

STORAGE

A place for everything

Want a kitchen that keeps clutter low and space availability high? At the HIA Sydney Home Show you'll find some clever solutions, writes **Sasha Tohmé**.

WHEN your kitchen benches are overflowing with appliances and you can't close the cupboards for all the pots and pans crammed inside, you know the time has come for some serious decluttering.

Whether renovating the entire kitchen or simply trying to create a sense of order, there are storage solutions to create a functional and stylish space.

Ample, organised storage space for food, appliances and utensils is what holds a kitchen together, experts say.

Australia's leading kitchen designers and manufacturers will showcase the latest storage trends in the HIA Sydney Home show at the Sydney Convention and Exhibition Centre from May 1-4.

Here they share their top tips.

IN PRAISE OF FUNCTION

WHEN it comes to creating an efficient kitchen, storage is paramount says Roger Franchi of Schmidt Kitchens.

"Function is as important as the look when it comes to kitchens," he says.

Kitchen cupboards have made way for drawers as they provide a neat and hassle-free storage option.

As well as cutlery and utensil drawers that are organised with dividers, designers are installing deep drawers for crockery, cups and saucepans.

"The drawers being used are heavy duty, soft closing and can carry up to 50kg, allowing you to store anything from plates and glasses to pots and pans," says Franchi.

"The idea is to avoid people losing things or having to search for things on their hands and knees, or trying to see what's at the back of the cupboard.

"There's no wasted space and everything comes to you."

Another storage innovation being included in modern kitchens is the use of drawers in the kickboards.

Popular in small kitchens, the soft-motion drawers can't be seen when closed and blend seamlessly into the kickboards.

"Maybe they can hide something in there – maybe treasure?" says Franchi.

The traditional pantry has also been given an overhaul with the inclusion of pull-out shelves.

"Everyone has been in the situation where they rummage through the pantry to find a certain ingredient and when they can't find it they go out and buy another jar only to return and find it hidden at the back of the shelf," says Franchi.

"With the pull-out shelves everything is in front of your eyes."

IN THE ZONE

MICHAEL Kitchener from Kitcheners Kitchens says adopting the triangle zone approach to kitchen layout makes best use of the space for cooking, cleaning and storage.

"It's really about designing a kitchen around the client's needs and creating the most usable space for them," he says.

The triangle zone theory was first introduced in the 1920s, but with the coming of innovative kitchen products it has been made a whole lot simpler.

In keeping with the zones the pantry has been spread out with things like spice and oil drawers incorporated into the cooking zone.

"If you're standing in the cooking zone or the prep zone you don't want to have to

walk three steps to get the olive oil out of the pantry," says Kitchener.

"Under the cutlery drawer you might put a deep drawer for mugs, plates and bowls to establish your prep zone, while mixing bowls might be stored with flours, bread crumbs and other things that would normally be put in the pantry.

"It's all about creating a dynamic and usable space."

The kitchen sink has also been given a revamp with the cleaning product cupboard replaced by drawers for convenience and ample storage.

"There are some amazing drawer solutions for under sinks, which in the past have really been wasted space," says Kitchener.

INTEGRATED STYLE

LIAM Murphy of Art Of Kitchens says smart exteriors also help to provide a clutter-free environment and give the kitchen a bigger sense of space.

Trends include handle-free drawers and cupboards and the use of mirrors in the shadow lines of drawers, kickboards and splashbacks.

"Mirrors creates depth in a kitchen and a sleeker look," says Murphy.

Integrated appliances are also popular in modern kitchens as well as recessed cooktops and under-mounted sinks.

"People want their kitchens to look like furniture these days so the integration of appliances and sinks has become a very popular trend," he says.

"When the cooktop and sink are absolutely flush with the benchtop it creates more work space and a more functional kitchen."



Out of sight (from top left): Schmidt drawers store ingredients at the work bench and also feature pull-out preparation benches; Kitcheners drawers can be used for many purposes; one of Hafele's new range of glass-fronted drawers