



REDEFINE—

CREATE THE MASTER PLAN FOR YOUR
DREAM KITCHEN

Contributed by Sally Langlois



Photo Contributed by ABC Arrow Building Center

Current workout trends emphasize getting the most impact from condensed, focused and intense exercise routines. Your kitchen can be designed to do the same, making it the hardest working room in your home. With work, school, and activity schedules putting the squeeze on family time, it's more important than ever to do your homework when planning a new or remodeled kitchen to ensure the safest, most efficient use of space and your efforts.

Who hasn't experienced the frustration of trying to work in a poorly configured kitchen... refrigerator doors that hit a side wall, dishwashers without

enough standing room to unload them anywhere except onto the countertop, and those shallow cabinets over refrigerators which are beyond reach and invite stacks of paper goods, baskets, or serving bowls in front of the doors? Thoughtful appliance placement and sizing of cabinets can solve many work-zone headaches even before you consider the wealth of specialized pull-outs and inserts on the market.

Tucking a tall, narrow pull-out pantry cabinet between a side wall and the refrigerator will boost dry goods storage while ensuring enough refrigerator door swing for full access to vegetable bins and deli drawers. Using a 24"

deep cabinet over the refrigerator can create an easy-to-reach zone of vertical slide-in storage for cookie sheets, baking pans, and larger cutting boards. Skinny base cabinets also offer great vertical storage for these items.

Adequate standing and landing zones are essential next to all appliances. Landing zones refer to countertop areas which will provide space to set down a hot casserole removed from an oven or microwave, bags of grocery items to refill the fridge, or those cold ingredients as you pull them out to compose an evening meal or quick breakfast. While diagonal corner placement of ovens and dishwashers looks attractive,

bending forward to reach into them while lifting heavy dishes can be harmful to your back. If a dishwasher must be placed close to a corner or side wall, make sure that you have at least 21" of floor space to stand alongside the open door while filling or emptying it.

Don't overlook placement logic in planning your kitchen. A refrigerator placed near a dining or cooking area will provide easy access to ingredients, beverages, and condiments. In turn, microwaves placed near refrigerators are handy when reheating leftovers or defrosting items. Morning coffee will be a breeze if your filters, mugs or thermos cups, and other supplies are housed in a cabinet near the coffee maker. If a primary traffic area, such as a patio door, is near your kitchen, keep in mind that frequent traffic to the refrigerator may be safer if it does not pass through primary work zones such as the sink or cooking surface.

Once you've decided on the best arrangement of work zones and appliances in your space, consider maximizing the storage potential within your cabinets. Lazy susans have evolved nicely from the plastic tray and metal spindle set-ups of yesterday. Newer versions are mounted on a solid shelf, are spindle-free, and can even have 6" deep side walls, ensuring that items won't tip over and fall out of reach. If it's absolutely necessary to have a blind corner base cabinet and you can allow at least a 15" wide door opening for access, wood or metal swing-out assemblies will enable you to draw all the items stored in that hidden corner out into the

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walkway area while still on their storage trays or platforms. No more unloading the whole cabinet to find your roaster lid!

While many of us have used rollout trays for base or pantry cabinets to discourage lost items in the back of deeper cabinets, wire pullouts specially shaped to work around the plumbing in a sink base are also available. Appliance garage doors can swing upward in front of your wall cabinets, eliminating troublesome

roll-up tambour doors or clearing the countertops to accommodate a swinging door. And don't forget that wider heavy duty drawers are today's favorite option for storing bulkier pots and baking dishes, offering single step operation and easier lifting.

Careful planning will ensure that your new kitchen works hard, making cooking more enjoyable and cleanup hassle-free. Efficiency in the kitchen will have you focusing on enjoying time with family and friends, whether cooking up a storm or getting out the door together!

Article contributed by Sally R. Langlois, AKBD at Arrow Cabinet Gallery & ABC Arrow Building Center.

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