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[Renovate your kitchen on a budget!](#)

January 24, 2011

Designer dynamo [Yanic Simard](#) gives us the low down on how to renovate a kitchen on a budget!

The kitchen is the soul of the house. Having a renovated kitchen is crucial in resale value. With the addition of new floors, cleaned up or new cabinets, up-to-date appliances and a modern backsplash these are all key components to a valuable kitchen. Not only will you make money by staying up to date with these things, you'll also enjoy the opportunity to cook in a gorgeous place. Let's discuss a few ways on how to renovate, while keeping the costs down as much as possible.

Don't move gas, drainage and sink

The largest part of your savings will come with smart planning. Things to plan around are your gas, plumbing and drainage. Moving any of these are extremely expensive and you can almost always work around them. It can cost \$2,000 or more just to change the location of a sink! If you're unhappy with the layout of your kitchen, consider at least keeping the appliances in the same spots and changing how the kitchen flows with a bar or island. Be creative with your layout so you don't spend a small fortune on moving pipes and wires.

Save with the backsplash

Countertops are another very expensive part, especially if you're going with granite or Corian. These are the most popular options and it's hard to get around it. However, you can opt for less expensive tiles on the backsplash, which can save you up to 35 per cent. If you have to utilize Formica, it's looking better these days. They now manufacture a 45 degree edge which makes the cabinet fronts appear rounded.

Buy your appliances in bulk

Everyone is always on the hunt for top-of-the-line appliances, such as Viking and Sub-Zero. However, there are so many brands these days that make wonderful stainless steel appliances that can fool almost anyone. Buy all of your appliances from one place. Be willing to purchase floor models. You can purchase an appliance that looks more high-end if you choose not to pick models with frills.

Reface your cabinets with paint or wallpaper

Buying new custom or ready-made cabinets can get pricey. In order to save here, consider refacing your old wood cabinets. It's a simple process that requires the cabinets to be sanded to the bare wood followed by paint, polyurethane, stain or even wallpaper. This can completely change the look. If you must swap your cabinets, install particle board cabinet boxes and solid wood fronts. The cheapest way to update the cabinets in your kitchen is to change the hardware.

Do all the electrical work at once

Plan your lighting ahead of time. Upgrade your lighting at the same time you're doing the electrical. If not, you'll have to bring the electrician back, costing you a lot more.

Install your own flooring

Ceramic and wood floors cost about the same and are equally attractive to buyers. Choose the one you like. You can save money on your floors by installing them yourself. Snap-in hardwood or faux hardwoods are easy DIY projects, and there are even inexpensive tile options that aren't difficult for beginners to install.

Make cosmetic changes

Sometimes, the biggest changes you can make to the look of a kitchen are cosmetic. Changing the paint colour, for example, can make a huge difference. Also consider making changes to your window treatments, backsplash, stools, decorations and trim. Also, cut down on the clutter. When you look at high-end kitchens in magazines, you'll notice that they don't display their life with magnets on the refrigerator or items all over the countertops.

Look for Green options as you renovate

While it's true that going Green usually costs you money rather than saving you money, but in the long run, you'll end up making that money back. Green appliances, for example, will save you money on your utility bills every month. Using Green products in your kitchen is also safer for your family, and you might qualify for special tax benefits if you go Green in major ways.

Set your budget ahead of time and stick to it

By far, the best way to renovate your kitchen without spending too much money is to set a realistic budget before you start looking at sample materials. Have a plan when you start the project and remember to account for labour costs if you don't intend to do the work yourself. Don't just have a bottom line number. Instead, come up with both a bottom line and specific prices for everything you intend to change. As you look at options, don't go over budget in any area. If you're strict with your budget, you can make the best choices in your price range without having to stop mid-project because you've run out of money. Remember, prepare for problems with your kitchen. No matter what your budget, you should have about 20 per cent of your budget set aside for miscellaneous costs. That way, if there are problems, you don't have to stop the project completely until you save more money.

Buy new light fixtures and retrofit existing potlights

Light is a very important aspect of any room. A bit of change in place of the light fittings can give a feel of change even if all the things stay as it is. The pressure on the pocket is also not much. All you have to do is to buy and fit some fancy lights here and there. They add to the décor of the kitchen as well as can light up some spaces where you had to do with the diffused light of the earlier fittings. The adjustable lights can be very effective. You can change them according to your needs and sometimes these lights have the provision of regulating their intensity. Kitchen lighting can set the mood for the room, a fairly inexpensive project especially if you are making improvements instead of wholesale changes. You should consider general, task, and mood lighting when making an upgrade. Also options such as fluorescent under cabinet lighting, LEDs, spotlights and more will give your kitchen a special look.

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