

## Hot Kitchen Tips eBook

***IF YOU ARE CONSIDERING BUYING A NEW KITCHEN  
MAKE SURE YOU READ THIS EBOOK!***



***CONTAINING USEFUL GUIDELINES AND TIPS –  
IT IS FREE AND AN INVALUABLE TOOL!***

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There are no rules when it comes to designing your kitchen – it should be just how you want it!

The points below are intended to be guidelines, to give you a head start. But break all the rules if necessary – sometimes these are the best kitchens!

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## 10 Point Checklist

(Put text over two pages – may be put the photos on the bottom across the pages)

Often your designer will have a list of questions akin to a checklist, but it helps if you have thought a little about some of the following questions:-

1. Who will be using the kitchen?
  - Number of adults
  - Number of children
2. What sort of cooking do you like to do?
3. Will anyone else be using the kitchen for example will teenage children be making snacks?
4. Do you want to cater for entertaining or eating in the kitchen area?
5. How tall is the person using the kitchen?
6. Do you require special areas in your kitchen space?
  - Does it need to incorporate a laundry
  - Do you want lots of wine storage
  - Will you need a desk or space for a computer
  - Do you want a TV
  - What about a notice board
7. What type of kitchen look are you after?
  - heritage
  - modern
  - colour
  - display cabinets
  - handles or no handles

8. Where would you like to store all your “kitchen items”
  - Do you have a lot of small kitchen appliances
  - Cleaning items
  - Food staples
  - Cooking books
  - Alcohol
  - Any special china/glassware
  - Utensils
  - Tea towels
  - Bins
  - Pots and pans
  - Bakeware
  
9. Consider appliances and sink size you would like
  - Oven and cooktop or a stove?
  - Type of fridge
  - Dishwasher
  - Microwave
  - Rangehood
  - Others – freezer, disposal unit, water filter, steam oven, coffee machine, etc
  
10. What material would you like in your kitchen :-
  - Polyurethane
  - Timber veneer
  - Handpainted
  - Timber
  - Lamiwood
  - Stone benchtop
  - Glass splashback
  - Tiles

# Layout Guidelines

(put over two pages – with a picture somewhere)

- Be guided by common sense and practicality. Think about what you don't like about your existing kitchen and remove these problems in your new design. For example :-
  - Not enough lighting, bench space or power outlets
  - A small sink
  - Difficulty cleaning
  - No eating area
  - Inadequate bin area
- Don't be constrained by the existing configuration. Often pipes, electrics, walls and windows can be re-positioned with less effort than anticipated.
- If you can't solve space problems consider expanding the kitchen via a buffet-style breakfast bar or island bench.
- If you enjoy al fresco entertaining and have sufficient space consider adding an outdoor kitchen.
- Plan your kitchen considering the natural pattern of movement. Allow a comfortable distance between each of the kitchen's functions: storage, cooking, workspace, waste handling and washing up.
- Over the years a 'work triangle' between the sink, fridge and cooktop has been regarded as a rule of thumb when designing a kitchen. Although still relevant in some spaces, increasingly there has been a move toward kitchen "zones". This means there should be an area dedicated to food preparation, another for cooking and another for eating. These zones can be adjacent to one another and cater for the specific habits of the kitchen owner.
- Note that left or right-handedness affects layout, make your layout to suit you.

- Sinks are usually placed against an outside wall under a window for convenient drainage and good natural lighting; however this need not be your only option. Increasingly sinks are being placed in islands or a second smaller sink is installed in the island.
- The dishwasher should be close to the sink and crockery and cutlery storage. It should also be away from doorways so it can be loaded easily.
- Consider if you need a food preparation area between the stove and sink and always try to ensure enough space adjacent to the cooktop to put a pot on the bench.
- Ensure appliances and cabinetry can be opened and closed with enough room for normal movement.
- If considering an island, it is recommended to allow for approximately 1000mm distance to walk around the unit.
- Island units are becoming increasingly popular as the kitchen sits in an open plan area. Commonly islands cater for seating.
- Corners can be tricky to utilise properly. Lazy susans can provide a solution for some; however there are better options on the market today such as pullout corner units.
- Drawers are a great option to incorporate as they are ergonomically better than shelves. Good drawer systems allow full extension, are fitted with soft-close mechanisms and can carry significant weight.
- Store frequently used items where you don't need to bend and those used less often higher or lower. Design storage so the layout is logical.

## Work surfaces

(put these three headings over two pages with a picture)

- Provide adequate bench space on both sides of the cooktop and oven to rest hot plates and also near the microwave to put plates/bowls to be heated.
- Bench top depth should be a minimum of 620mm – but go deeper if possible as this will only give you more room for preparation. In some kitchens there is not enough room for a depth of 620mm so you may need to go shallower.
- Your bench top height should suit you. Make sure the company you choose can make the top any height you would like. A rule of thumb is anywhere between 880mm to 940mm.
- If possible avoid positioning a workspace or cooking unit in a corner – sometimes space dictates this cannot be done.

## Cooking Units

- Whether you choose to go for a stove (combining the oven and cooktop) or a separate oven and cooktop is an individual choice. If you have young children a built in wall oven affords better safety. Wall ovens at the right height can also be better ergonomically as they save bending down.
- Gas cook tops give more control over heat, although the latest electric options also have good cooking control. Induction cooktops work almost instantaneously and are a good alternative to gas.
- Ensure the company you are using also installs an isolation switch to your cooktop (electric or gas), this is a legal requirement.
- Microwaves are best built in to free bench space and ergonomics would suggest at approx 1000-1200mm above floor level.

## Lighting and Ventilation

- To increase natural light, consider resizing existing windows, adding skylights or opening the space to living, dining or outdoor areas.
- Create differing levels of light. Multiple recessed lights work well with traditional ceiling fixtures in eat-in kitchens. Adjustable pendants or spots with dimmer switches are suitable for above the dining area.
- LED lights are become increasingly popular due to their efficiency to run. Consider using these for task lighting under wall cabinets, otherwise halogens or fluorescent lighting also work well. Get your kitchen company to make light pelmets to suit the lighting you wish to use.
- Install a powerful exhaust fan to remove heat, steam, grease and odours, ducted to the outside via an external wall or through a roof cowl. It is illegal to duct into a roof space. If ducting to the outside cannot be done, you will need a recirculating range hood.
- Position switches and outlets with practicality in mind: light-switches next to doors; multiple outlets above benchtops designated for appliances.

## Colour and Style

(Put these three over two pages with a picture)

- Neutrals are practical and 'safe', which can be a consideration if you plan to sell. However don't be afraid to use colour ! Some of the most eye-catching kitchens have clever use of colour – bold and bright ! Metallic paints can be painted onto doors and often add to the “wow” factor.
- There are generally two paint finishes available on kitchen doors, satin or gloss. Satin helps hide finger prints and is easy to clean, making it ideal for families with small children. Gloss is more glamorous, however higher maintenance to keep clean.
- Stainless steel or brushed steel finishes are durable, hygienic and stylish. They coordinate well with appliances and reflect light.
- If you are unsure about what colour scheme to go with, your kitchen designer can assist, alternatively there are people who specialise in colour consultancy who can take the angst out of colour selection. A reputable kitchen company will also provide you with sample doors made as per your request.

## Flooring

- Save money by retaining existing flooring and resurfacing or resealing – especially if you have a timber floor. Generally timber suits most kitchens.
- Stone, tile and concrete flooring are waterproof, durable and easy to clean. However, stone floors are cold and can stain.
- For a practical, cost-effective alternative, consider new-generation linoleum: it's hard-wearing, flexible and available in many styles.
- Consider the slip rating of your flooring.

## Washing up area

- If space permits, choose a double bowl sink, with deep bowls for pot-washing.
- Consider undermounting sinks to free up bench space. Most reputable sink manufacturers provide accessories such as built in drainers with their sinks. This will mean there is no need for drainers on the bench space.
- For right-handers, the most natural placement of the washing area is to the left of the workspace, with a dishwasher to the left of the sink.
- Make sure the plumber installs an easily accessible stop tap for the sink and dishwasher so the water to the kitchen can be isolated easily.
- Some dishwashers are available in two smaller units and can be operated independently – this suits some people.

## Waste Collection

(put these three over two pages with a picture)

- Allow space for rubbish in the sink area.
- Include receptacles for recycling and compost.
- Make waste disposal easy and hygienic: bins which require one movement to open for example integrated on to drawers of doors are best.

## Appliances

- Have your floor plan /measurements on hand when shopping for appliances.
- When measuring appliances, allow room for connections, opening of doors, and movement around them.
- Ask your kitchen company whether they provide space behind their cabinets to allow room for services such as water or gas pipes. This prevents cabinets having holes in their backs and minimises the chance of vermin in cabinets.
- Check whether extra plumbing is needed to accommodate new appliances (e.g. dishwasher, solar hot-water service, in-sink garbage disposal or an ice-maker fridge).
- If you need to relocate the hot water system in your new kitchen by more than 1000mm, the plumber must fit a temperature control valve. This is a legal requirement.
- If you require an additional circuit to run an appliance, make sure your electrician fits a safety switch. This is required by law.
- If you are working toward a budget, consider buying appliances as a package.

## Paints and finishes

- Ensure edging materials on laminate and melamine doors are PVC not edge tape.
- Avoid using vinyl wrap doors as over time these can bubble especially where near heat and moisture.
- Patterned and textured surfaces reflect fewer marks; dark-coloured, high-gloss surfaces look great but can mark.

# Essential Questions to Ask Before Buying your Kitchen

(This over the last two pages with a picture and Impala logo)

1. Ask to see photos of their work and referrals from past clients.
2. Do they offer a warranty? Make sure it's 10 years. What about the hardware? Reputable kitchen companies will offer a lifetime warranty on hardware used e.g. hinges drawer runners.
3. Will they give after-sales service?
4. How long have they been in business?
5. Who makes their kitchens? Do they have their own factory or is the manufacturing contracted out?
6. Ask to see their insurances (product and public liability and workers compensation).
7. Do they take out HIA insurance (this is a legal requirement).
8. Ask to see their kitchen renovation licence.
9. What procedures do they have in place if I am not happy?
10. Can the company you choose make whatever you want or are you restricted to particular dimensions, door finishes and styles?
11. What will the back of the door look like?
12. How are the edges of the doors finished?
13. Make sure the kitchen company you select custom makes your cabinetry to maximise your storage space and to get a design made just for you. Some companies only use modular units, others have set sizes for cabinets, cabinet depth and bench top heights.

Ask the kitchen company you select if they make their cabinets out of High Moisture Resistance board.

14. Do they offer marine plywood for cabinetry exposed to wet areas?
15. Do the cabinets have edge tape or are they solid PVC – the latter being more durable.
16. Does the company make solid plinths or are the cabinets on plastic legs? Be careful if the company uses the latter as these can sag when heavy bench tops are placed on the cabinets, creating cracks in joins.
17. Do the cabinets have solid tops, backs and sides?
18. Can the company make coloured interior cabinets?
19. Does the company offer gloss interiors in its cabinets. i.e. a gloss finish to shelves to make them easier to wipe down and clean.
20. Are the drawers used soft closing? Are the doors fitted with a soft closing mechanism?
21. Are the shelves adjustable in height or fixed?
22. Does the pantry come with cut away shelves or drawers to roll out? If you are having a step in pantry – does the company provide a stainless steel thread?
23. If you are having lights fitted under wall cabinets does the company make under pelmet soffits to match the door colour? Are the work lights concealed by a neat light pelmet?

24. Is all trade work included in the quote :-
- Site measure
  - cabinetry
  - bench tops
  - splashbacks
  - removal
  - plumbing
  - electrical
  - tiling
  - ducting
  - installation
  - rendering
  - plasterwork
  - delivery
25. Can you make changes to your design?
26. Ask why you should choose them!

It is important you choose a company you feel comfortable working with, as a kitchen is an investment in your home for many, many years to come. Given the kitchen is the focal point of a home, don't compromise on quality and design just to save a few dollars.

Remember - break all the Rules if Necessary Sometimes These are the Best Kitchens!!!