

A kitchen cabinet design for handy storage areas



Squeezing things into the awkward kitchen cabinet design is something we've all experienced. Bigger, better storage is often a major motive to renovate - we take a look at some designs for effective kitchen storage.

According to kitchen designer Michael Kitchener, of **Kitcheners Kitchens**, a look at your lifestyle should top the list of considerations when choosing kitchen cupboards and cabinets for effective storage. "Couples, families and bachelors have different cooking styles and therefore different needs in terms of equipment and storage," he says. "Good kitchen design is based around these requirements and even takes into account left- or right-handedness."

A dynamic kitchen space

Michael says 'Dynamic Space' by Blum, the basis of a new kitchen standard, is overtaking traditional 'kitchen triangle' concepts. "A recent study by Blum, the Austrian fittings manufacturer, reported that designing kitchen cupboards and work areas on a Dynamic Space model can save people 25% of walking in the kitchen over 20 years," he enthuses.

Dynamic Space looks at the kitchen from five zones:

- Consumables (canned goods, rice and pasta, refrigerated goods)
- Non-consumables (dishes, glasses, crockery)
- Cleaning (sinks, taps, bins)
- Food preparation (utensils, knives, chopping boards, spices)
- Cooking (cooktop, oven, utensils, pots and pans, trays)

"The trick is configuring these zones to your lifestyle," Michael says. "For example, a couple that doesn't cook much but regularly hosts parties will need more attention to preparation and cleaning zones." Dynamic Space has also shifted items from the traditional pantry, like spices and breadcrumbs, to the preparation zone, where they are readily accessible.

Kitchen drawers

Michael is a self-confessed 'drawers' man when it comes to effective kitchen storage and an alternative to conventional cupboards in the kitchen. "Developments in full extension drawer systems, hinges and organisation mean you can access 100% of the drawers' contents," he says. "The latest corner drawer units, complete with Blumotion soft-closing mechanisms, can increase usable space by 60%." Other tricky spots like under the sink and next to the oven can be turned into usable space with custom-built kitchen cupboard storage space.

Open shelving

Open shelves can provide easy-access storage for everyday items or larger things that you don't use often. Wall-hung kitchen cabinets, a more traditional way to equip a kitchen, are a more versatile option that allows you to be a bit messy, with platters, glassware and dinner sets out of sight.

Accessible storage in the kitchen

Michael says poor accessibility is a common mistake in cupboard design and storage in the kitchen. "Details like left versus right-hinging cupboards in corner wall units and hinges that open 90degrees instead of 180degrees are commonly overlooked, as is neglecting to incorporate a bin."

High-end internal storage solutions are also making their mark on the modern kitchen. With stationery drawers, internal drawer divisions for large utensils, lid separators for pots and pans and dividers for vinegars and oils, there are plenty of alternatives to traditional kitchen cabinets of yesteryear - and we're fast running out of excuses for mess and clutter in the kitchen!

If you're thinking of updating your kitchen cabinet design, consult a kitchen designer to discover how you can maximise your space:

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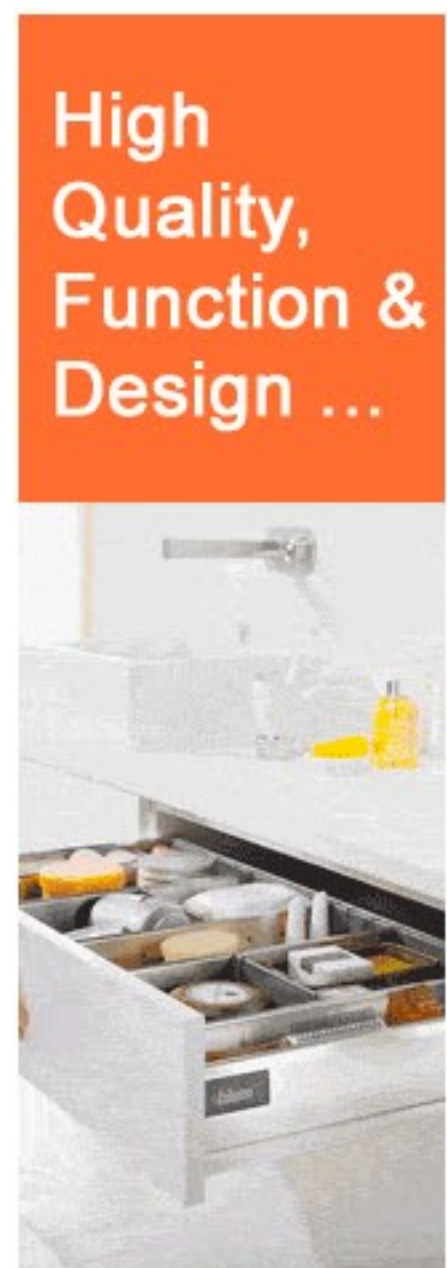
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