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ULTIMATE GUIDE TO KITCHEN EXTENSIONS

Adding more space won't just improve your home's layout, it can boost your property's value and desirability, too. Here's how to get the design of your dream room just right

When designing a kitchen extension, working out exactly how you will use your space goes hand-in-hand with calculating the room's footprint and layout. With these considerations decided, you can then move on to aesthetics – and all this before hiring professionals.

HOW WILL YOU USE YOUR SPACE?

Is your new room to be just a kitchen-diner? Will it include a living space, too? Do you want a utility room? Is it to be open plan or a series of smaller spaces? Will it connect to the garden, perhaps with folding-sliding doors?

Planning the interior layout meticulously while considering the footprint is the key to success, especially if the new room is to have multiple zones. 'I always suggest taking an honest look at how you use your kitchen, how you wish you could use the new space, and what you really love about friends' kitchens,' advises Tori Summers, head designer at Benchmarx Kitchens & Joinery. ➤



FAMILY FRIENDLY

Completed as part of a whole house refurbishment, which also included a loft conversion, this 1890s mid-terrace house in Barnet, London, has been transformed with a single-storey rear extension. A slightly pitched roof with extensive glazing allows light down into the main living space below, while bi-fold doors lead out to a new terrace area. The entire project, including the loft conversion, cost £120,000 (excluding VAT), by Model Projects

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With just a small galley kitchen at the back, this Victorian terraced house was in need of extra space. By extending to the rear and out into the side return, the large wraparound extension is big enough for a contemporary kitchen, dining and living area, leading out to a terrace through bi-fold doors. Designed and constructed by Build Team, the build cost was around £55,000

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'It is also worth factoring in any pet hates you have with your existing kitchen – and how these might be solved with clever planning.'

If you decide on the most desirable option of a kitchen-diner-living space that's open to the garden, has a utility room and perhaps even a walk-in larder, consider potential downsides: are you attempting to squeeze too much into the space, to the detriment of the whole room; or building an extension so large that the garden is compromised?

The solutions to these issues? If you really want to cook, dine and lounge in your new room, be clever with your space. For example, swapping a large dining table for a kitchen island with a generous, drop-down breakfast bar, or putting banquette seating around a small table, could enable you to fit in a sofa, too. Perhaps the utility room could be downsized and hidden within the kitchen in a floor-to-ceiling cupboard? Or maybe a space-efficient pull-out larder cupboard could be fitted instead of a walk-in one? 'Islands require a great deal of circulation room, so in a small kitchen, a peninsula is an alternative,' advises architectural designer Nicola Hill.

Will your new, open-plan room be the only reception space in the house? In that case, it might be worth dividing the living area from the kitchen-diner, perhaps with glazed doors or walls, or folding internal doors, so it remains open most of the time but can be separated when necessary.

WHERE'S BEST TO EXTEND?

The size and shape of your extension's final footprint will largely depend on whether you're building under permitted development; applying for permission for a larger build, such as a double-storey extension; whether you are incorporating existing elements, such as an integral garage, and how much garden you have to sacrifice.

'If your garden is small, you might want to consider rearranging the existing internal space and possibly extending at the front or into a side return,' advises Nicola Hill. 'But even if your garden is large, it's important to plan the layout carefully and maximise the use of space rather than just putting a huge addition on the back of your house. It's also worth taking into account the

PHOTOGRAPHY PAUL MILLER PHOTOGRAPHY



CHARACTER ADDITION

This Victorian semi-detached home in Moseley, Birmingham, lacked a sociable family space. A new brick-built extension to the side and rear of the house has created a large open-plan layout with kitchen-diner and living area. Contemporary rooflights and two sets of bi-fold doors bring in maximum light. Designed by Intervention Architecture, it cost around £63,000 to build, including the glazing.



position of neighbouring properties and the path of the sun through the day to get the extension just right.'

At this stage, think about the arrangement of various elements of the room, too. Ideally, the new cloakroom, utility, larder or kitchen will sit in the middle of the house – in the darkest part of the new extension – while the lounge area is next to the windows or doors to the garden to make the most of the daylight. The dining table, or breakfast bar, is best placed between the kitchen and living area, to define and separate these

zones. Bear in mind that to keep your extension cost-effective, the location of water, waste and gas supplies, and the most convenient access for cooker hood ducting might dictate the layout and positioning of the new kitchen.

Next, look at how the new space will be linked to existing rooms. The aim is for it to feel like an always-been-there addition, with the entrance into it flowing naturally from the original house. You can achieve this with good design and architecture – but consistent décor can help, too. 'It's important that the aesthetic of >



PHOTOGRAPH NICHOLAS YARLEY

SIDE ORDER

This kitchen extension to a London home was designed by Holloways of Ludlow Architectural Design & Build. A side-return extension has gained valuable space for a dining/entertaining area in the kitchen and helped to create a seamless link to the garden. The Schüller C kitchen cabinetry is complemented by a 12mm Silestone worktop. From £20,000 for the kitchen only

your new extension flows with the rest of your home,' says Adrian Stoneham, managing director of Stoneham Kitchens & Interior Furniture. 'It doesn't necessarily have to be exactly the same style, but there should be a sense of cohesion as you go from one room to another.'

HOW CAN YOU DESIGN THE BEST SPACE?

► 'Look at magazines and websites such as Realhomes.com and Pinterest to get ideas for the type of renovation you are planning,' says Jude Tugman, managing director of Architect Your Home. 'Save them to show your architect or designer, as this will help them understand what you are hoping to achieve and the styles you admire.'

► 'Talking to your chosen kitchen manufacturer early on in the planning scheme can be a real benefit, especially when it comes to budget and space,' says Tori Summers. 'They will be able to suggest solutions you've perhaps not thought of, as well as helping you achieve the look you want, but at different price points.'

► 'Plumbing and electrics should be considered right from the very

beginning,' warns Adrian Stoneham. 'They will need to be fitted to reflect where your appliances and sink are being installed and the power loadings required for individual equipment. For a kitchen extension, it's likely you will have to add to a circuit that goes directly from the distribution board.'

► Getting light levels right in kitchen extensions is vital to consider at the planning stage, too. 'Open-plan kitchen extensions often result in very deep rooms,' says Nicola Hill. 'Rooflights, side windows and light-reflective surfaces can all help to maximise daylight.'

► Adding roof windows or large sliding or folding glazed doors will fill the room with natural light – bringing the outdoors in and instantly modernising the space. 'Proceed with caution, though,' advises Jude Tugman. 'It may seem logical to blanket-glaze the whole extension, but it's much more effective to place your glazing strategically for maximum impact and benefit.'

Remember, too, that lots of glass means less wall space, and fewer opportunities for kitchen cabinetry, furniture and electrical points.

► 'Large open-plan kitchens need well-designed zonal lighting that can

cover both mood and task requirements,' says Jon Stanley, vice-president of marketing at Caesarstone UK. 'Consider dimmer switches to help control the mood, but ensure also that light switches are well-located and that you have enough electricity points for appliances.'

► Think about how you will minimise appliance noise and smells in an open-plan room. A utility room or cupboard that integrates a washing machine, a super-quiet dishwasher and a boiling-water tap, plus effective ventilation and extraction, are all good options, but even introducing soft furnishings, rugs and curtains will deaden background noise – and allow you to create defined zones with colour, texture and pattern.

WHICH STYLE SHOULD YOU CHOOSE?

'Start by researching extensions to similar properties to get an idea of the styles you like. There are lots of new cladding options, which might provide a good contrast to your existing property – or you may prefer the extension to blend in with the original architecture,' says Nicola Hill.

Research the styles of extensions nearby, and consider whether the materials and design of yours will complement both your interior style and your property's architectural character. If you do decide to go for a contrasting style, bear in mind that a minimalist, glazed extension will suit the architecture of a Victorian or Edwardian property beautifully, but will only flatter a post-war home that's had a modern exterior facelift.

Give careful thought to the roofline, too – will a glazed, flat or pitched roof be flattering to the shape of the one on your house, and how will the extension's height impact on existing first-floor windows? It is always wise to research what your local council might approve before going any further.

WHAT ARE YOUR DESIGN OPTIONS?

Should you hire an architect and a separate contractor, a project manager, or a design and build company? The answer lies in your ►

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budget, in how much time you have to get involved, and how much experience you have of complex building work – see page 141 for more advice.

If you have never tackled a renovation, it's worth getting professionals involved at an early stage to help with everything from planning issues to managing schedules – but only after you've made some key preliminary decisions yourself. 'It is important to make as many design decisions as you can in advance, before you hire a builder or architect,' says Nicola Hill.

'A project manager needs to be both organised and able to recognise when there are gaps in the information that need to be filled,' explains Martin Smith, architectural designer at Holloways of Ludlow Architectural Design & Build. 'This anticipation of possible problems is key, and the continuity of stewardship from concept through to completion means that full responsibility is taken for design, budgeting and quality from start to finish.'

Even if you take a hands-off approach, you will be regularly called upon to make decisions – being unable, unprepared or just slow to make them will slow work down and end up costing you money – and you may not get the result you dreamt of.

DO YOU NEED PERMISSION?

'Under permitted development, you can extend single storey from the back wall of a terraced or semi-detached house by three metres; or four metres for a detached, as long as the materials match those of the existing house,' says Nicola Hill. 'There are extended permitted development rights in place until May 2019, which takes these distances to six and eight metres respectively, but you need to make a neighbourhood consultation application. The eaves of the extension must also be no higher than three metres from ground level. There may be more restrictions if you live in a Conservation Area or own a listed building. It's a good idea to apply for a certificate of lawful development, even if your extension falls under permitted development; that way, when you sell your property, it will answer any conveyancing questions.'

Adrian Stoneham adds, 'If you've recently bought a new-build, check your house-buying pack to see if there



BOLD LOOK

The awkward layout of this dated 1950s house in Hertfordshire has been transformed by replacing an old conservatory with a contemporary side extension, clad in Western red cedar stained in black osmo oil for a striking finish. The internal layout has been completely redesigned to create a flexible, open-plan kitchen and living space. Designed by Zminkowska De Boise Architects, a similar extension would cost in the region of £70,000, excluding VAT and fees

is a clause which requires you to obtain permission from the builder before extending. If this is the case, you may also be required to pay a fee.'

HOW MUCH WILL IT COST?

Extension costs depend on the finishes and materials you choose, and local labour costs. However, expect to pay between £1,500 per square metre for basic quality and £3,000 per square metre for top quality. Remember to factor in VAT on labour, materials and services. Costs per square metre will rise for

smaller projects and if ground conditions are difficult, and will be lower for double-storey extensions, as foundations only have to be dug once.

Add from three to seven per cent of the total build for architect's fees; up to £1,000 for structural engineer's fees; around £200-£300 for planning fees; upwards of £330 for building control fees; up to £1,000 for party wall surveys; from £2,000 for a boiler; from around £10,000 upwards for a new kitchen; up to £1,800 per metre for bi-fold or sliding doors; from £75 per square metre for decorating and tiling; and up to £50 per square metre for floor installation. ●

PHOTOGRAPH TOM CRONIN