

Dream Kitchen Planning Guide:

Ask Yourself The
Five “Must Answer” Questions!



“Knowing what to ask
at the start assures
your satisfaction
in the end.”

A FREE Consumer Guide

Introduction

Step into any house and people are drawn to the kitchen: the smells and aromas of a home-cooked meal, gathering around the table, kids raiding the fridge for snacks or telling about their day; the kitchen serves as a hub of activity in an active household. So when dreaming about what your kitchen should be, there are five important questions you should ask yourself.

These questions are designed to help you in the planning process, because dreams usually don't just happen. In the same way fabulous kitchens don't just happen either. They are typically the result of a lot of planning and coordination with an experienced professional kitchen designer. The pros guide you through the right questions so you can be sure that the results meet your expectation for a great kitchen.



As you carefully review these questions, be ready with a pen and paper in hand. Write down your thoughts, notes and answers to each. These notes will come in handy later on when you are ready to talk with a designer.

1. What is your budget?

While the average cost of a kitchen remodeling project can range anywhere from \$20,000 to \$50,000, it's easy to go way higher. It's important to know before you begin how much money you have to work with, to accomplish your goals. Cost can really amass in appliances, so do your research and consult the experts before make decisions on those.

A good rule of thumb is that the cost of the kitchen design shouldn't exceed 20 percent of the value of your home. Generally you can recover up to 8 percent of that when you sell. Knowing your budget beforehand keeps the project from getting tied up and prevents you from spending too much on design elements and not enough on practicality. Which leads to the second question.

2. How do you want to use your kitchen?

Consider how your kitchen functions in your home. Do you spend a lot of time cooking? Do your kids enjoy helping? Does it also function as an office space or a hang out? Or perhaps you want it to open up to the family room or dining room. This will help determine the layout as well as any special features. For example, if you like to bake, consider adding a marble countertop. Marble is wonderful for working with pastry, since

it is naturally cool. So, it doesn't conduct heat very well. If you often cook using a wok, this requires a quality range hood. Have you ever considered adding a raised countertop island for added seating?

The preferred uses of your kitchen will define lots of parameters for the project. So this is where the help of an experienced designer will come in handy. They will know the pros and cons of a variety of surfaces, colors and more. But the starting point is you, your family and your needs. Be sure to think this through and make notes about how you really want to use your kitchen and what kind of a space you want it to be.

3. Do you have adequate space, storage, and lighting?

Many kitchens lack one or all of these basic needs. When considering your countertops, beyond work space, you will want to take into account where your countertop appliances are stored. Closely relate is electrical outlets. Where are they located? Do you have enough?

Now is also a good time to take inventory of everything stashed in your cabinets. Do you have enough cabinet space? More than enough? If too much, possibly the space can be converted into other uses. When planning for new storage, you can think about things like easy access to things like blenders and mixers, the things you use more often.



Finally, is there adequate lighting in all of your key work areas? The usual areas are the sink, stove, and prepping countertops. There are a wide variety of lighting types available from strip lighting, to track lighting, hanging fixtures or under the counter lights. A good designer can coach you on the best balance between looks and function.

4. Can you easily move from your stove to sink to fridge?

These three form a triangle of workflow. A good design limits anything from cutting them off from each other. For example, narrow aisle ways or islands can isolate any of the three. That's definitely something to avoid. Consider also where the dishwasher is located in relation to the sink and any doorways or passages through the kitchen to keep open. Where will you put your trash? Do you recycle? How about composting? Is there an outside door nearby for removing some of these items?

5. What would you like to change?

We've saved the biggest question for last. If you could just set aside all of your answers to the previous questions for a moment, that's how we want you to think here. What would be on your wish list? Which parts of your kitchen would you radically change if you could? (List your answer in your notes even if you think it's impossible.)

Is your home more traditional or modern? Contemporary or country? Would you like to change to a different style? Remember walls can be moved, rooms can be expanded and stretched to meet different needs. A good designer will help you think outside the box and make that happen.

Consider also long-term consequences and growing families. Ask yourself about things like color and style. The average kitchen remodel typically lasts 12-15 years. Don't limit yourself in your thinking. Be creative.

Conclusion

We hope these questions get you moving in the direction of your dream kitchen. As we stated earlier the best process to make things happen is a good plan. Now armed with the questions, you have the tools to help you process your answers and get them down on paper. The next step is to consider choosing a professional design and remodeling firm to help you make your plans a reality. Consider calling Mike at Custom Built Design and Remodeling to help you make your dream kitchen a reality! 517-881-9871

