

## A Good Kitchen Layout

### **How To Do A Good Kitchen Layout – The Basics**

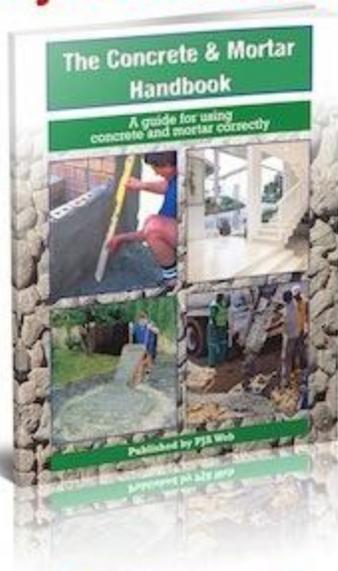


*Kitchen layout and design by Appleby Kitchens Johannesburg*

A good kitchen design is one that fulfils all the functions you require of it, and at the same time is aesthetically pleasing. Once you have gathered ideas and established your priorities, you will need to decide on the layout of the kitchen, taking into account the basic work triangle as well as traffic flow through the room.

#### **The Work Triangle**

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The key to any efficiently designed kitchen is its work triangle', This is the logical inter-relationship of the cook's three principal aids: the stove, the refrigerator and the sink, They should be sited so that you have access to each without having to take too many steps or circumvent obstacles in the process of fetching, preparing and cooking food, and of washing up, The three are positioned on the points of an imaginary triangle, which should be as compact as possible within the limits of free movement between the points.

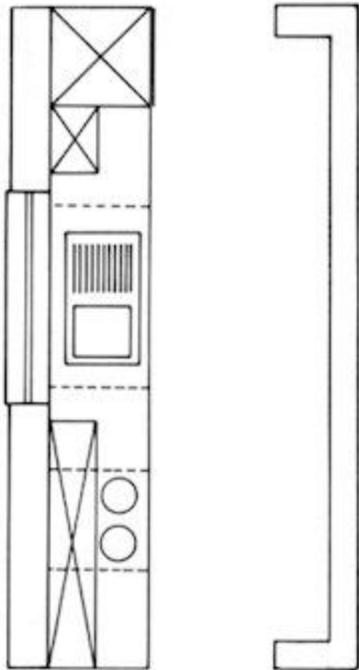
Having established your triangle, the related components will virtually position themselves: utensil and dry food storage areas will be close to the stove; crockery and cleaning material storage areas will be around the sink, and work surfaces will be close to both.

### **Kitchen Shapes**

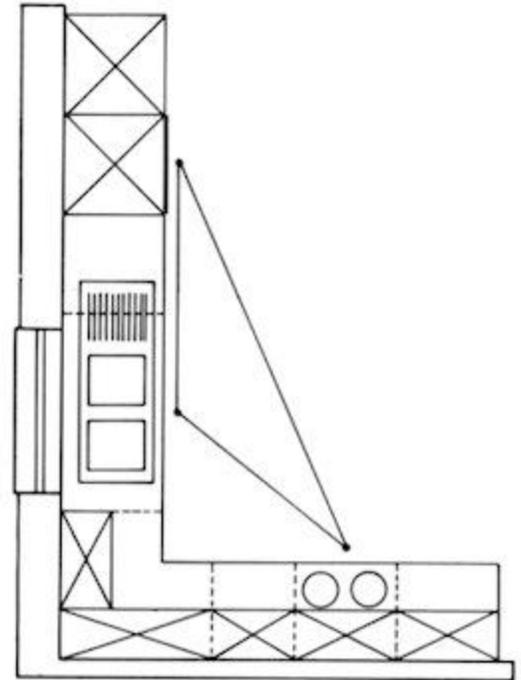
These seem to be of infinite variety to the casual eye, but in fact there are just four basic shapes: the single-wall, the galley (or corridor), the L-shaped and the U-shaped.

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## THE SINGLE-WALL KITCHEN



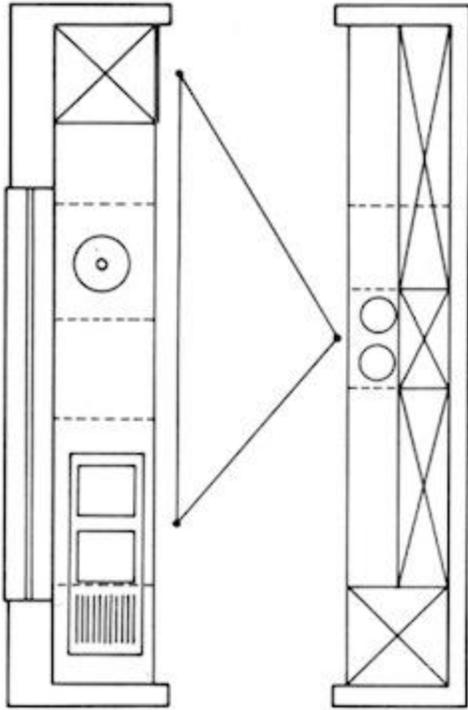
## THE L-SHAPED KITCHEN



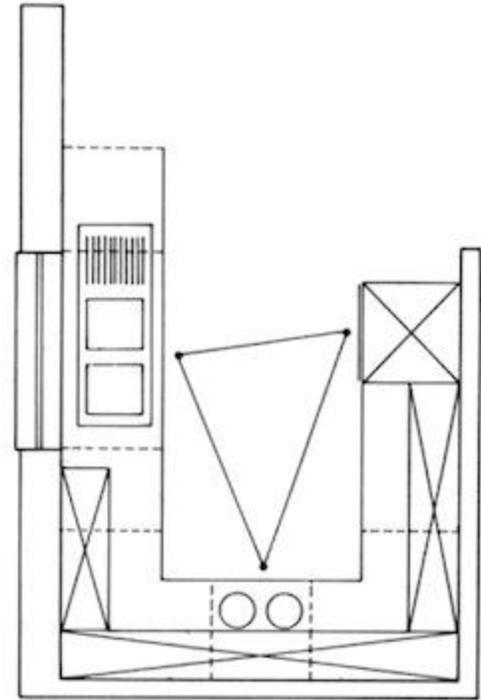
**The Single-Wall**, or one-counter, is the only type of kitchen which cannot incorporate a work triangle. Preparing, cooking and washing up are all performed along one wall, which is an ideal arrangement for a small apartment, This is not its only application, however. You may indeed have plenty of available space but prefer to use most if it for, say, an open-plan configuration of cooking/eating or cooking/eating/sitting areas. The main drawback of this design is the difficulty in creating an efficient storage system. If the line is too short, you will not be able to squeeze in enough units and work surfaces. If it is too long, your work flow will be inefficient.

**The L-Shaped Kitchen** is exactly what its name suggests. The triangle is not quite as efficient here, but this is probably the best shape if you want a completely integrated eating area or like the idea of having an island work station. An island work station can be anything from a simple table – providing an additional working surface – to a complex bank comprising a hob, sink and eating counter, and so by definition is suitable only for the medium-sized to larger kitchen.

## THE GALLEY KITCHEN



## THE U-SHAPED KITCHEN



**The Galley or Corridor Kitchen** – consisting of two parallel working areas – is an arrangement that allows for both a sensible work triangle and considerable flexibility when it comes to the room's ancillary functions. You could, for example, make provision for an eating area beyond the work centre, or link the two by installing an eating counter between them.

**The U-Shaped Kitchen**, which has three working walls, is an excellent layout when space is at a premium. Here, the work triangle can be at its most compact with, again, the option of linking the eating area with the open end of the 'U'.

[Design Your Own Kitchen](#)

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**How To Design Your Own Kitchen**

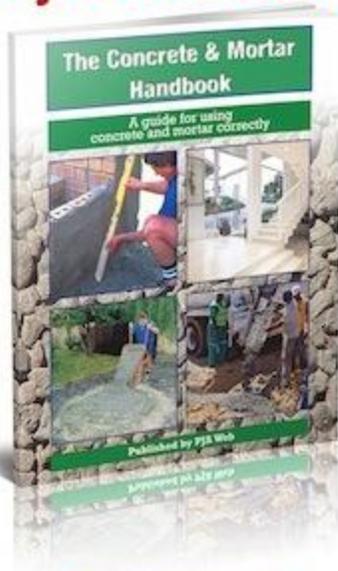


*The open-plan approach to kitchen design allows optimum use of available space and also creates an illusion of roominess. This arrangement is a sensible combination of the sociable and the practical, with the eating counter also serving as a work surface.*

### **Using Templates**

Fitting the various individual components of the kitchen into your outline is an exact, and exacting, process in which guesswork shouldn't feature. Prepare card or plastic cut-outs, or templates, of every major item. These should be carefully drawn to scale.

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Among your cut-outs will be one each for the sink, stove, and refrigerator; and others for the different shapes and sizes of storage units and work surfaces. Depending on the nature and extent of your scheme, you may need templates of a table, bench, chairs, dishwasher, microwave oven, freezer and washing machine. Move these around the floor plan and shuffle the combinations. If part of the essential jigsaw doesn't fit comfortably, start from the beginning again rather than puzzle yourself into a frustrated frenzy.

### **Fitting In The Appliances**

Establish the precise work triangle with your sink, stove and refrigerator. When you have a configuration you like, juggle with the minor appliances, deciding which are to be free-standing and which built-in. This decision will make a great deal of difference to your layout, affecting the kitchen's storage capacity and the arrangement of its working surfaces. Pay careful attention to the details: how will the doors and drawers open? Will the dishwasher door interfere with the under-sink storage door? Is the microwave oven conveniently placed? Bear in mind that these are always hinged on the left. When you have the arrangement you want, apply it, with precision, to the plan.

### **Fitting In The Work Surfaces**

Having positioned the appliances, plot the layout of the countertops. These come in a range of standard widths and, generally speaking, provide the practical links between your major appliances,

allowing you room for food preparation and washing up. If space is a problem, experiment with combinations of uses to which you can put a particular work surface. You could, for example, consider installing pull-out counters or think about space-saving corner units. A lot can be achieved with a little ingenuity.

The two essentials: Firstly, you'll need plenty of elbow-room to the right and left of the sink, even if you intend installing a dishwasher. Secondly, you'll need as much working space as possible on each side of the stove – not only as temporary accommodation for hot food and plates, but for slicing, pastry-making, salad-mixing and the many food preparation tasks.

These are the most important work areas, but the fridge comes a close third. If possible, try to fit in a small surface to hold items taken from the fridge.

The heights of the work surfaces are determined, for obvious reasons, by the height of the cook. Surfaces should generally be about 75 mm below the elbow for comfort, but work-tops needed for special jobs involving downward pressure – mixing or rolling, for example – should be at least some 75 mm to 100 mm lower. Bear in mind that many built-in appliances are designed for countertops at the 'average' below-elbow height. A standard height for counters is 900 mm. The width of the units is also extremely important – just a few centimetres can make a lot of difference to the capacity of work surfaces.

Also make sure you plan for enough working space for each essential kitchen task.

### **Fitting in The Units**

These are the last of the major components to be incorporated. Here – and to a degree also in the selection and positioning of appliances – height and width are as important as depth.

It is important to try to determine your requirements as accurately as you can, using a checklist as a reference. Consider each working area in turn: decide what needs to be stored, and where. How much base and wall storage space do you want around the sink? In the vicinity of the stove? Where should the dry goods be stored and what about cleaning material and equipment? Do you prefer to hang utensils on the wall or to tuck them away in a base unit? Do you prefer open shelving to cabinets?

A small hint that could make a big difference to general working efficiency: over estimate your storage needs at the planning stage. Kitchens tend to accumulate equipment and oddments over the years, so having worked out how much storage space you think you'll require to begin with, add 10 to 20 per cent to the figure.

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## Kitchen Traffic Flow

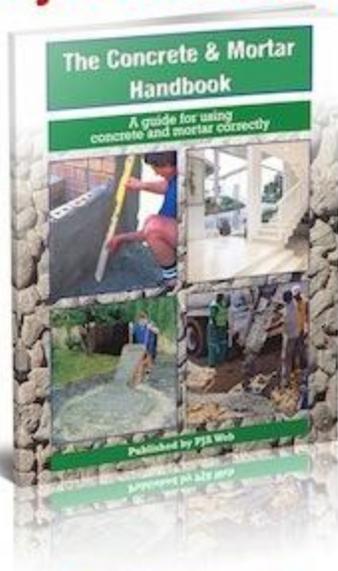
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# **How to Solve Kitchen Traffic Flow Problems**



The patterns of traffic through the kitchen should be taken into account when planning the new layout. Ideally, the traffic flow should not interfere with the work triangle. If this is unavoidable, however, try and ensure that the triangle intersects the path to the fridge.

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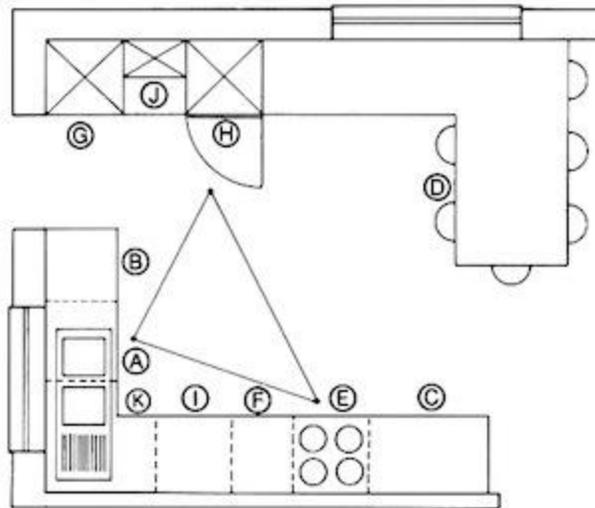
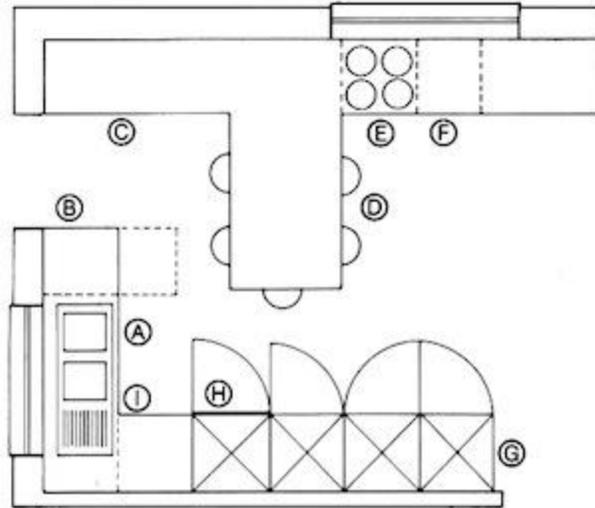


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Here we have listed a few classic traffic flow problems with possible solutions:

### **Problems**

- The breakfast bar obstructs the free flow of traffic through this kitchen, as well as interfering with the work triangle.
- The stove is much too far away from the work area.
- The fridge and cabinet doors open onto a major traffic area.
- The dishwasher is inconveniently positioned and difficult to load when people are sitting at the breakfast bar.



*KEY: A. Sink, B. Dishwasher, C. Cupboards, D. Breakfast bar, E. Stove, F. Drawers, G. Tall cupboard(s), H. fridge, I. Washing machine, J. Wine rack, K. Corner cupboard.*

- The position of the washing machine creates a useless 'dead' corner to the left of the sink.

### **Solutions**

- The breakfast bar is moved away from the work triangle and used to separate the kitchen from the adjacent family room.
- The stove and refrigerator are repositioned, forming a more compact and practical work triangle.

- The dishwasher remains where it is as it does not obstruct the amended layout.
- A corner cupboard is installed between the sink and washing machine.
- In its present position, the broom cupboard could hinder entrance through the back door. As it is not frequently used, however, it does not pose a serious threat to traffic flow.
- The tall units are replaced with practical standard units which do not obstruct traffic flow.

### **Kitchen Traffic**

Once you have planned the major activity centres, think about the traffic patterns that will or may establish themselves in your new kitchen. Traffic is a vital factor: it affects the ease and comfort in which the cook works and in which the other family members can move (or sit) around. You would probably do well to make yet another sketch, tracing movement in and through the kitchen. Start with your work triangle and your doors, drawing lines linking the entrances and exits. Will the paths cross? Draw more lines linking the working surfaces. Where will the family collect for informal meals? Draw more lines. A clear pattern will emerge, the problems will be visually evident; the solutions becoming apparent with some careful thought and adjustment. Moving a door just a few centimetres can make a world of difference. An island or peninsula fixture can successfully divert traffic and safeguard the triangle by isolating it from the general flow. Conversely, the triangle itself could be altered slightly to rescue it from interference. The answer might lie in a modest repositioning of the work surfaces; or in replacing the circular table and its chairs with a neatly-fitting square table with benches. You could even create a bay-windowed eating alcove, which means investing in some structural work but which could pay handsome dividends in terms of both convenience and stylish attractiveness.

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## How to Design an Open-plan Kitchen

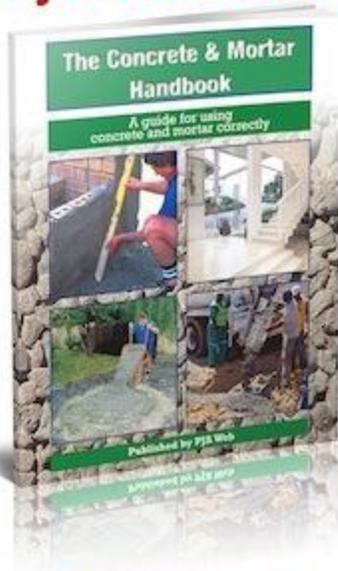
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### **The Open-plan Kitchen Option**



There was a time, not too long ago, when South African home owners were not overly concerned about the dimensions of their rooms. Nowadays, with construction costs – indeed all costs – spiralling, the emphasis is on the compact, and on an internal arrangement that makes optimum use of every available square centimetre.

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Up until the 1970s, the most common type of kitchen was a separate room, totally enclosed except perhaps for a serving hatch, with one door leading out to the service yard and the other into the dining area, Although some larger kitchens of this kind had space for a breakfast nook, they could not be described as 'open-plan' in the correct sense of the word.

**Open-planning**, a basic design concept much in vogue today, really does save space, Moreover, it helps to create the illusion of space, which is extremely important in the smaller home. A great deal depends on the kind of family you have, and the type of cook you are: bear in mind that an open configuration involves loss of privacy. If you regard the kitchen as your exclusive domain; a functional place which enables you to get on with your work without disturbance; or if the other members of the household need space for their own individual pursuits, then the enclosed kitchen would probably be your choice.

Open planning is for the family that mostly enjoys doing things together, unless, of course, the home has additional, special-purpose areas: study, TV/family room, a master bedroom with space for sitting, or children's bedrooms fitted out for play and homework. In broad terms, there are two categories of open-plan living:

**Cooking and Eating.** Here, we are not talking of a table in the corner of the kitchen that does duty for casual meals, with a separate, more formal dining room elsewhere, but of the incorporation of a

proper eating arrangement into the kitchen area. The room needs to be large; firm demarcation of the working and eating areas is a matter of preference. A counter or some other form of room divider allows a degree of privacy, for instance, but if yours is a particularly close-knit family, a free flow between the two sections would afford maximum sociability. A counter can also double as a breakfast bar.

**Cooking, Eating and Living.** Here, the three activities should be clearly separated, perhaps by the arrangement of fixtures and fittings, and bearing in mind that the combined area needs to be especially spacious. Storage is particularly important, since the kitchen and all it contains will be on permanent show. The work centre's decor will have to harmonise with the rest of the living area, so colour and style are vital considerations.

## Kitchen Planning by Stages

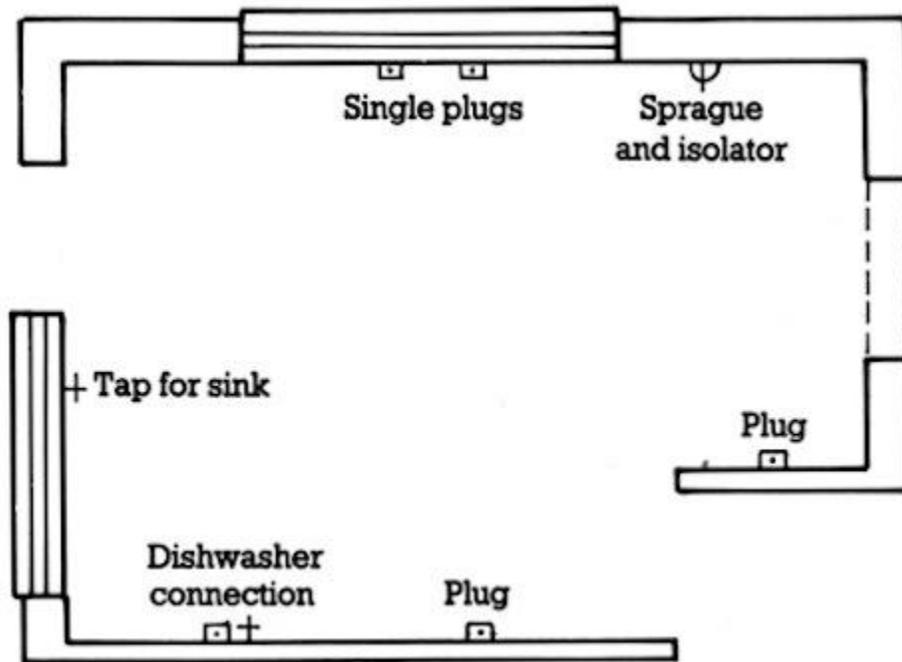
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### **Plan Your Kitchen in Stages**

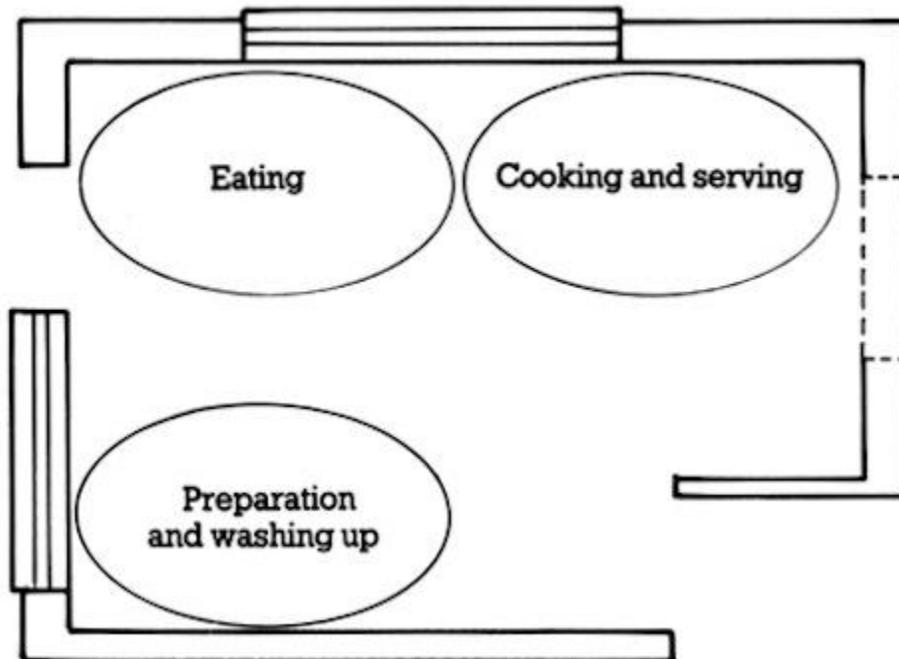


*This deceptively uncluttered kitchen includes a host of special features, including pull-out vertical tiers for groceries, a built-in microwave oven, and a stacked washing machine and tumble dryer, which are concealed behind closed doors.*

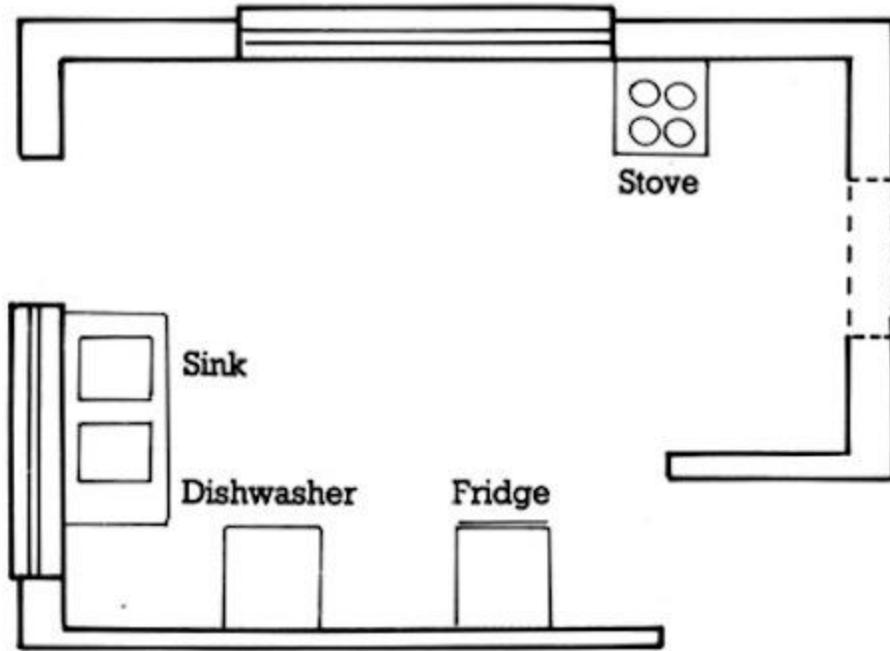
## The Four Stages of Planning Your Kitchen



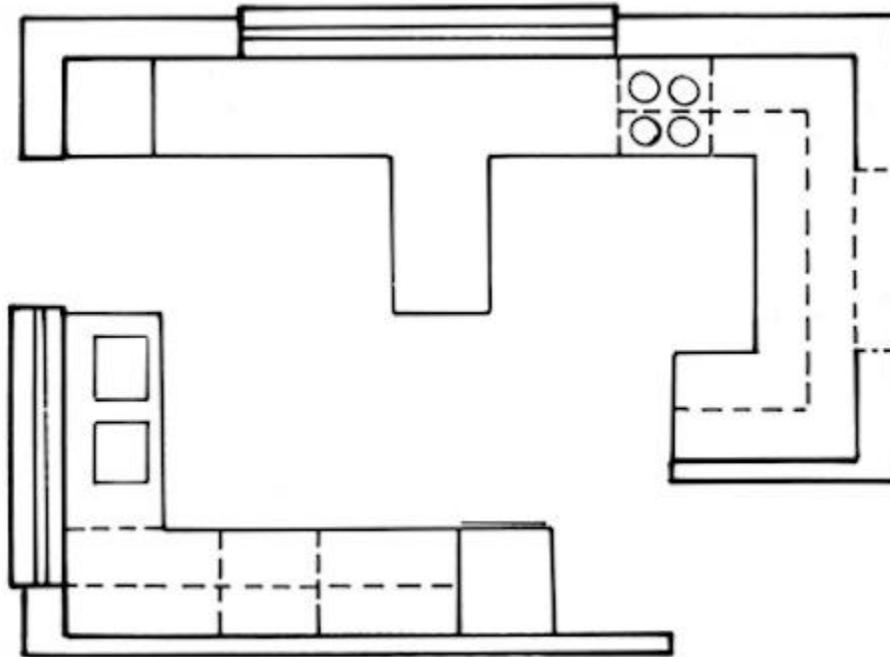
1. The outline of the existing room, showing structural features, (walls, doors, windows, recesses) plug-points and plumbing connections.



2. Blocking out the major activity areas in rough.



3. Creating the work triangle, sketching in the appliances.



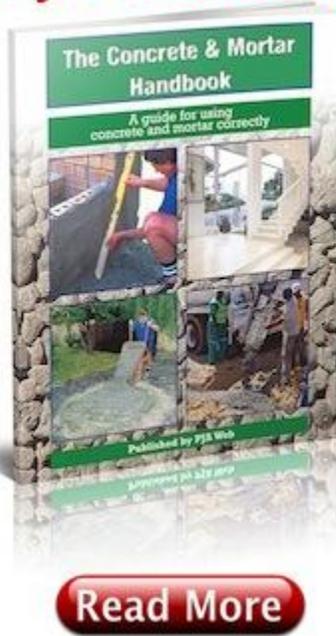
4. Fitting out the rest of the kitchen; incorporating storage units, work surfaces, eating area, and so on.

## Minimum Modules and Enticing Extras

These floor plans show the same kitchen treated in two different ways. The first has been planned on a limited budget and contains the basics only, while the other is a truly luxurious design, containing a variety of appliances, gadgets and special units.

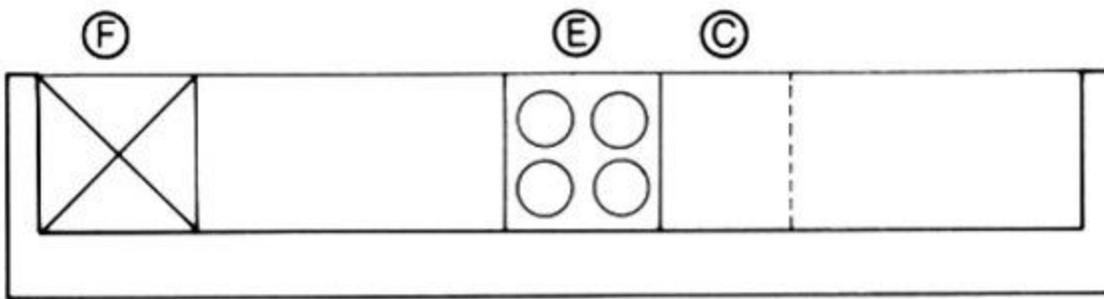
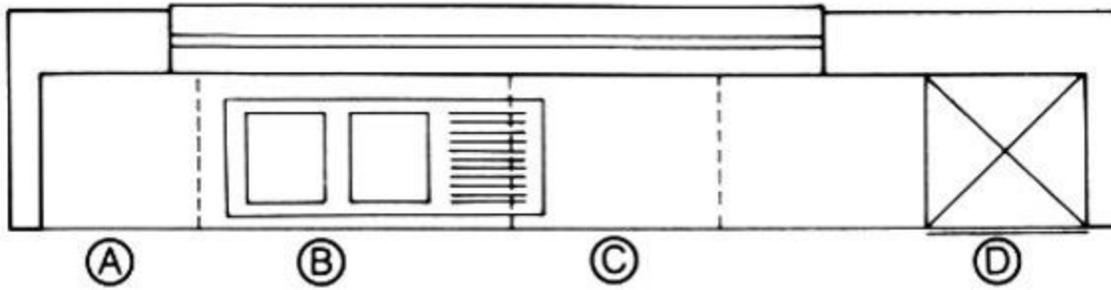
Bear in mind that kitchen installation companies tend to charge per unit- the second kitchen shown here has a total of 18 units, making it considerably more expensive to build than the first one, which has only seven. Any major changes to plumbing or electrical installations will push the price up, as will any special features such as enamel sinks, post-formed finishes, solid wooden doors, pull-out drawers or storage units with smooth runners.

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### Key for drawings:

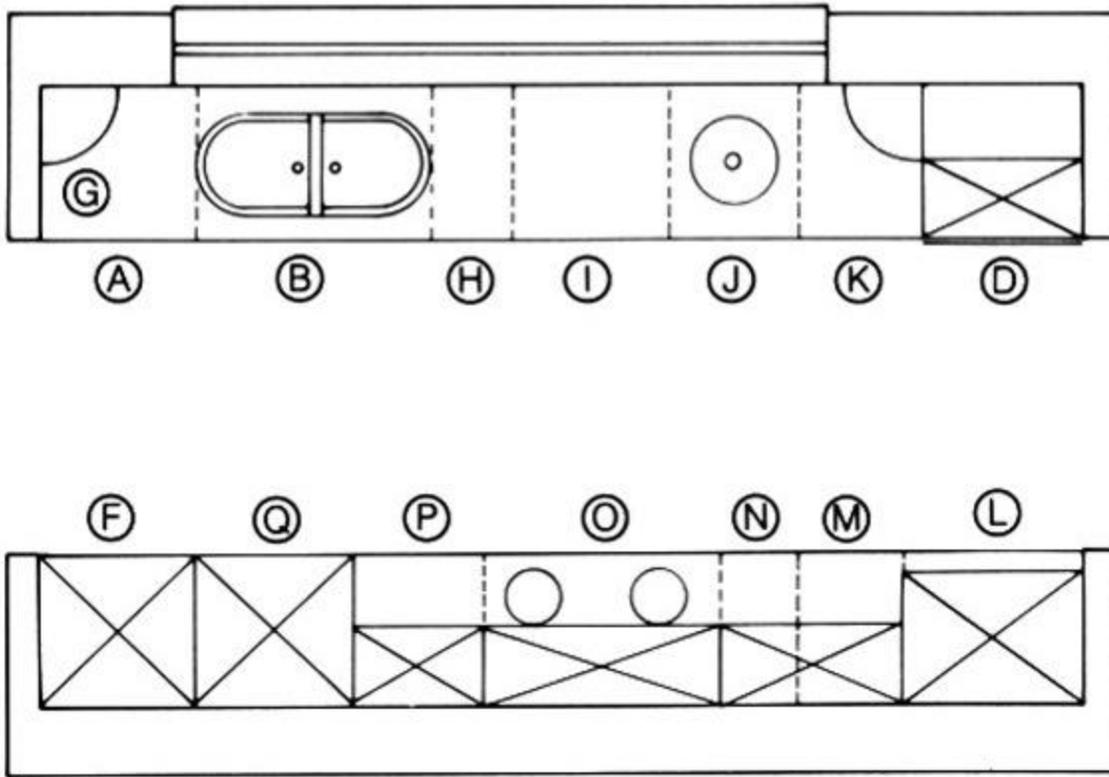
A. Washing machine, B. Double sink, C. Cupboards, D. Fridge, E. Stove, F. Broom cupboard, G. Curved shelves, H. Pull-out bin, I. Dishwasher, J. Preparation bowl, K. Vegetable drawers, L. Built-in microwave oven, M. Pull-out mixer arm, N. Tray cupboard, O. Hob with deep pot drawers below, P. Drawers, Q. Eye-level oven.



**KITCHEN A**

**Kitchen A**

A room planned on a budget need not be inconvenient. This kitchen has a functional, compact work triangle, and features plain white formica counters and melamine doors with colourful handles. Extra wall units and appliances can be added when your budget allows.



## KITCHEN B

### Kitchen B

Sensible allocation of limited space has resulted in a luxurious yet compact design. Features include Post-formed formica counters, an enamel sink and separate preparation bowl, a built-in hob and extractor, eye-level oven, dishwasher, washing machine, microwave oven and pot drawers.

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## Renovate Your Kitchen

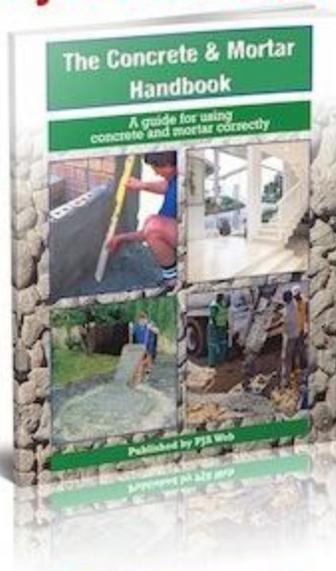
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### **Renovate Your Kitchen – Old to New**



The kitchen is one of the most important rooms in any house. But when you buy a house, you don't always get the kitchen that meets your needs – never mind your dreams. It is at this point that you may decide it's a good idea to renovate your kitchen.

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## **So What Do You Do to Renovate Your Kitchen?**

Once you have given some thought to what you want from your new kitchen, the next step is to commit your needs to “paper” in a series of floor plans (drawn to scale), starting with the existing kitchen. You can do this on graph paper – the old-fashioned way – or use a computer program to draw the plans. There are many computer designs for kitchens online, but some are very challenging for the novice designer, and some simply don’t work, often because of incompatibility with computers or operating systems. The other issue is that many people have difficulty visualizing what they want, and one or other system may make it easier.

Apart from serving as a platform on which to build the new room, this initial plan will prove useful if you intend calling in an architect, kitchen installation company or builder, because it will save them some of the preliminary work. It is an essential task if there are structural alterations involved in your scheme, as these will need the approval of the local authority.

## **Planning Tools**

You will need a steel measuring tape (the retractable kind), a ruler, triangle, compass, graph paper, pencil, eraser and cardboard or plastic templates.

## The Kitchen You Have

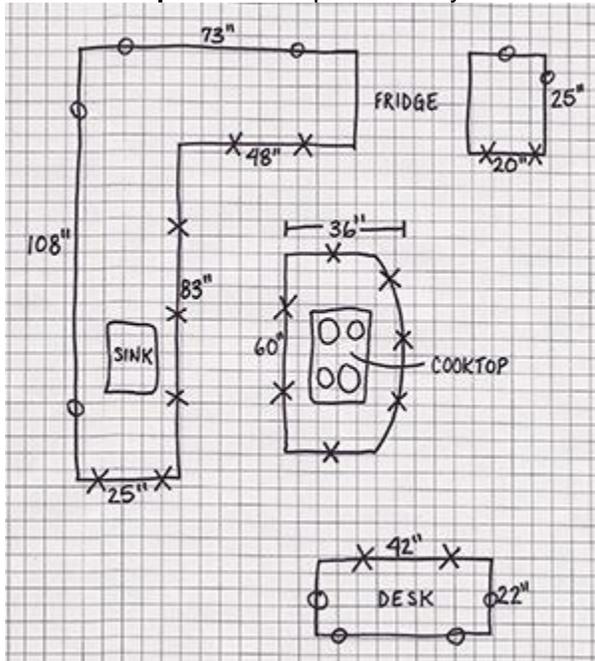
Your starting point will be your existing kitchen. The description that follows is for a simple on-paper approach.

**First Step** Make a large, rough sketch of your kitchen's basic configuration. This is the outline you will develop and refine as you work through the various planning stages. Include any adjacent areas that are likely to be part of, or closely related to your final scheme.



Confine the drawing to the walls, doors, windows, recesses, projections and any other structural features, (a built-in peninsula unit for instance), electrical mains, plug-points, switches and the sink, leaving out the “movables”, such as fittings and appliances. Obviously, some or all of the latter could feature in the remodelled kitchen, but illustrating them at this point is not necessary and would merely tend to confuse (even you). The plan should evolve from the fundamentals.

**Second Step** Measure up accurately to the nearest centimetre.



Note the measurements down on your rough

sketch, amending the drawing if you find you have omitted a feature.

**Third Step** Produce an accurate scale plan from this rough sketch. Your graph paper is the key ingredient here, since each small square represents a larger portion of the floor area. Transfer the measurements to the graph paper using the ruler for the horizontal lines and the triangle to produce the right-angled vertical lines, if necessary. Use the compass to calculate the swing of the appliance and cupboard doors. Indicate the position of the sink and of the mains, plug-points and switches. If possible, use an easy-to-understand set of architect's symbols.>

## The Kitchen You Want

**Shape and Size** Your next move is to decide on the general configuration of your new kitchen. The existing plan you have drawn will indicate what structural alterations are possible and whether they are relatively simple to effect. It will also give you a good idea of possible changes in the room's shape – for instance, from a galley to an 'L' – and whether you can enlarge the kitchen and in what direction to do so.

Place a sheet of tracing paper over your existing plan and experiment with the elements in order to arrive at an approximation of the remodelled outline. At this stage it can only be an approximation, since the dimensions and shape might well have to be adjusted as you introduce your fixtures and fittings.

**Allocating Space** The third stage is to work out what areas of the kitchen would best serve the various functions, and block in roughly, with ovals or squares – the “activity centres”. Do you intend having an island unit; a serving/eating counter linking the kitchen with, say, the family room? Do you like to work near the window; is there space in the scheme for a breakfast nook, and if so, where is the best place for it? Experiment with various options, sketching different possible divisions of available space until you arrive at the general arrangement you like best.

The major activity centres are:

- Cooking and serving
- Preparing the food and cleaning up
- Cooking and food storage
- Laundry
- Eating and informal relaxation

Allocate space to the first three categories with the work triangle in mind, and the last two so that they do not interfere with the triangle. The eating area should not be too near the sink, stove and fridge in the interests of working efficiency. Conversely, it should not be too far away for convenient serving, or so awkwardly placed that it disrupts the flow of traffic.

These are broad divisions, which now require detailed refinement before you start to renovate your kitchen.

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