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# SPRING RENOVATIONS START NOW!

## A GUIDE TO PLANNING FOR YOUR NEW KITCHEN

**BY MELISSA DAVIS** | It's hard to think about planning a spring renovation when we're ankle deep in snow. I completely relate to the desire for a few chilly months of hibernation and procrastination, but this is prime planning time!

**T**he average kitchen renovation should be planned 3 to 6 months in advance. That means your spring start date should have you doing the preliminary legwork now. Here's the good news, we're also in prime time for design shows and home shows, ripe with the latest products and eager suppliers offering book early deals.

Before you begin, let me offer a few of the latest product innovations in kitchen design that us pros are using on our clients' homes right now. The kitchen sink isn't just the same old stainless it once ways!

**SINKS:** The leader in sink technology has been and continues to be **Blanco**. They were first to market with their Silgranit product which today is a heatproof, stain-proof, break-proof, scratch-proof sink offered in 7 colours all of which are on trend from white to anthracite with shades between, to seamlessly blend with any counter colour. Stainless is nice, but this is miles ahead.

**COUNTERS:** Composite counters remain the top pick for designers because of their stain resistance and colour range from fresh pure white to concrete and jet black.

**Caesar Stone** continues to offer new colours each season with patterns like Calacatta Nuvo, emulating a beautiful subtle marble.

**CABINETS:** As we've all become more aware of the dangers lurking in everything from our cleaning supplies to the paint on our walls,





most manufacturers have responded by offerings a low VOC cabinet. **AYA Kitchens** carries a collection with beautiful styles from ultra contemporary to traditional.

**APPLIANCES:** We're seeing a movement away from the bright stainless, instead opting for integrated and matched appliances. Samsung launched their new series with a deep black stainless finish. The great pop of metal with a more sophisticated tone.

## KITCHEN REMODEL CHECKLIST

### 3 TO 6 MONTHS BEFORE:

- Start getting inspired — pull images and create boards on *Pinterest*.
- Keep versus ditch — determine what works and doesn't in your existing kitchen
- Make a budget — kitchen renovations can be as simple as a facelift, but even just changing appliances requires an electrician and plumber. Plan every foreseeable cost in advance to avoid overspending.
- Hire the team — select a designer, cabinet company and contractor that will work together as a cohesive team and understand your style, budget limitations.

### 3 TO 6 WEEKS BEFORE:

- Make decisions — select the style, palette, appliances and fixtures in advance to leave time for substitutions if needed. Budget and availability often mean changes are needed.
- Call it done — settle on a layout, down to the smallest details like drawer inserts, lighting.

### DAYS BEFORE:

- Pack it up — pack up your existing kitchen items and store. Don't leave anything behind that might slow down the crew. Time is money!
- Stick to the plan — there will be a lot of questions. No matter how much pre-planning was done, things come up. If you've properly planned in advance, you will feel confident in the choices and stick to the original plan. Any changes ahead will cost time and money.

**LIGHTING:** One of the most important elements for both function and completing the overall look, innovative lighting has made it all the way to the mass-market kitchen offerings. **IKEA's** new line of kitchens offers in-drawer, in-cabinet and feature lighting with accessories that connect to the same power supply for charging USB devices.



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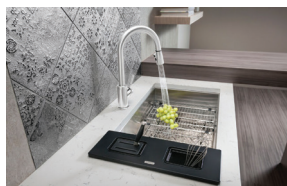
# LIVING LARGE IN SMALLER SPACES

**By LINDA MAZUR** | Small space living can be wonderful, but it does require some creative design thinking. While you may feel that you have compromised on your square footage, this doesn't mean you have to compromise on design, comfort or functionality of your home.



As a designer, I have found that with the rise in “small space” builds over the last few years, many companies have adapted their designs and product lines to accommodate this growing trend, enabling us to better utilize our spaces. In the kitchen there are many great ways to work with small spaces. Look to use wall space for as much storage as possible to avoid losing valuable area on your counters. Today, you can buy all sorts of wonderful wall storage systems for everything from knives and utensils, to pots and your herbs.

A magic corner is another idea for “size-challenged” areas, and great way to utilize the dead space at the back of your corner cabinet. Or perhaps consider adding a hidden drawer in toe-kick beneath your cabinets which is perfect for trays and platters. For those of us who don't have the luxury of counter space, **Blanco** has introduced some great products that can pull double



duty to increase the efficiency in your kitchen. Consider a great workstation add-on that is part of their *Quatrus Gourmet Series*; it enables you to create added work space at your sink, a fantastic feature for kitchens where space is at a premium. The *Blanco Precis collection* with drain board sink is available in their exclusive Silgrant material and includes a grid tray, optional cutting board that slides over the sink or drainer board allowing for a distinctly functional work space.

Small space living can be fabulous, but it doesn't mean that you have to make concessions on style, it simply means strategic thought should go into your design. Think vertically when designing your home — you need to use every bit of available space and that often means going “up” with your storage solutions. Identify and implement all hidden areas, the space at the end of a hallway, under a staircase, or even over windows and doorways. Choose multi-purpose furniture like coffee tables with

hidden storage, or introduce pieces you may not necessarily use in that particular area, like a chest of drawers as a side table by your sofa.

Two important points you should remember as a small-space dweller, make sure your furniture selections are the correct size and scale for your room; and declutter! When you live in small surrounds you need to pare down to the items most important to you... remember everything has its place! Though you may believe small spaces are easy to work with, in fact they can be the most challenging. Consider working with a designer like myself to make the most of your space. With some inspiration and planning it's possible to create a well-appointed, beautiful home in minimal square footage.

Designer **LINDA MAZUR** is the Principal Designer of Linda Mazur Design Group. With over a decade of experience this sought out multi-disciplinary interior design firm is known for providing innovative interior renovations and full scale build projects that reflect both timeless style and optimal functionality. The firm services Toronto, GTA and surrounding areas. [www.lindamazurdesign.com](http://www.lindamazurdesign.com)  
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