

## REMODELING..What to expect!

So, you've decided to remodel your kitchen (or other room). Good for you! You probably already know that your kitchen is still the family meeting place even in this day and age of fast food. It is associated with comfort and family connection. The more welcoming your kitchen space is, the happier you and your family will be. Your remodel experience will be as stress free as possible and even enjoyable if you know what to expect so that you can be prepared time wise and money wise to do your part.

As your cabinet designer, I will educate you on cabinet choices, help you create the best possible kitchen for functionality and aesthetics, and help you stick to your budget as much as possible by guiding you to the best choices and quality suited for you. I strive for that end of project comment; "I just LOVE my new kitchen. And you'll love it not just because it is new, but because it expresses you and is a joy to cook in, making it timeless. When all is done, it will be well worth all of the homework and time you spent on your selections.

Along with the decision to change the kitchen (or room) can come the possibility of moving walls and windows to change the original space. If you already have a contractor you are working with, he can tell you which walls are structural and must remain at least in part or as a support post. If you don't have one, I can refer you to some or you may know someone who has done a good job for friends or family. Once those possibilities are accessed, it's time to work on the kitchen design. Think of the things that you like and don't like in your current kitchen. Tell me all of your thoughts when we meet. I will incorporate as many of your ideas and wants as possible into your new design. The computer renditions of your kitchen are easily changed, so don't be afraid of communicating all of your thoughts; none of them are cast in stone! It usually takes

a few revisions of the kitchen design to get it just right. Appliances place a key roll in the overall kitchen design, so it is helpful if you have a pretty good idea of sizes and types before we meet and then fine tune them as the design is being finalized. Most appliance choices need to be decided before the cabinets are ordered.

The cabinet ordering time is about 5 weeks (usually the same time frame as your flooring, lighting, appliances, sinks, fixtures and counter top) and their arrival time needs to be coordinated with your contractor's schedule so that he begins your remodel either slightly before or when the cabinets arrive. The cabinets arrive securely attached to pallets; a pallet is about 4 x 4 x 7 feet high. An average kitchen is about 5 pallets with some loose bundles, which will take up a garage stall. The bulk of an average kitchen remodel takes about 2-3 weeks, so it is a good idea to set up a make shift mini kitchen elsewhere. Just before your contractor starts, schedule yourself enough time to empty out your current kitchen.

Next, your contractor guts the existing kitchen. You can have him install some of your old cabinets elsewhere (like in the garage), and/or sell them on Craig's list or have Habitat restore pick them up to sell them to benefit the Habit For Humanity Projects. Then walls/windows are removed/moved, electrical is added/changed, and sheetrock and painting occur. The type of new flooring you have chosen will determine whether it is installed before or after the new cabinets are installed. Usually Vinyl (new name for linoleum) will be installed before the new cabinets and all other types will be installed after.

The cabinets are installed without the drawers and doors. Your countertop fabricator can template, make and install the countertops just as soon as the base cabinets are set into place. Make sure to schedule the countertop template well in advance of the expected date. You can always move the time back, but it can be difficult to get a last minute appointment. The final stages of finishing the new kitchen includes installation of the appliances, adjusting all of the cabinet doors and drawers that have been reinstalled on the cabinets to assure

that all of the drawer fronts are evenly spaced and line up horizontally, all of the butt door cabinets have as little of a gap as possible and all of the cabinet doors line up at the top and the bottom. Next, your contractor will install the cabinet knobs and pulls that you have painstakingly selected. Use blue painters tape to template the location of each knob and pull on each cabinet to be sure that you like all of the placements and that they line up.

Remodeling is a messy thing. Even though your contractor has done his best to keep the area somewhat clean, in the end a deep clean is necessary; especially before you move into your new kitchen. A good vacuum with a soft brush attachment is a good way to clean out all of the cabinets before you move in, as well as getting rid of the dust that has accumulated in your home. Moving into your new kitchen is exciting! Allow yourself enough initial time to make some decisions about what goes back into the new kitchen, what goes where and then some additional time to rearrange. Now is a good time to add drawer dividers, cushiony non-stick shelf papers, after market trash containers and other fun organizational items as you settle into your new space.

Your cabinets have a very tough and durable finish on them and the wood is sealed so don't be afraid to clean them as needed with mild cleaners like Simple Green if they get greasy around the stove area. You made it through the remodel. Yeah! Enjoy your new kitchen; can you imagine not having it now?

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