

# Creating a family-friendly home

Functionality, fashion and fun can all live under the one roof in a fabulous family home

WORDS Louise Heather

## Great design for the whole family

### Kitchens

Michael Kitchener from Kitchener's Kitchens tells us about designing a family-friendly kitchen

**When dealing with families, what are a few design elements you recommend in creating a new kitchen?**

Depending on space, it's great to create an eat-in area, such as a breakfast bar overhanging an island or peninsula. Traditionally, people want large pantries (even walk-in) to cater for their families' needs. These can come down in size with the use of drawers making the space more useable.

**Are there any special considerations for kids in the kitchen?**

Depending on their age, there are some recommended dos and don'ts, such as don't design a microwave to be sitting under the bench. If the oven is going under the bench (rather than mounted in a wall unit), select an oven with a child lock. Also choose an oven that is either triple- or quadruple-glazed — which means either three or four layers of glass on the door — to keep the face of the oven door cool to touch.

There is a large selection of child-proof locks for cabinet doors to prevent toddlers from accessing them. Keep in mind that as your children grow up you will want to easily deactivate these locks — some can be built into the cabinetry, while others are later additions.

**Does selection of materials come into play when designing the family-friendly kitchen?**

Yes, you will want to go with a durable material. I recommend always going with the look you are

after, but that same look can be achieved with a variety of different materials at different budgets. Polyurethane kitchens have a similar paint to what is on your car. It will easily scratch if you have skateboard games being played in your kitchen.

I would also recommend using handles as opposed to a handleless look, as kids with grubby hands will pull on the handles and not grab the doors.

**Are there any common mistakes people make when designing their family-friendly kitchen?**

Space! Make sure there is enough space for people to work around each other. There should be at least one metre between countertops.

**What are some tips for families planning their new kitchen?**



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Have a look at different solutions, especially internal storage solutions. Some simple inexpensive options can make a world of difference, such as a divider in a large drawer to separate your plastic lids from your bases.

A kitchen will last for 15 to 20 years, so keep in mind how your family's needs will change over the years to come.