

# transitions in kitchen design

priorities benefit all

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This kitchen addition like many others, started with a desire to improve the ability to gather and entertain within the kitchen itself. When indoors, most people in this day and age spend the majority of their time with family and friends, in their kitchens. While this is a natural culmination of our busy lives, the need to take advantage of every opportunity to spend time together as families, and our love for food, drink and friends, for many homeowners the kitchen isn't always the ideal space to enjoy

these moments. That is unless the kitchen is designed with just these things in mind. Even in homes built within the last few decades, the kitchen has been generally undersized in relation to other rooms in the house that are used far less. From a design point of view, the kitchen has been mostly relegated to a utilitarian space meant for preparing and storing food, not gathering and entertaining with even average sized groups of people. Some of these design conventions in homes are dictated by economics and the extra cost that

adding square footage to a kitchen imposes on the overall cost of the home. After all, kitchen space isn't an empty shell comprised mainly of flooring and paint. Every square foot of kitchen space carries costs far above any other room in the home. Cabinets, appliances, countertops, additional lighting, all carry costs greater than the average footage. In addition, consumer perception of what rooms a house should include in order to be considered a quality home, force architects to manage the overall square footage to accommodate these

conventions. Unfortunately, in most cases that means sacrificing "living" space within the kitchen itself. Even though for a lot of people, that's the room they find themselves "living" in the most.

As a result of lack of space, kitchen remodeling, expansions and additions in particular, are becoming necessary improvements for aligning lifestyle with the flexibility the kitchen can offer a large family. This potential for increasing quality of life

FEATURE



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and comfort in the most important room of the home, was the basis for our homeowners' decision to add on. The design process involved a series of consultations that addressed these needs as well as the possibilities the existing structure had. Where, how large, and what shape the addition and the existing space would eventually be, were discussed to help

determine what would fit the budget and still accomplish all of their goals. In some cases this is as simple as erecting a rectangular extension off the back of the home to increase the square footage of the kitchen. However in this case, because of the presence of mainly right angles and boxes as the primary lines of the existing rear façade, the homeowners and



I decided to create some interest and variation to the simplicity of the existing back elevation by incorporating 45 degree angles to the corners of the addition. This basic design technique helped in many ways to define the interior layout, and create the zones that allowed the new kitchen to act as a living space. From the outside, it softened the potentially abrupt appearance of yet another box, jutting out from the back of the house.

On the inside, the angled walls in the back, created a large open space in the center of the kitchen that begged for a substantial island for seating, preparation, and clean up; while maintaining intimacy with those sharing the space. With seating for seven, and plenty of

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counter space, this island is ideal for accommodating large groups of people comfortably. Simultaneously, the perimeter walls served multiple purposes as well. Part of them serve the functional aspects of cooking and storing food. While the rest of the outer walls serve as “living” space. An adequate desk space, and a large bench for lounging, face the yard and are grounded by windows that allow one to see through the kitchen to the outside. These features help produce the feelings of peace and togetherness that we all want to associate with our homes. Having addressed the fundamental design elements that were lacking in the smaller, original kitchen, our attentions turned to the aesthetic.

Transitional design has become one of the most popular styles to evolve in recent years, and its clean lines coupled with subtle decorative elements, suits those seeking a refined look while maintaining an environment that is comfortable, uncluttered and unobtrusive. Transitional forgoes the decorative embellishments and excessive detail that more traditional design embodies. Cabinet doors have fewer lines and contours, molding shapes are more graceful and less busy. Combined with modern stainless steel appliances and tile backsplashes that are void of complex, random patterns; the transitional kitchen is an ideal marriage of style and functionality.

Our philosophy when remodeling is to provide the quality of life benefits that improving your home can offer. Kitchens are a great place to start! They are the hub of our homes, and have the best potential for magnifying these benefits on a daily basis. It's no coincidence that the #1 project realtors suggest to sellers, and the #1 project buyers look for having been done by previous owners, is the kitchen remodel. Even updating the existing space can yield massive benefits. For some people, the additional space needed to improve the kitchen, already exists in a rarely used dining, or formal living room. This too is a popular trend among homeowners who are looking for a more intermediary cost to improve. No matter what your situation, there are countless options to add functionality and beauty to the most dynamic of rooms. Don't be afraid to prioritize how you live in your home on a daily basis when deciding if sacrificing other spaces is prudent from a resale standpoint. Take advantage of the time and space your house affords you now and be confident in the fact that you are not alone in your priority to live more comfortably in your kitchen. If designed properly, it has the potential to transform your lifestyle in positive ways that few other projects can match. More than that, it's an improvement that can be shared with loved ones. The kitchen personifies the core of what our homes are; places to create warm memories year after year.

R&A

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