

7 Reasons to Hire a Kitchen Designer

After 30 years in business I was recently asked a question that has haunted me every day since I started The Buckingham Group, “I just want to update my kitchen, why would I need to hire a designer?” As a homeowner it is important to recognize when you are overwhelmed and it’s time to call a designer for help. Kohler (www.kohler.com) has always been a great source of information for me throughout the years. They have provided this comprehensive article to help in this difficult process. Enjoy!

Redesigning any room is a challenging venture. But redesigning a kitchen poses its own special challenges. Few rooms offer such a vast choice of styles and products and require us to make decisions that will be so permanent. And it’s no small matter shutting down the heart of your home to upgrade with features that may well last a lifetime.

You’re bound to feel overwhelmed at some point in the process. Your eyes may glaze over as you leaf through stacks of design magazines or when you size up your oddly shaped cooking area. Or worse, it may hit you after the work is done, as you step back to behold your design creation and spot mistakes that are now too costly to fix.



So when do you decide it’s time to call in a professional? Interior designers Sandy Gordon of Madison, WI, and Nancy Hoff Barsotti of New York City and Pittsburgh, say it’s when:

1. You can’t communicate your vision effectively to others.

Shopping for kitchen furnishings is a time-consuming exercise, but it can be done. What can be trickier is describing to retailers the products or overall look you desire. Interior designers can help equip their clients with the right communication tools—from appropriate questions and descriptive phrases to sample

products and floor plans. Or, you can relax and let the design expert—who knows both you and the market—present a limited number of product options to you.

2. A challenging space has you stumped.

Do you have too many doorways? Not enough storage? No windows? Angled walls or ceilings? If you’re scratching your head over these complex design issues, it may be time to call in an expert. “It’s an interior designer’s forte to assess challenging spaces and see different options,” Gordon says. For example, she suggests adding natural lighting to a narrow, dark kitchen by placing windows above wall cabinets—or under them, in the space normally reserved for a backsplash. If you lack storage space, an interior designer can suggest the latest or most suitable options in cabinet design and storage to help maximize your space.



3. Your head is spinning from too many product choices.

When this happens, people have a tendency to either table the project indefinitely or make costly mistakes. Why not seek some guidance from an expert? "These choices are expensive and you're not apt to change them," Barsotti says. "A consultant fee of no more than \$1,000 in most areas is well worth it for a kitchen project that can easily run into the \$30,000 range."

4. Temptation is tugging at your purse strings.



If you've ever stepped into a kitchen showroom or simply eyed one in a magazine, you know the seductive power of a state-of-the-art kitchen. Even the most cost-conscious consumer may be tempted to go over budget. "Interior designers are mindful of clients' budgets and know what can be done with less," Barsotti says.

5. You need personalized advice.

Experienced designers know which questions to ask to target your needs and lifestyle. Who works in the kitchen, and how? Is there a height differential between two partners who'll be cooking together? Do you love to entertain, or

cook strictly for the family? Are you ready for professional-style appliances and features? The best designers have a knack for revealing details that can tailor your new kitchen to your needs.

6. You're having trouble blending styles or developing a theme.

Spouses often differ in style preferences, with one leaning toward traditional styles and the other seeking a more contemporary look. Finding the right "transitional" balance can be difficult. An interior designer can help you blend styles by using, among other techniques, a cohesive color scheme throughout your floor plan. They can also help you develop a period style and obtain products that are true to a particular era.



7. You suspect you're overlooking important details.

An interior designer will pay close attention to electrical and lighting—areas that are likely beyond the know-how of most customers. For example, Barsotti recommends placing power strips underneath upper cabinets to avoid marring beautiful backsplashes with electrical outlets. A designer can also help you make choices in cabinet hardware and finishes that will best enhance your kitchen style.

For more information or a complimentary consultation please feel free to contact our office at 918-624-2666.

Sincerely,

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