



THE KITCHEN: THE CORNERSTONE OF THE HOME

By Blaine Smith

Cabinet options today are limitless. Dark wood, antiqued, glass, maple, or stainless steel? Ordained with brass handles or iron knobs? Located above the countertops or hidden away underneath the island butcher block table? The look and feel extends from modern and traditional to country and cosmopolitan. There is something for everyone. A review of cabinetry choices can make it easier for any homeowner to get ideas about how to bring their dream kitchen to life.

The types of cabinets are plentiful and sometimes overwhelming, but the right cabinet in the right place makes a huge difference in the efficiency and look of your new kitchen.

Box Cabinets

The most popular of all kinds is the traditional box cabinet. At face level, the cabinet should give full view of everything inside. They are made for their functionality and the ability to store a large quantity of items. However, box-style cabinetry uses up more space, so it may not be your best choice for a smaller kitchen.

Hidden Cabinets

A popular trend right now is open, airy kitchens. Replacing the large overhead bins with floor cabinets, drawers, under-island and pantry storage are gaining momentum. Everyone loves to have more space for those gourmet appliances or for food presentation when entertaining. Hidden

cabinets open up the kitchen and present a clean, uncluttered appearance. This option creates others, including the ability to use an open wall for a window that brings natural light into the kitchen.

DOORS

After deciding on the type of cabinet, door covers are your next opportunity for creating a kitchen that reflects your personal tastes. There are four types of doors to choose from.

Inset

The inset cabinet door rests entirely inside the cabinet frame so that there is no lip resting outside the frame. A knob or handle is not needed to open this type of door. This projects a smooth and modern look.

Lipped

The lipped cabinet door is a lot like the inset cabinet style, but there is a groove carved out along the back that allows the door to sit inside the cabinet frame so the door rests outside on the face of the cabinet. This type of door requires a knob or handle to open it.



Partial Overlay

The partial overlay door is a very popular choice. The partial overlay door is mounted on the face of the cabinet. The “overlay” refers to the amount of space on the face frame that is covered by the cabinet door. This traditional-looking cabinet gives

the kitchen a warm, wholesome look.

Full Overlay

The full overlay door covers the entire face frame of the cabinet. Since this look needs no knob or handle to open it, this creates a cleaner, more contemporary silhouette.



MATERIAL

The type of wood - oak, hickory, cherry, pine – can be complemented with color and grain choices, too. Collectively, they create your cabinet finish.

Stains or Glazes

If you want to match a color theme in the rest of your home, use a stain. It’s easy and has no color limits. Glazing your cabinet doors, which is coming back in a huge way, provides a subtle approach to accenting beautiful wood. Glaze a light colored wood door to set off the natural highlights in the wood finish.

Paint

Paint provides a wide assortment of colors, each shade reflecting a different feel and effect. A glossy paint can give a European feel while a textured dull finish presents a quiet country ambience. Another alternative is using paint and/or stains to create an antique look. People love the nostalgic feel that a heavily textured, dark-colored wood can give. The antique look can give just the right ‘just-like-mom-used-to-have’ appearance.

THE RIGHT CABINET IN THE RIGHT PLACE MAKES A HUGE DIFFERENCE.



Plastic

Plastic laminate delivers texture and pattern options. If you're trying to deliver a lot of personality, consider the endless patterned laminates that can be applied on your cabinet doors.

Stainless

A stainless steel door, or ornament, speaks: modern, crisp, polished. They never corrode, but do show fingerprints and scratches easily.

Glass

Glass is a traditional and popular choice that should be considered for addressing special issues. First, ambiance. Etched glass is like sophisticated artwork. Second, space. Glass, like mirrors, creates the illusion of expanded space. Great for a small kitchen. Three, practicality. When space is limited, it is easy to see what's inside each cabinet. Caution: you have to keep the kitchen storage orderly with see-through glass fronts.

Wood Veneer

A wood veneer, a thin slab of wood applied to the cabinet face, can give any cabinet a great decorative look. It also acts as a stabilizer, reducing shrinking due to climate changes that can cause costly splitting of beautiful wooden cabinets.

KNOBS & HANDLES

The variety on the market is sensational. Don't be afraid to try new colors or raw, textured knobs that look more rustic. Remember all the elements: metal, stainless steel, brass, rot iron, glass, even porcelain. Think of handles and knobs like an accessory for a great outfit.

The kitchen is the focal point of the home; the centerpiece of activity. The cabinets serve as a focal point within this gathering space so don't reduce your cabinets to simple storage centers. They are meant to do much more, including embellish, add color and character, and reflect your personality. Today's endless options make it easy to achieve all these goals and add functional beauty to your kitchen, too. ■