



Kitchen Classics

KITCHEN AND BATH GALLERY

Your dream kitchen, meticulously crafted and installed.

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What you
should know
about
countertops
and
cabinets
*before you
remodel*

Set a budget before you begin

We know it's difficult, but we have to say it: "You must have a budget in mind before you start the process." Otherwise, you will not get a design recommendation that fits your needs, and you will be frustrated right from the start of your remodelling project.

Your budget will determine what the final outcome will look like, as it allows us to recommend finishes, materials, accessories and trims. For example, cabinets with a thermofoil finish cost significantly less than cabinets with a solid wood door and a glazed finish. Crown moulding and light rail add to the cost but also give a much nicer presentation. Granite countertops can be five or six times the cost of laminate. Adding full extension drawers with dovetail drawer boxes and soft close also adds costs to the final price.

Here are some of the basic decisions you will have to make before we finalize your design and start your project:

COUNTERTOPS

The wide variety of countertops dictates a close look at each, their features and benefits — you may be surprised at some of the new options.

High Pressure Laminates

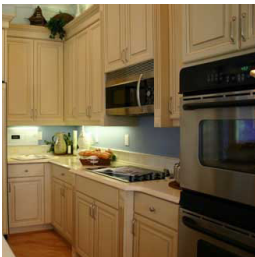
- Lowest priced but with new finishes and patterns some of the higher prices are approaching lower priced solid surface items.
- Warranties are maximum one year and cover material only.
- Cleaning materials limited to nonabrasive products to eliminate any scratching of tops.
- Water is a problem: the substrate can be damaged at joints and finished ends if too much water is used to clean or if water is left on countertops to seep out even very small openings at joints.

Acrylic Based Solid Surface Products such as "Corian" and "Staron"

- Premium products with starting prices at 2.5 to 3.5 times laminate price.
- Impervious to water.
- Joints are eliminated thus not allowing water to get into anything — including cabinets
- With matte finish can be cleaned with abrasive to give very long life and look like new.
- Has a soft warm hand and feels very nice to touch.
- Not heat resistant so a trivet must be used if anything is placed on it from oven or cooktop.
- Can be repaired if damaged from heat or significant blow.
- The only product that can have integral kitchen sinks made of the same material.
- Has ten year limited replacement warranty.

Quartz Engineered Surface Products such as "Silestone", "Hanstone" and "Cambria"

- 93-94% quartz, which is third hardest material known.
- Premium priced at 4.5 to 5 times laminate price.
- Sold in slabs, therefore handles like granite with seams where required related to size and countertop layout.
- Surface never requires sealing and with proper cleaning will look great for many years.
- Has ten year warranty on material against manufactures defects.



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Granite

- Premium pricing stating at 4.5 to 5 times standard laminate price.
- Very large variety of patterns and designs, all from nature, from all over the world.
- The only way to get a spectacular appearance with large scale patterns.
- Joints required, depending on countertop layout and slab size, which varies on all granites.
- Product requires sealing on a yearly basis to make sure that product will not stain.
- Requires a trivet under hot pots from the oven or cooktop.
- No warranty from supplier.

Soap Stone

- Very high price.
- Limited variety of colours, usually very dark green.
- Intensive initial preparation to prepare countertop so that limited maintenance required.
- Seams required due to slab size and layout of countertop.

Slate

- Higher priced.
- Only a few finishes and limited colours available.
- Seams required as in granite and quartz.
- Non porous, hence used in many laboratories.



CABINET CONSTRUCTION

You'll find the material, joining, and finishing choices you make will effect how your room looks, what you spend, how much time you spend cleaning up and how often you need to replace or renew.

Materials

- Particleboard has many qualities such as density of core. Some manufacturers use a very light board which has a lower price but not good holding properties.
- Melamine has many thickness and therefore qualities. Some manufacturers use 60 gm material for cabinets and some use 120-140 gm material which gives a much heavier surface for impact resistance, long term cleaning ability and solid appearance.
- Plywood is used for cabinets but has a premium price of 20 to 30% over regular pricing and has a wood finish inside which is not as durable as good melamine.
- Materials which give off very low emissions are becoming available for the "Green Effect" people are looking for.

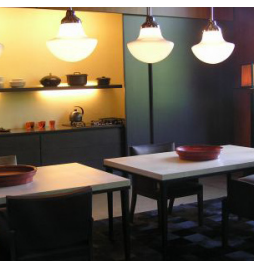


Joining

Joining items include screws, fluted wood dowels, plastic dowels and connectors used in RTA cabinets. Each has its benefit from a manufacturing and consumer point of view.

Sizes

- Most panels are 5/8" but some use 3/4" to give a more substantial look and performance.
- Cross members vary from 1 1/4" thick to 5/8" depending on price points and manufacturers assembly method.
- Semi custom cabinets have a wide variety of sizes starting at 6" wide and up to 54" wide, with three or four doors, and heights from 10" to 42" and more for uppers, allowing a great degree of design flexibility.



Hinges

- 90 to 107 degree standard opening to 170 degree opening for hard to reach locations so doors swing out of the way.
- Clip attachment for easy release for cleaning, maintenance and rearrangement of stored items are best, but screw-on hinges are available on lower cost products.
- Slow closing hinges eliminate slamming and noise.
- Limited lifetime warranty against manufacturers defects.



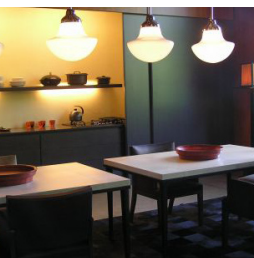
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Drawer Systems

- Metal sided: with integral exposed slide with 5/8" bottoms for very strong construction available in regular extension (70% out of cabinet) and full extension (100% out of cabinet)
- Melamine box: can be pinned or doweled in corners, doweled being the best. The sides of the box could be 1/2" to 5/8" thick and the bottom could be 1/8" to 5/8". Most of this type are regular extension slides but full extension is also available.
- Metal/aluminum box: with slide mechanism hidden inside the box side. This type is most often full extension and due to clean, contemporary look is used in modern kitchens. Available in silver or light taupe. An optional finish is wooded sides in beech for overall wood including the bottoms and backs.
- Dovetail box: for very traditional look with undermounted slides for out of sight appearance. This is available with regular extension and full extension. The box has solid wood sides typically a high density fibre board.

Doors

- The best doors are made of solid wood and are available in almost all species: oak, birch, cherry, maple, ash, hickory, pine and alder to name a few. It all depends on the appearance you are looking for — there as many looks as there are people!
- The design of doors is also almost endless, from traditional raised panel with dado joints at corners for strongest joints, to mitre corner with dado or biscuit joints which can separate with climate or seasonal changes.
- Solid colour doors, finished in paint or lacquer, can be made of MDF to eliminate joint cracking and give a very smooth appearance. These have to be maintained so that moisture cannot get into the MDF and cause difficulties such as the material swelling at damaged or cut points.
- Thermofoil doors with a PVC skin over MDF are good for moisture if the barrier is not broken with cuts or damage. They are susceptible to heat damage. As this product is not labour intensive it is very economical if trying to work within a tight budget but want a nice look.
- Flat melamine doors are usually a low starting price but can be very practical and good looking with ease of cleaning. The current clean look can be produced with this product in many different colours and variety of textures.
- A new product coming onto the market is polyester wrapped MDF profiles which can be cut to look similar to a solid wood door.



FINISHES

- Single stain hand rubbed into the wood gives the most beautiful appearance for natural wood no matter what the colour.
- Use a lacquer, with stain-in finish, to colour wood that has a difficulty accepting stain due to its very close or closed grain. Some woods do not accept stain in a uniform manner — a stain that is included in a lacquer will allow a uniform appearance on these woods. If a finish such as this is scratched, the colour of the actual wood can show through.
- Lacquer with a very high solids content will cover wood like paint. It can also be glazed to highlight detail in a door or it can be brushed or drawn with a different colour to give a different appearance. You can do both on the same door. The various stages in these finishes tend to make these more expensive.
- Thermofoil finishes come in different colours, designs and textures. They are an attempt to emulate lacquered, painted or natural finishes at a more reasonable cost. They have the advantage of being waterproof on the face but can be damaged by sharp objects or heat. Heat can shrink the "foil" causing it to come away at the edges if on the face of the door. This finish is more prone to ultra violet rays and discolouring.
- Melamine has a variety of textures, colours and designs, is very durable and has a good surface for long-term use. It can chip at the edges exposing the substrate/particle board to the effects of water. If this occurs then the "board" can swell and the melamine surface will crack and become unsightly.

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- An alternative to Melamine is a high pressure laminate which gives a very durable surface and if applied to its substrate/particle board will last for a long time. This is a more costly version of a similar look but if you anticipate rough use then it will be worth the additional cost.

Don't forget the accessories!

There is an almost endless array of accessories you can choose, from standard cutlery trays to unique waste management systems and high-end handles and drawer pulls. Ask us for details.

