



design and remodeling trends

start early

Want a New Kitchen by Thanksgiving?

You might be thinking, isn't it a little early to be talking about Thanksgiving? But if you'd like a new kitchen to host your extended family for the holidays, then now is the time to get started.

Design Takes Time

We live in the age of shortcuts, and for some things that's just fine. But when it comes to your home, your family and your investment, a shortcut is just no good. Good remodeling design is the result of a long process of research, deliberation, problem solving and decision making. We need to consider the existing structure, accessibility, functionality and durability to design the space to fit your needs.

You Have Decisions to Make

Before we can begin construction, you have to decide what the new kitchen is going to look like. There are thousands of different products, finishes and trends to choose from. If you do your research up front and know the look

you're trying to achieve, you'll be prepared to make decisions more quickly once the design is underway. Be realistic about your budget and make choices that fit it.

We Need to Order Materials

Once you decide on your selections, it takes time to get them from the manufacturer to your home. Typically, it takes three to four weeks for cabinetry. Countertops also have a long lead time because the new cabinets have to be installed first, and then fabrication of the countertops can take two to three weeks. And if you have any speciality or custom made items, it can sometimes take two to three weeks or longer.

Reserve Your Spot on the Schedule

So as you can see, there's a lot of prep work before construction can begin. But professional remodelers often begin booking early. We are scheduling for late summer work now! So it's important to reserve your spot on the installation schedule now for fall construction.

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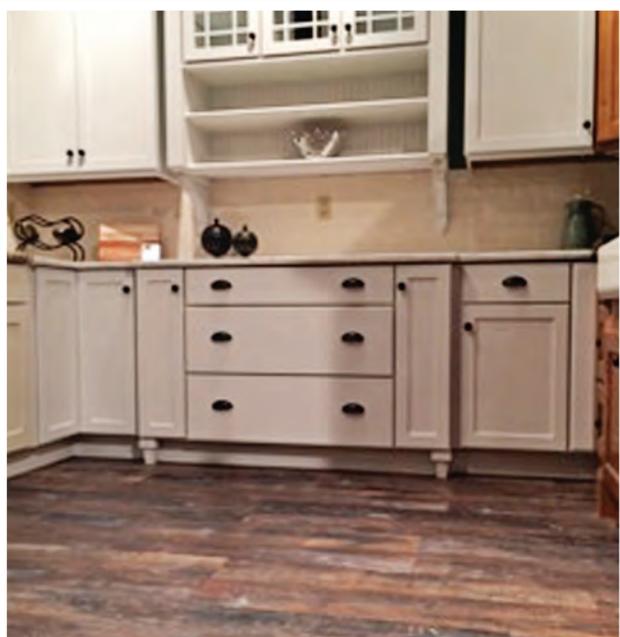
IT REMAINS STREAMING OF GREEN

A couple decades ago, green remodeling was reserved for high cost projects. Energy efficient products and recycled materials seemed out of reach for most homeowners. But today, these products are easily incorporated into any remodel, cost the same as "non-green" products, or have become standard.

When it comes to recycled flooring, you can literally have it all from tile to cork, bamboo to vinyl. And you can also find recycled glass, paper and bamboo in today's countertops.

With cabinetry, use a company that is environmentally friendly and certified by KCMA (Environmental Stewardship Program), FSC (Forest Stewardship Council) or SFI (Sustainable Forestry Initiative). Also, make sure they follow regulations regarding formaldehyde content for composite wood products. We use Wellborn cabinetry because they have the above certifications.

There are also many green products that have become standard, such as energy efficient appliances, LED lighting and low VOC paint. Always look for the ENERGY STAR or EPA logo.



Clockwise from top left: Eco-responsible tile by Crossville; ECO by Cosentino® recycled content countertop; LED task lighting; WE Cork flooring.

HOW TO: *navigate allowances*

The tricky allowance schedule. What is it and how do we manage it?

Homeowners often get hung up by allowances because they don't understand what they are and how they work. Allowances are critical to managing your money during a remodeling project.

What are allowances?

When a remodeler bids a project, most of the cost can be figured out by doing a 'take off' from the plans to determine how much material is needed. They also collect bids from subcontractors to determine their costs. However, there are some items that a remodeler has no way of knowing the cost. That's because the homeowner still has to choose these items, and those prices could be all over the map. Kitchen cabinets, for instance, could range anywhere from \$10,000 to over \$50,000. Therefore, an allowance schedule is created for the items that an owner will select. These are called selections. If the owner has shopped ahead of time and obtained price quotes, then real numbers are used. However, if the owner has not made their selections, then an estimated amount is used.

How do I know how much my allowances should be?

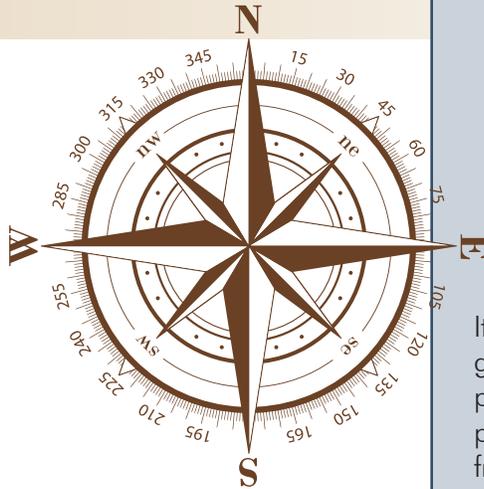
First, get a handle on how much your remodeling dreams will cost. You can check out Remodeling magazine's 2015 "Cost vs. Value Report" on our website at www.blueridgehi.com to get national averages for common projects. You can also research specific products to determine basic ballpark costs.

Then figure out how much you have to spend. If you're paying cash, that's easy to answer. But if you're borrowing, you need to assess how much a bank will lend you and what that loan will add to your monthly expenses.

Once you have decided how much you're able to spend, you can begin to see how much you have available for cabinets, countertops, flooring, plumbing and electrical fixtures. Obviously, if your budget is \$50,000, it is not realistic to have a cabinetry allowance of \$40,000 because that leaves nothing left for labor or really anything else in the kitchen!

What should I look for when comparing bids?

A reputable contractor will provide extensive details about products and services they're delivering. Equally important is what is not included. Review your allowance schedule carefully, and be sure they are realistic for what you want. Also make sure you know what your budget covers. For example, flooring allowances usually cover the material, underlayment and installation. Read the contract to know exactly what it covers. If you're not sure, then ask. A reputable contractor will happily and easily answer these questions.



YOU CAN

SURVIVE THE SELECTION PROCESS

It's not uncommon for homeowners to get overwhelmed during the selections process. There are literally thousands of products, colors and finishes to choose from! Here are some tips to help guide you through the process.

- Allow yourself plenty of time. Rushing causes stress.
- Don't expect to get everything chosen in one or two days.
- Typically for a kitchen you would choose your cabinetry or countertops first, depending on which is more important to you. Then you would follow with your flooring, and then plumbing fixtures and lighting.
- Concentrate on one piece at a time. It can get very overwhelming, so when you need to take a break, do it!
- Don't be afraid to go back to a store two or more times to see a product.
- Ask for samples to take home. Set them in the room and look at them in all light scenarios.
- Ask for help if you are having trouble. Sometimes another person can give a lot of insight and make the decision process easier.
- This is most likely a once in a lifetime project, so enjoy it. Have fun!

GOT A KITCHEN REMODEL IN MIND?

**WE CAN HELP. CALL
540.951.3505 FOR A
CONSULTATION.**

NEWSLETTER OF:

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PROFESSIONAL CERTIFICATIONS & MEMBERSHIPS



Project Files

Creating a Kitchen Office

problem

In this kitchen remodel, the original desk was cluttered and almost unusable. Important documents and other items were exposed, and there was no storage.

solution

With custom cabinetry and countertops, we created a larger work area for bill paying and light home office work. The space is more private and less visible to guests from the front entrance.

The cabinetry also creates a designated office space that is separated from the kitchen work area without closing off the entire kitchen. Organizational cubbies, file drawers and extra storage allow the family to store important documents so nothing gets lost in the day-to-day shuffle.

