

Planning your layout:

Designing a new kitchen layout - remember there are no absolute rules, after all it is your kitchen but.

1. First of all, list the floor/wall mounted appliances you want to include in your kitchen - see choice of appliances below for the most likely ones you will want to include.

Likely appliances required in a kitchen

- Cooker or Hob and Oven / Microwave
 - Extractor hood for cooker / hob
 - Washing machine
 - Dish washer
 - Tumble dryer
 - Fridge/freezer
 - Room air extractor
2. Measure your kitchen at floor level and at about 900mm from the floor - use the smaller measurement for your floor plan.
 3. Draw a scale plan, using squared paper makes things easier.
 4. Mark on the plan the services as they currently exist - hot and cold water, drains, electric points, gas points, any existing extractor vents in the walls.
 5. Cut out paper or card scale footprints for each appliance and sink you want to include. Write the name of each appliance on its respective piece of paper/card.
 6. Most kitchens need three 'work areas'. Preparation, cooking and washing-up, each area should include all the appliances required and a suitable sized work area around it.
 7. Roughly position the scale footprints of the appliances in their most logical position with respect to the existing position of the services. Do not worry if you need more services, it just indicated that you will need to add some.
 8. Look at the free area between the appliances and decide how many base units you need or can fit. Cut out paper/card footprints for these units.
 9. Position the base unit footprints on your plan.
 10. You now need to think if there is enough work top surface around each work zone - a lot of the appliances are sized to fit under work surfaces so you should not lose too much. Try to avoid having work surfaces less than 1 metre in length.
 11. If you cannot fit in all the appliances or base units you have select or you think the room is already too full, ask yourself if you can relocate any appliance in another room - i.e. move the washing machine to the garage.
 12. Think how you can rearrange the kitchen to make it easier to use, begin to think about relocating the position of the existing services. Remember that in addition to the floor mounted appliances, you will also need electric points for the smaller, moveable appliances which you get out of the cupboard each time you want to use them. All services and window/doors **can** be repositioned - it is just that additional work is involved; the rough order from easiest to most difficult is - electricity, gas, water supplies, drains (above floor), blocking up doors/windows, drains below floor and moving doors/windows. But remember that you may need professional assistance to move doors/windows and you will need a registered gas fitter to move a gas point.
 13. Bearing all this in mind, 'play' with the layout to achieve your dream kitchen - then look at any relocation of services required - are you happy with the amount of work involved? You will often find that you have to compromise.
 14. When you are happy with a basic floor arrangement, think about the wall area and where you can fit wall units, these tend to be needed in the food preparation area. Try and keep the wall units inline with the base units below them.
 15. You should now be in the position to list:
 - The number and style of floor units you require.
 - The number and style of wall units you require.
 - The appliances to be fitted.

- The work you need to do to add or reposition the services.

Choosing and positioning wall/floor units.

1. The colour and style are personal matters but:
 - a. If you plan to move house in the next few years, it may be worth being a little conservative - the kitchen is a major selling point and an outlandish style may put off potential buyers.
 - b. Take into account the natural light of the room, you do not want the room to be too dark.
 - c. Remember that the kitchen is a working room, you may want to avoid pure white or other light, plain colours as they can easily discolour unevenly in a kitchen.
2. Although there are many different widths of units available, you do not need to use them all. Try to use one door/drawer width along a run with just one 'odd' size installed at one end of the run to fill the space.
3. Try to keep the same style for all the units in a run - think carefully before you mix High Line and Drawer Line styles.
4. Try to keep the doors on wall units in vertical line with the drawers/doors on base units.
5. Where wall units are mounted above floor level cupboards, have the doors opening the same way.
6. Do not fit wall units above or immediately to the side of gas hobs/cookers.