

## Creating a “New” Kitchen without Overspending

According to Remodeling Magazine, kitchen remodeling provides the number one return on your investment, so let’s look at a number of ways to create a totally functional and attractive “new” kitchen without overspending. Each of the systems outlined below each has pros and cons, but whether you do the minimum or something more extensive, there are a variety of ways to upgrade your kitchen while keeping spending under control.

- Refinish or Reface

By far the least costly way to refresh your kitchen is to keep the existing cabinets and give a cosmetic makeover. Bright light and friendly colors are your allies here. This can be as simple as refinishing or painting the doors and face frames and a new counter top. Replacement doors are another option and can be installed prefinished to minimize down time and disruption. Of course this approach has many limitations which keep both costs and creativity to a minimum! For instance you will have to keep living with that poorly planned corner cabinet from which nothing ever returns.

- Keep the existing footprint

If new cabinets are in the budget, then changing appliance sizes, better storage features, and other upgrades become possible. This approach minimizes the amount of plumbing and electrical work and helps keep the project from growing into adjacent rooms. It takes discipline to keep the new kitchen finishes such as flooring and millwork details from invading adjacent space.

- Expand the space with conservative techniques

We often find that the builder’s plan from some years ago is not how you live but sometimes moving a few walls can work wonders. Examples might be opening up living spaces to the kitchen in split level homes or consolidating with the dining room. Either way, the project now involves increasing value by making better use of what you now own. Using 3D computer modeling allows us to remove the walls and see the opportunities on the computer screen or your TV!

Another favorite trick is to “bump out” under the existing overhang to gain those critical inches that make a great kitchen design work. Most homes give us 2’ of overhang to work with, and with cantilevered floor framing we can push that sink cabinet wall back far enough to accommodate the center island that is on most wish lists. Support for the roof comes from a composite wood and steel beam designed by Kirkland structural engineer Carol Buckingham. Combine this method with a well crafted kitchen design and the results can be both spectacular and a great value.

- Be realistic about materials

Granite is forever...or at least a lifetime for most of us...but there are other choices! For instance, we often tear out plastic laminate counters which are 20 years or more old and still in reasonably good shape. The cost for a similar replacement might cost 20% of granite for a typical kitchen, so the difference is significant. Want granite but can’t afford it right now? Use laminate now and replace with granite when your ship comes in. The same philosophy goes for sinks, faucets, fancy backsplash tile and a myriad of other lovely finish items that are installed “on top”. You can have all of the goodies included in your design, but it may push your badly needed kitchen remodel back a few years.

So...pick a path and plan the best kitchen remodel for you, then look forward to many years of enjoyment. You will find the professionals throughout the industry more available than in recent memory. For your Free copy of the Remodeling Magazine “Cost vs Value” report write me [len@mcadamsbuilders.com](mailto:len@mcadamsbuilders.com) .