

GET IN THE ZONE

When planning your kitchen layout, one key aspect is to consider how you want to use the kitchen and where you want items to be stored. Naturally, heavy pots and pans should be kept in lower cabinets, and within easy reach of your oven and hob. Likewise, mugs should never be too far away from your kettle. In this open-plan scheme, the dining table is in the same space as the kitchen, so the addition of a tall dresser provides storage for crockery and cutlery, to make laying the table quick and easy.

Clever ways to
**CONFIGURE YOUR
 KITCHEN SPACE**

TIME FOR A NEW LAYOUT? USE EXPERT DESIGN TRICKS TO MEET YOUR NEEDS AND MAKE THE MOST OF YOUR FLOOR SPACE

Bespoke kitchen,
 from £35,000,
 Martin Moore



Bespoke Shaker-style kitchen, from £30,000 including appliances, worktops and installation, Sustainable Kitchens

PUT IN A PANTRY

A pantry or larder separate from the rest of your kitchen can help keep things clear and tidy, as it is an ideal space to keep store cupboard staples and baking equipment. In this barn conversion project, the ceilings were low and natural light was limited, so a walk-in pantry was designed with internal windows and under-counter cabinets only, so that it could feel bright and connected to the rest of the kitchen. Automatic lighting makes it extra bright inside.



Simply Burbidge Finsbury kitchen in Seal Grey, from £7,500, Burbidge

LEAN INTO AN L-SHAPE

Most L-shaped kitchens are fitted on to adjacent walls of a room, creating a practical corner design. They provide plenty of work surface as well as storage, though be mindful of where the two runs of cabinetry meet – the addition of pull-out drawers or an internal carousel will help to avoid wasting useful storage space. Consider keeping wall cabinets to one side of an L-shaped layout, opting for open shelving on the other so as not to make the room feel overcrowded. If space allows, you could add a dining table.

FIT RIGHT IN

You are likely to inherit some unusual nooks in older country properties, so taking a flexible approach to your kitchen design may be necessary. Look for alcoves and recesses that you can build storage into and toss out the idea of a conventional fixed layout. Add single runs of cabinetry where they fit best in the space you have to work with, incorporating your appliances in between. To add to this flexible approach, go for a free-standing island design – units on legs open up the amount of floor space on show and can be moved around if needed, too.



The Hartford collection in Willow, from £20,000, Tom Howley



Kitchen, from £25,000, Life Kitchens



The Sebastian Cox kitchen, from £15,000, deVOL

BUILD BANQUETTE SEATING

You can fit more seating into the available space when it is built into the design of your kitchen, as in this smart L-shaped layout with banquette seating. The fitted, upholstered benches not only provide storage beneath, but are a clever way to hide any unsightly wires or pipework. 'These are a necessary evil that may have to be boxed in to be concealed,' says Daniela Condo, designer at Life Kitchens. 'See if services can be re-routed inside bulkheads, voids or under the plinth of the kitchen.'

MAKE A STAND

Often found in rustic-style homes, free-standing furniture offers a more flexible approach to kitchen design. It's a relaxed look, enabling you to add single runs of cabinets around the kitchen to create your ideal layout, incorporating your appliances in between. This mix-and-match method works particularly well in older, country-style properties where the room may be unusually shaped. Paired with complementary wall-hung cabinets, a run of wooden free-standing cabinets will provide ample storage in a small kitchen, as seen in this example by deVOL.

GATHER AROUND THE KITCHEN TABLE

A kitchen-diner layout is ideal for busy family households, where both the cooking and dining zones sit within the same design. 'When planning a kitchen, take inspiration from the existing features in the room, such as doors, thoroughfares and windows,' says Sally Hinks, kitchen designer at Harvey Jones. 'Looking at these elements will help you site the table in the best possible position.'



The Original kitchen, from £20,000, Harvey Jones



Bespoke kitchen, from £40,000, Naked Kitchens

GO WITH THE FLOW

'Always walk through the plan in your mind to ensure it flows well and works efficiently, making sure that you can easily and fully access appliances so there are no pinch points,' says Jayne Everett, creative director at Naked Kitchens. 'If you go for an island, make sure there's enough space around it to pass through and open cabinets,' she adds. It's the well-planned, seamless flow around the U-shaped layout and the double-ended island that makes this kitchen design work well.



Bespoke kitchen, from £40,000, Humphrey Munson

UTILISE THE U-SHAPE

The U-shaped kitchen is one of the most efficient layouts to have in both small and open-plan homes alike. It is the easiest way to achieve the ergonomic triangle that is so often talked about in kitchen design - where your fridge, cooker and sink are all within easy reach of one another. Larger kitchens can often accommodate the addition of a central island, too. With plenty of room for cabinetry and built-in appliances around the edge, the island provides a casual seating area and additional preparation space.

INCLUDE AN ISLAND

With open-plan living proving increasingly popular, islands today come in a range of styles, functions and sizes to suit your space. Offering the possibility of extra room for both cooking and seating, they can help turn a kitchen into the hub of the home. To make an island the focal point, choose one in a different colour from the rest of your cabinetry, as shown in this traditional kitchen design that combines earthy brown and off-white. The length of this island allows a variety of different elements to be included, including a sink and ample storage.

FEATURE YVETTE MURRELL



The Durham collection, from £780 for a bifold dresser, LochAnna Kitchens