

KITCHENS

12 steps to planning a great kitchen

By Marsha Rae
of
“HOME BY DESIGN”

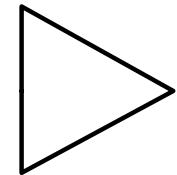
mandatory in kitchens

- The traditional kitchen work triangle is a total of 15' to 24' for the three sides of the triangle. The triangle is formed by drawing straight lines from the stove to the sink, sink to refrigerator, and from the refrigerator back to the stove.
- Today, it is not at all uncommon to have several triangles or “task areas” in a kitchen. It is also common for these triangles to intersect. These triangles may be smaller than the original all encompassing triangles. They will obviously include points other than the original three. However, the most critical point is still to provide convenience and efficiency.



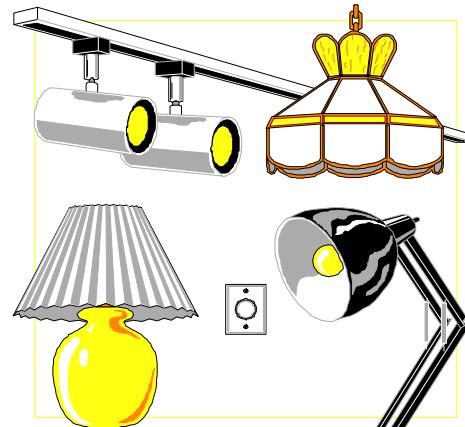
- Many family styles today call for more than one person to be working in the kitchen at the same time, so you will want to “play house” a bit and envision how you will be inclined to use the kitchen. Then define various task areas for each of the people or tasks which will often be performed. This will often include task areas such as:

- **Cooking** - This is considered the master triangle, and should include cooktop, sink, counter area, and refrigerator
 - **Baking** - This area should include oven, moderate to large assembly area, and refrigerator
 - **Salads** - Include a sink (often a secondary, bar size sink), refrigerator, and preparation area
 - **Pasta** (often combined with or overlapping the Baking area) - This area should include medium to large counter area, sink and refrigerator
 - **Recycling** - Include a cabinet section with bins, accessible to the compactor if you have one, and a sink
 - **Family messages/communication** - This will include the obvious telephone, message pad & pencils/pens, writing surface, and of course the telephone. These days, in many cases, it will include a computer and/or a bulletin board
 - **Menu planning** - Make use of the desk area and a shelf for cookbooks, as well as a computer if you wish
 - **Clean up** - Pretty obvious
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- If you are planning new construction, I invite and encourage you to consider angles as a way of getting more into the kitchen, as well as making it seem more inviting



2. Lighting - Never Too Many Or Too Much Variety

- There are many types of light fixtures on the market today, and you should definitely take the time to determine the types which will best fit your kitchen and your life style. Typically, I like to have at least two different types of lighting in a kitchen.
 - Incandescent lights tend to create more heat than fluorescent and typically their light is much more focused than that of the fluorescents. The recessed can lights are great as task lights, and work well with the cleaner, more contemporary style which is so popular today.
 - The new halogen lights are wonderful, but not in every application. They can also be great as task lights and accent lighting.
 - Fluorescent lighting is great to create bright, overall lighting. This type of light is also less expensive to operate and creates little or no heat, making it very economical in the summer. This type of lighting is also used extensively as "under counter" lighting.
- Once you have determined your task areas and work triangles, be sure to overlay that plan with a lighting plan. You will want to make sure you have included plenty of light for each of the tasks you plan to perform as well as mood lighting.



3. Flooring - Under foot and forgotten?

Again, there are many varieties of flooring products for the kitchen floor, and each one has its strengths and weaknesses. The choice is yours, but I suggest that you make it after careful research and thought.



- The most common product for kitchen floors is still sheet vinyl or lino. There are as many manufacturers as there are styles, and every quality level imaginable. Vinyl is probably the most reasonably priced flooring products for the kitchen, and there is a large variety in color and pattern. For the most part, keep this type of flooring very simple and undemanding. I would consider it to be the least attractive element in a good kitchen, and I DO NOT want it to catch the eye! If you are using vinyl on your kitchen floor, keep it subtle.
- Wood flooring can look wonderful in almost any kitchen. Wood flooring is now available in pre-finished, finish in place, parquet patterns (and many even more intricate patterns), acrylic injected, and even the new hard laminate finishes like the Pergo product. If you sweep often you do not have to mop too often. Woods range from oak or maple to walnut, pine, and redwood.

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- Ceramic tile can look wonderful in the kitchen and surrounding areas. I would recommend that you not use a tile which is smaller than 6" square, however. Once again it is important to keep the contrast between the tile and grout at a minimum.
- We've even used painted concrete floors in several cases and the clients have loved them!
- Carpet is often an unhappy solution to kitchen flooring, perhaps because it is so difficult to get kitchen type stains removed from it and because bacteria growth can become a serious problem.



4. Appliances - Let's Cook Up A Storm



- I am especially fond of the new 700 Series from Sub Zero. This is the new one with the highly innovative drawers for food storage. These units are very efficient, attractive, and so convenient.
- You can see this wonderful new concept in refrigerators as well as all the other appliances at A & A Family Appliances in Rocklin or at the Plumbery in Sacramento.
- The market is being literally flooded with new products,... and I would suggest you take worksheets for the work currently in process, and select the products which best fit your needs and budget. This is the time to consider options such as convection cooking in either the oven or microwave, warming ovens (and they come either steam or dry), ovens which include a "pizza stone", and numerous countertop built-ins for mixing, blending, etc.

Have you experienced the new Miele dishwashers yet? They are absolutely wonderful!! They are ultra efficient, economical, quiet, and best of all, you barely have to do any scraping, rinsing etc.

- Home on the Range! Seriously, a full 40% of my clients over the past two years have wanted a professional range in their new or remodeled kitchen. If this appeals to you too, be sure to do your homework. Some of the manufacturers have come out with sealed burners which are a must for ease of clean up. There are a broad range of features available and the price tags to go along with them.
- Many clients are also asking to double up on ovens, dishwashers, sinks, etc. in order to make their kitchen more versatile.
- Whatever your heart desires for your new kitchen, there is at least one manufacturer who can supply you, and probably at least two different models or styles. Again, determine which appliances meet your needs and pocketbook.

As a matter of fact, this might be a great time to do so!

