

# Build Your Dream Kitchen

Countertops | Cabinets | Flooring



# Introduction

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Long regarded as the heart of the home, the kitchen is undeniably an important room — maybe even the most important. It's a place where guests gather and where family memories are made.

So what happens when your kitchen just doesn't feel like the great room it's supposed to be?

Maybe it just feels a little outdated. Maybe your family has grown and your needs have changed. Whatever your reason is, you've decided to renovate.

That's great! But once you start thinking about everything that goes into a renovation, it can begin to feel overwhelming.

Don't worry. Here at Daniel Fox Construction, we've done plenty of kitchen renovations over the years. In this guide, we'll share with you some of our expertise based on experiences we've had with our clients and some of the common questions that they have along the way. We'll break down the whole process for you, step by step, to help you have a better idea of what to expect — and maybe even get some amazing ideas for your own kitchen.

Ready to start planning  
the kitchen of your dreams?

# Seeing the Big Picture

When planning your kitchen renovation, you'll need to start with the big ideas first and then work your way down to the details. It's easy to get caught up thinking about the gorgeous granite countertop you've been eyeing, but have you thought about whether it fits your style, your needs, and your budget?

## Why Are You Renovating?

This is undoubtedly the most important question to ask yourself. The answer to this question will dictate just about everything you choose. If your biggest priority is to add an island or another structural change, you want to make that the core of your budget and plan everything else around it. If your goal is to make an exquisite space for entertaining, that will affect the materials you choose and more.

**While considering this question,  
there are a few other things you should ask yourself:**

- To what extent do you want to remodel your kitchen? Are you just updating the cabinets and countertops, or are you looking for a complete overhaul? Are you changing the layout or adding new features?
- Do you have a start date in mind? Are you trying to complete your remodel before an upcoming event?
- Do you have any children or pets?
- Do you want to expand the square footage of the room?
- How will the remodel impact your day-to-day life during the construction period? Will you need a temporary kitchen set up while the renovation takes place?

A good contractor will also ask you these types of questions to make sure that the entire process goes smoothly.

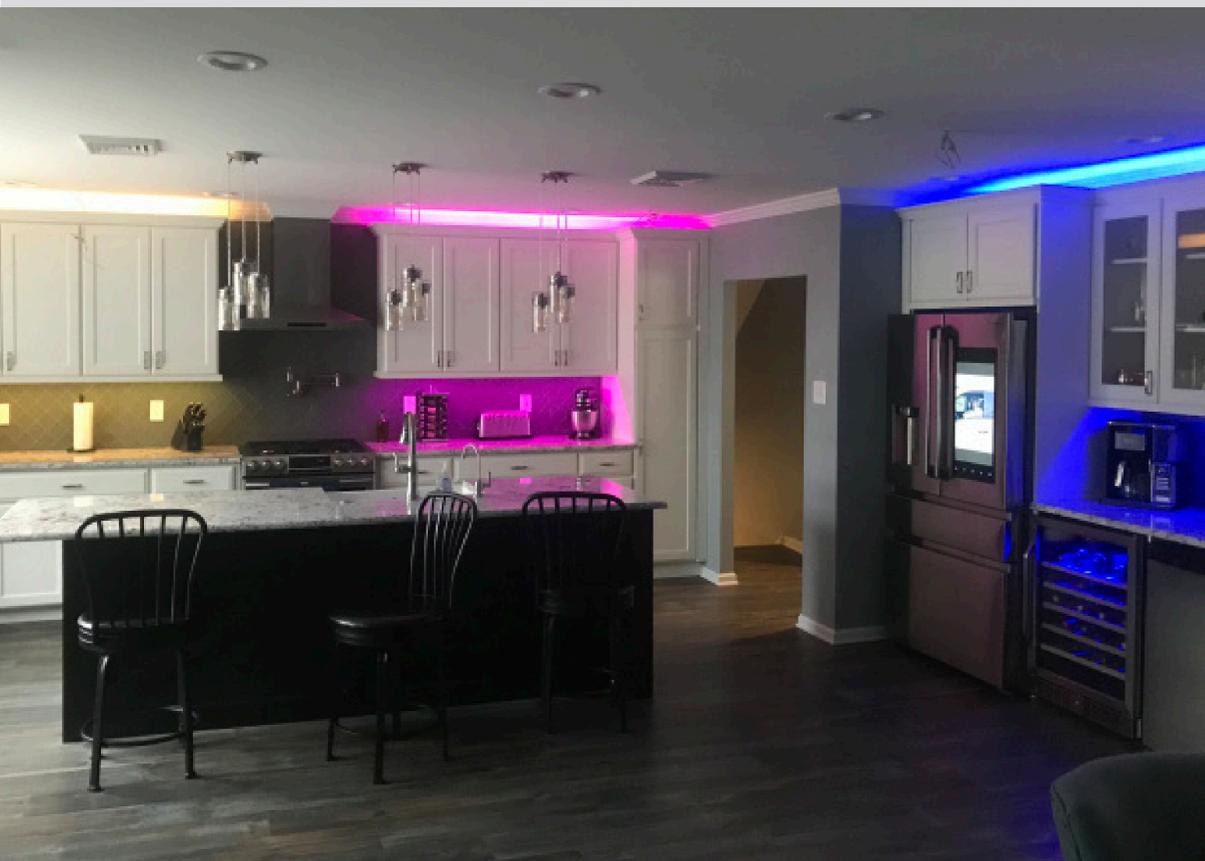


## What's Your Style?

Most people like their kitchens to complement the rest of their home aesthetically. If you've been poking around for ideas online, you've probably come across these three terms that broadly define style:

- **Traditional:** A timeless look that often includes classic colors and natural materials. Cabinetry will have raised panels or molding, giving it a more decorative appearance.
- **Modern:** If you prefer a minimalist look with clean lines, modern is the way to go. Sleek, metallic fixtures and finishes are common in this type of kitchen.
- **Transitional:** A blend of both traditional and modern styles, transitional kitchen often have a mix of natural and manufactured materials. Cabinetry lines are clean with little or no ornamentation.

Don't worry if you don't know exactly what style you're going for; but having a general idea will help you collaborate with your contractor and designer as you choose elements for the room.



## Color Me Happy

In addition to the overall style, the color palette for your kitchen will help to "set the mood." No matter what color you have in mind, it will fall into one of these three categories:

- **Neutral:** By far the most popular option, neutral colors consist of shades of white, gray, brown, and black. Neutrals are great because they fit in with every home's color scheme.
- **Warm:** If you want to add a little spice, warm colors like yellows, oranges, and reds can add some zing to your space.
- **Cool:** Soothing blues, greens, and purples can make your kitchen feel like your own personal oasis.

If you like the idea of adding some color but don't want to go overboard, adding pops of bright hues to lighting fixtures or backsplashes can add a little personality.



## Form vs. Function

Have you been ogling a few gorgeous kitchen projects that have popped up on your Instagram feed recently? (Don't worry — we have been, too.) Still, it's important to keep in mind how you'll be using the space. Are you in desperate need of more storage space? Then maybe that modern, minimalist kitchen isn't the best choice. Do you find that you always need more counter space to prepare family meals or to set out trays for entertaining? Perhaps adding a big, cozy nook isn't the right move.

Your end goal should be to create a space that both meets your needs and fulfills your vision of what a beautiful kitchen should be, which leads us to everyone's least favorite topic...



## Budget: Be Realistic

Although it might not be something that we like to think about, it's crucial to determine from the beginning what a realistic budget is for your project. If you don't, you won't be able to prioritize the features that are most important, or you could end up spending more than you wanted to because you fell in love with a slab of marble. (Believe us, it happens.)

Some people have the misconception that if they tell a contractor their budget, then they will end up being charged more. This is simply untrue. A good contractor will showcase the value that they have to offer in the form of their expertise in both design and construction. They will also help you prioritize what to spend on each aspect of your kitchen by asking plenty of questions about your goals. For example, if you're set on getting top-of-the-line appliances, maybe you want to go with a more cost-effective set of cabinets. They should encourage open and honest communication so that at the end of the day, you are absolutely thrilled with your new kitchen.

## So, What's Next?

We're just getting started! Next, we'll dive into all of the individual elements that will make your kitchen uniquely yours.



# Let's Get Cooking!

This is where the fun really begins. In this guide, we'll help you select all of the following elements and go over some of the options you'll have:

- Countertops - 7
- Cabinets - 8
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# Crazy About Countertops

Countertops are a defining feature of your kitchen's style, but there is so much more to picking a material than how it looks! The surface of your countertop may face hot pans, sharp knives, unexpected spills, and more. How will it hold up against household perils?

For example, you might adore the soft colors and one-of-a-kind veining of a marble countertop, but your busy family might be a little too hard on the stone. Plus, it could take a huge chunk out of your budget.

Not sure what countertop material is the best fit for your kitchen? Check out these eight popular options!

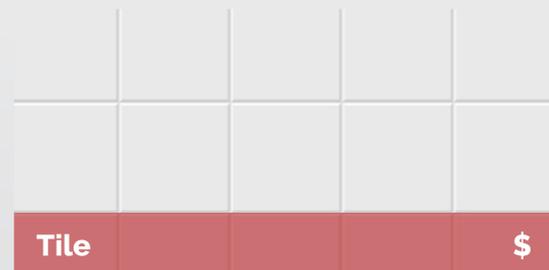


**Laminate**

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Laminate can mimic the look and texture of wood, marble, and other natural materials at a much lower price. It resists scratches and stains, and it's easy to install!

*Good choice for:* DIY enthusiasts who can be hard on their countertops.



**Tile**

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Tile comes in materials, colors, and styles that match any taste and make customization simple. If you love natural stone (but not the price tag!), consider using affordable tiles.

*Good choice for:* Savvy homeowners who love to get creative.



**Wood**

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Wood adds a warm, natural feel to a kitchen, and no two pieces of wood are quite the same. This charming material will take a little more care than some choices.

*Good choice for:* Modern cooks who love a relaxing, organic working space.



**Granite**

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Every slab of granite is unique, with striking colors and veining. This natural stone is tough enough to dull a knife blade, but it does take some upkeep to retain its gorgeous looks.

*Good choice for:* Entertainers who always have a crowd in their kitchen.



**Quartz**

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This engineered stone comes in many vibrant colors and patterns. It is also incredibly durable, withstanding stains, scratches, acids, heat, and impact.

*Good choice for:* Homeowners who love a stylish kitchen — despite any mishaps!



**Recycled Glass**

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Depending on the style, recycled glass countertops can add eye-catching color to a kitchen or look subdued, yet chic. Most slabs are 80% to 90% recycled glass.

*Good choice for:* Eco-conscious homeowners with a bold sense of style.



**Marble**

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Marble is elegant and highly desirable, featuring beautiful, one-of-a-kind veining. This luxurious natural stone is heat resistant, but it will stain and scratch.

*Good choice for:* Cooks who use their kitchen as a tranquil retreat.



**Stainless Steel**

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This sleek metal is the go-to for most restaurants: durable, easy to maintain, and hygienic. It suits both industrial and retro designs, but it can be noisier than other surfaces.

*Good choice for:* Serious chefs who don't mind a little clanging.

# Get Creative With Cabinets

Cabinets are a major factor in your kitchen's beauty and function. There are tons of styles and materials to choose from, which is amazing — and a little overwhelming. Before you pick the right cabinets for your kitchen, you have to understand the different options.

## Look High and Low For the Right Type

Most kitchens include some combination of the three basic cabinet types:

- Base Cabinets are low to the ground. These sturdy cabinets are the base for heavy countertops and provide storage space for cookware and cleaning supplies.
- Wall Cabinets are hung on the wall. They are lovely and useful, perfect for storing items like dishes, glasses, and spice racks.
- Tall Cabinets or "Pantry Cabinets" tower as high as 8 feet! They easily fit large items like brooms, mops, and bulk food supplies.



## Shake Up Your Cabinet Style

Different kitchen designs call for different cabinet styles:

- Shaker is the most common style and goes with most kitchens. It features a five-piece door with a frame made of four pieces and a recessed center panel.
- Flat is minimalist and without extravagant details. It is a good fit for modern and contemporary kitchens.
- Inset designs are precisely constructed so that they nest inside the cabinet's frame. This style calls back to Georgian and Victorian-era kitchens.



## Will You Go Against the Grain?

Here's where you can really let your sense of style shine! Traditionally, cabinets are made of woods from a variety of species such as cherry, maple, hickory, oak, or birch. You may also consider a budget-friendly (but still durable!) laminate or Thermofoil.

Once you decide on a material, it's time to pick the color. Will you choose natural wood-grain, classic white, sleek grey, or a daring shade like fire-engine red?

## Choose What to 'Ware

Hardware is the finishing touch for your cabinets, and the right choice will complement your kitchen's overall design, just like the perfect jewelry set pairs with your favorite outfit. There are three main types: knobs, pulls, and hinges. You can also choose from a range of materials and styles.



## It's What's On the Inside That Counts

Your cabinets may look stunning, but a big renovation is hardly worth it if you don't have the storage that you need. Choose custom storage solutions that will maximize the usefulness of your kitchen space:

- Corner drawers
- Organizers for pots & pans
- Rotating spice racks
- Narrow or curved pullouts
- Tiered shelves
- Over-door organizers

# Fabulous Flooring

Your kitchen deals with a lot of traffic: crowds of guests, family mealtimes, and late night snack runs. Add in the occasional cooking mishap, and that floor might be the hardest-working part of your house!

When you choose your kitchen floor, you need to consider the look, the durability, and how it fits in your budget. You'll find upsides and downsides to every material, and not every option within each category is created equal, so speak with your contractor before making any big decisions. There are plenty of flooring options out there, but most of our clients pick one of these five:



**Hardwood**

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Hardwood never goes out of style and is perfect for open floor plan homes. This material is durable and low-maintenance but somewhat vulnerable to spills.

Good choice for: A family who loves a cozy, stylish home and might make a few messes.



**Tile**

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The most common type of kitchen tile is porcelain, which can mimic natural stone or have an earthy, rustic look. This lovely flooring holds up against impacts and spills.

Good choice for: Homeowners who want the style of stone without the upkeep or the price tag.



**Laminate**

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DIY-friendly laminate might just be the toughest flooring, and it can mimic most other materials. Its super-hard surface may feel artificial, though, and it can be slippery.

Good choice for: Families that need an everything-proof floor for a reasonable price.



**Vinyl**

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Vinyl is the most budget-friendly option. It is easy to clean, water-resistant, pleasant underfoot, and available in a variety of styles and colors. But it's not eco-friendly and will scratch.

Good choice for: Cooks who are always standing at the stovetop and need a soft, yet sturdy floor.



**Stone**

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This luxurious natural flooring gives your kitchen a designer look and adds resale value to a home. It requires some upkeep, however, and it can be expensive.

Good choice for: An entertainer who loves to wow guests with impeccable style.

# Dive Into the Details

## Splish, Splash, Backsplash

Backsplash protects walls from spills and splatter while offering a lovely focal point for your kitchen. There are so many materials, patterns, and decorative designs that we could spend chapters just exploring the latest trends! Some of the most popular backsplash tiles include:

- Ceramic: lightweight, affordable, and easy to install
- Glass: colorful, eco-friendly, and effortless to maintain
- Marble: beautiful, luxurious, and simple to clean

Once you've found a backsplash that fits your style, consider highlighting the stove area with a functional and elegant pot filler faucet.



## Light It Up

Lighting fixtures can brighten up a space and your mood. Different types of lighting will serve different roles, and you may need to combine a few lights to create the right atmosphere:

- Ambient lighting gently fills up the kitchen.
- Direct lighting lights up workspaces.
- Decorative lighting is eye-catching.

Once you understand the type of lighting that you need, move on to design. Do you prefer hanging pendant lights or high-hat lights that are installed flush with the ceiling? Would you like to add under-cabinet lighting to brighten up your cooking space and add depth to your kitchen? How about a Hue LED lighting system that you can turn on and off with your smartphone?

Finally, spend some time considering the different types of light bulbs and how they fit into your home, your lifestyle, and your budget.



## Let That Sink In

Sinks are more than just a place to do your dishes. They can be real statement pieces! Consider these gorgeous options:

- Integrated Sinks seamlessly incorporate your sink into your countertop.
- Farm Sinks feature an exposed front and deep basin, perfect for a country kitchen.
- Stainless Steel Sinks are durable, affordable, and absolutely timeless.
- Undermount Sinks are installed below the countertop for a sleek look.

Once you pick a sink, don't be afraid to choose a unique faucet, too!

## An Island Getaway

Kitchen islands can be used as storage areas, prep spaces, and informal eating areas. Talk to your designer about the way that you want to use your kitchen island. If you're going to do a lot of chopping, then a wooden counter might be best, while a breakfast area should be just the right height and width to fit everyone in the family.

Additionally, since the kitchen island is separate from your main kitchen, you can go a little wild. Try incorporating a new color or material that stands out and shows off your unique taste.



## In Your Own Little Corner

A breakfast nook is the perfect place to start your day with a cup of coffee and enjoy the morning sunshine. This space can be cozy, bold, or modern. Here are a few ideas to get your creative juices flowing:

- Set it near a window where there's plenty of light.
- Structures can be built-in, or you can "construct" a nook with furniture.
- Use this space for reading, playing board games, and more!
- Choose pillows that are cute, comfy, and easy to clean.



## Bar None

You can mix up your parties and family gatherings by adding a bar to your kitchen. When you put together your bar, consider how tall you want your bar stools to be so that nobody's knees are knocking against the counter. Make sure you have easy access to ice cubes for cocktails and a refrigerator for all your syrups and citrus. Finally, remember to stock your kitchen with a basic bar kit and plenty of glasses.

## Feel a Spark

Electrical outlets have a lot of power over how your kitchen is organized: where you keep your small appliances, where you plug in handheld items, and so on. Consider having extra outlets custom-built in your cabinets, and don't forget to install some USB ports for your smartphone and other devices!



## Endless Possibilities

If you can dream it, we can make it happen. Daniel Fox Construction will work with you to accommodate almost any idea and create a kitchen that is truly yours.

# Choosing the Right Contractor

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A great home contractor will work with you to complete your renovation process on budget and on time. With their guidance, you will create the gorgeous kitchen that you've always wanted. When choosing the contractor for your next project, look into their:

## Experience

You don't want messy grout, poor lighting, and an awkwardly-placed island, so don't let yourself be an inexperienced contractor's guinea pig! Instead, find a reputable professional who has completed many projects similar to yours. A knowledgeable contractor will avoid all the little mistakes common among new contractors and DIYers.

## Credentials

Do not even consider hiring a contractor who is not licensed by your state and local government! That license guarantees that your contractor has passed exams and proven that they know their trade. A licensed contractor will also have liability insurance, which offers you added protection.

## Start Planning Your Dream Kitchen Today!

We have walked you through every step of the renovation process: setting a budget, choosing the perfect details, finding a trustworthy contractor, and everything in between! Now it's time to start thinking about how you can turn your dream kitchen into a reality.

At Daniel Fox Construction, we have remodeled countless kitchens over the past 30 years and are always committed to providing quality renovations that exceed our clients' expectations. We believe in open communication, unwavering reliability, and keen attention to detail.

**Quality \* Integrity \* Trust...**  
**Anything Less Is Unacceptable.**



We highly recommend Daniel Fox Construction for any and all of your remodel needs. They tackle projects large and small with equal skill and professionalism.

- L. and R. Harkins Yardley, PA

While updating our kitchen you offered insight and perspective that not only helped achieve the look we were going for but maintained the dignity of our older home.

- J. Layden

We are completely delighted with the end product and our overall experience with Dan and his organization [...] each time we walk into our kitchen we take pride in how it looks and functions.

-The Griffins