



# Getting Started: Creating Your Dream Kitchen

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Remodeling a kitchen is one of the most exciting rooms to renovate in your house. Whether cooking with your children, having wine with friends or simply relaxing with a cup of joe, everyone always ends up in the kitchen. It is the heart of the home. The good news is that out of any home improvement project, a kitchen renovation offers one of the highest return-on-investment. The selections and decisions may seem unending, but the possibilities and payoff are immense.

The first item that needs to be determined is what style or “look” are you wanting to create in your new kitchen? Are you looking for a sleek and streamlined look? Or a clean look that may have a little detail, but not too much? Are you more traditional and love the classic features? Determining the answer to this question is important, as your style choice needs to fit and compliment the rest of the house as well.

## **STEP 1: ARE YOU CONTEMPORARY, TRANSITIONAL OR TRADITIONAL?**

To keep it simple, let’s break it down into three style groups: Contemporary, Transitional and Traditional.

### ***Contemporary:***

Clean, sleek, modern and uncluttered would be the first 4 words that come to mind when describing a contemporary kitchen. However, today we see a lot of warm contemporary kitchens where some color or wood grains have been introduced that take away from the colder, more sterile feeling a contemporary kitchen has been known to display over the years. The typical contemporary kitchen of past years used to be monochromatic ... white on white on white. White is still a popular choice, but today it might be mixed with another texture, material or color for interest and warmth.





### ***Transitional:***

Think of a transitional kitchen as the great fusion of contemporary and traditional. It has the clean lines of a contemporary kitchen, but yet some of the details that a traditional kitchen may have. For example, the door style may be minimalistic but at the same time a hardware or light fixtures may be more detailed and intricate. They are typically more neutral when it comes to color, but they are far from boring. Transitional style kitchens are frequently adventurous in textures, everything from exciting tile surfaces to polished chrome or rough stone to add appeal. Often you will find a mix of natural and manufactured materials. It can often feature wood, steel and stone all in the same space.





### ***Traditional:***

If you like embellishments or adornments, then you will definitely be drawn to a traditional kitchen. Traditional kitchens focus on the details, everything from decorative wood hoods to corbels to appliques. The door style of choice typically has a raised center panel or a decorative applied molding that adds dimension.





## STEP 2: LEVELS OF CABINETRY

Once you determine your style preference the next step is to identify the [type of cabinetry that is best for your space](#). Then you can decide what options or upgrades you want inside your kitchen cabinets.

Separated by their specifications and price, cabinets are categorized into three levels:

### **STOCK CABINETRY**

Stock cabinetry is the most conservatively priced of the 3 levels of cabinetry, most of which you typically find at a big box store like Lowes, Menards, Ikea and places alike. Stock cabinets will have limitations and restrictions when it comes to sizes, door styles and finishes. You need to make your selections from what is available without modification. Stock cabinets are usually ready-made and available to take home with you. Stock cabinets are great for the do-it-yourselfer on a tighter budget.

### **SEMI-CUSTOM CABINETRY**

This is exactly what it sounds like... a cabinet that will have some of the capabilities that a custom cabinet will, but still has limitations. This cabinetry level will price in the middle of the road. A semi-custom cabinet will allow for most size modifications, but typically you aren't able to alter the finish or style of the cabinet. Within a semi-custom cabinetry line you will have some upgrade options. The flexibility of semi-custom allows more creativity when designing your new kitchen; therefore it takes more time to receive than a stock cabinet. Typical lead times for semi-custom cabinetry would be 4-6 weeks.

### **FULLY CUSTOM CABINETRY**

A fully custom cabinet is made to order by hand with only the finest materials and select grade woods. It is the "If you dream it, we can build it" approach. A custom cabinet will allow a customer to create their vision without restriction or limitation of finish or style options. If you have an irregular space and require odd-sized cabinets, a custom cabinet maker can build to suit. This maximizes storage, functionality and design in a way that a stock or semi-custom cabinet cannot. The lead times on custom cabinets are approximately 10 -12 weeks but can vary due to the complexities, finishes and style details. As a result of the options available within a custom line, this is the most expensive of the three, but, as you can imagine, by far the best quality.

## STEP 3: FINDING A FULL SERVICE KITCHEN DESIGN FIRM

The next step will be to determine which kitchen designer or kitchen design firm is the best fit. Recommendations from friends and social media channels are always a great way to get started. Great online resources are [Houzz](#) and [Angie's List](#). Once identifying a couple of kitchen remodeling companies you would like to visit, it is always good to ask some basic questions of your contenders.

### **10 QUESTIONS TO ASK YOUR POTENTIAL KITCHEN DESIGNER:**

1. What does your average kitchen renovation project cost and what does that include?
2. How long have you been in business? And how many of those years have you been doing kitchen remodels?
3. Do you charge to come out to my house for the preliminary consultation? If so, what does it include?
4. When do I get a copy of the design and elevations?
5. Are you full service or do I have to get my own contractors?
6. How long have your crews (workman) been with you?
7. How long will the project take from demolition to completion?
8. How soon could you start after receiving a deposit?
9. Once you start a project do you stay and work until it is complete?
10. Can I see a copy of your contract and payment schedule?

The process of any interior remodeling project can be a drastically different experience when you have the guidance of a professional kitchen designer leading the way versus stumbling thru it on your own. The design firm you decide to partner with plays a pivotal role in this process. This may be the most important decision you make regarding your new dream kitchen. We invite you to come and visit us in our showroom of over 20 kitchen displays.

For more information on how to choose the right kitchen designer for your remodeling project, [click here to download our "Choosing a Kitchen Designer" guide](#).

We hope you have found this information helpful. If you haven't started the process of remodeling your kitchen and would like more information, here is our contact information or click the link at the bottom of the page:

Kitchens & Baths Unlimited: 847-729-1212 or visit us at 1232 Waukegan Rd, Glenview, IL 60025.

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## ABOUT US

[Kitchens & Baths Unlimited](#) is a full service kitchen and bath remodeling firm of 30 years, doing business predominantly in the North Shore and Chicagoland areas.