



8 Tips for a Successful Kitchen Remodel

Deciding to remodel your kitchen can be a stressful experience with the many decisions you have to make along with the dust, noise, strangers in and out of the house, and no functioning kitchen for a while. But, the final outcome can be very rewarding along with adding a very high rate of return on your investment. According to the National Association of Realtors Cost vs. Value report, the percentage of cost recouped on a kitchen remodel is higher than remodeling any other room of the home. The following are eight tips that can help make your kitchen remodel a smoother transition into the kitchen of your dreams!

1. Do your homework first! Decide what styles you like. Visit websites like Houzz and Pinterest, read magazines, and keep a record of room designs, appliance picks, paint chips, countertop samples, and cabinet styles you favor.
2. Have a budget in mind. Decide how much you are willing to spend and find out approximately how much what you have in mind might cost. Google “Kitchen Remodeling Calculator” and you’ll find many free online remodeling calculators that will walk you through your remodel and give you a price range.
3. Shop carefully for a contractor and get more than one bid. But remember, the lowest price is not always the best deal. The quality of the materials one contractor chooses over the other could be different, he or she could have missed something, or the work plans may differ drastically. Make sure you get itemized pricing from each contractor so you know you’re comparing apples to apples.
4. Check out the contractor thoroughly. Finding a reputable contractor is more important than price. NARI is a great source for professional, reliable, experienced, licensed & insured companies. Ask the contractor for a current license and insurance. Get a contract and make sure it contains the starting date, completion date, and details of the project. Ask the contractor for a list of past customers. Call them and ask: Did they receive the remodel project they wanted? Are they glad they hired this contractor? Did the crews show up on time and clean up at the end of the day? Go look at their past work. Check if the contractor has any complaints filed against the company through the Better Business Bureau or the state attorney generals’ office. Finally, ask yourself if you feel comfortable with this contractor. Do they listen to you? Are they fun to talk with? Remember you will be dealing with this person for weeks or months.
5. Consider the geography of your kitchen and how you will use it. In most cases your kitchen layout should adhere to what’s called a work triangle. The work triangle is made up of an imaginary line drawn from the center of your sink to the center of your stove/cook-top, to the center of your refrigerator and back to the sink. This triangle should not

be interrupted by traffic or cabinetry. Your contractor can assist you in planning the best layout for your space.

6. Plan for proper lighting to make your kitchen more inviting and safer. - Inadequate lighting is a common kitchen problem. Under-cabinet lighting is the best source of task lighting and doesn't break the budget. Update ceiling-mounted fixtures with pendant lamps or some winding track lighting.
7. Plan your cabinetry to allow for sufficient storage. Homeowners often agree that they have insufficient storage space as well as the inability to organize accessories. Make sure you discuss storage options that fit your needs with whoever helps you with your cabinet design. Consider options such as: work islands, base rollouts, lazy Susans, trash/recycling rollouts, under the sink organizers, cutlery tray drawers, inside door mounted spice racks, and pull-out cookie sheet organizers.
8. Countertop Choices – There are many options on the market today for countertops. Following are the top four most commonly used along with the pros and cons of each.

Granite: Pros – holds up to heat, comes in a ton of colors, second-highest hardness rating after a diamond, and will last a lifetime. Cons – expensive but becoming more affordable, requires some maintenance, some stones absorb stains if not sealed, will dull knives if cut on directly, and can crack if stressed due to settling or improper installation.

Engineered stone, quartz products like Zodiaq or Silestone: Pros – resistant to stain and acid. Cons – expensive.

Solid Surface, such as Avonite or Corian: Pros – comes in many colors & patterns, seamless, stain resistant. Cons – vulnerable to hot pans which can stain & damage the surface, can be somewhat expensive.

Laminates such as Formica or Wilsonart: Pros – Comes in many colors, easy to maintain, durable, least expensive. Cons – Scratches or chips are almost impossible to repair, seams show, very limited on edge choices without a pricey up charge.

With advance planning and attention to detail your kitchen remodel can be a fun experience leading up to a wonderful new kitchen.