it is highly recommended that no piece of work be performed without a detailed and written agreement.

Step 16: HOW LONG DOES IT TAKE after you sign up (and eventually have paid the required deposits) with all the hired trades? It widely varies depending on many factors: the complexity of the project, the availability of the general contractor and of his sub trades, the building inspectors, how busy the kitchen company is, how time consuming the kitchen build is, if some special order appliances, materials or other components are out of stock or back orders, etc.

Let's consider one of the most common examples of kitchen remodelling projects: some non-structural changes to the walls (no building permit required), replace one window, relocate the plumbing for the sink, relocate the power supply for the stove and the exit of the hood, demolish the existing bulkhead and repair walls and the ceiling, new ceramic tile floor and backsplash, install new cabinets (stained and lacquered maple shaker doors) and quartz counter top, plumbing, electrical, mechanical and lighting (LED under wall cabinets, ceiling pot lights, accent lamp(s) over the island, hook all appliances and electrical fixtures, new baseboards and trims, painting, final cleaning and disposal of the debris. How long will this take if everything goes reasonably smooth? 4 - 5 weeks to produce and install the new cabinets (simultaneously, in the last 3 weeks of this waiting time, the contractor would have prepared the room including all the rough in, new floor and window and most of the lighting fixtures, sand priming the walls, etc). This is followed by 1.5 - 2 weeks of waiting for the quartz counter to be templated, fabricated and installed, when the contractor can only do few

things, but this is the best time to have all the new appliances delivered. Now the contractor comes for another 1 - 1.5 weeks to finish: backsplash, under cabinets lighting, hook the sink and faucet, dishwasher, fridge water supply, oven(s), microwave, paint, touch ups, cleaning, claim his balance and go for good.

TOTAL: $5 + 1.5 + 1.5 = 8$ weeks (in your house only 6 weeks because the contractor did not start but 2 weeks after the cabinets production). If you give it another week for unforeseen obstacles, you cannot go wrong.

A larger and more radical project, involving structural changes can take 4 - 6 weeks longer.

A re-facing only project, including new granite top, new sink and faucet, may take 3 - 5 weeks depending on the sophistication of the new doors. (in your home only few days).

We hope that all the above was worth reading and useful.

If you have further questions or want more details on one or more of the steps of the kitchen renovation process, please do not hesitate to e-mail us: Mario@yellowtreemillwork.com

You can also call us: (647) 898-1075

Yellow Tree Inc. is the best choice for your kitchen renovation in Oakville, Burlington all the way to Niagara Falls. For your dream kitchen call us now: (647) 898-1075, or for more information about our services, please browse the rest of our website at YellowTreeInc.com

Free estimate and design support, best price guaranteed!