

Gilday

RENOVATIONS

architects ■ designers ■ builders

The Definitive Guide to Kitchen Design & Renovation Success



You've downloaded this ebook because you are thinking seriously about hiring a professional to remodel your kitchen. You'll want to be sure the issues that prompted your decision to remodel are thoroughly addressed during the design and renovation process, so you don't invest time, money, and emotional energy in creating a beautiful new kitchen that has the same old problems hidden beneath its shiny new surfaces.

It's way too easy to be infatuated with gorgeous kitchen decor and appliances. Love them, but don't lose your head over them.

In the pages that follow, we're going to explain what you need to know to be able to see beyond "good looks." We'll identify design fundamentals that underlay high-performance kitchens and common problems that cause kitchens to fall short. And we'll help you understand the different methods available for remodeling or redesigning a kitchen, so you'll be prepared to get the most out of your investment.

Armed with a deeper understanding of what makes a kitchen work well, you'll start out with a great list of questions to ask your kitchen designer or remodeling contractor, and a more realistic idea of what to expect from them. You will also have a better idea of how the process leading to a successful kitchen renovation project ought to look and feel.

Kitchen Geometry: What Makes It Work

The “work triangle” is a basic concept of kitchen functionality and a core principle of modern kitchen design. We call the points of the triangle “task areas.”

Designing logical relationships between task areas will make or break a kitchen renovation. If the geometry is off, the kitchen - no matter how beautiful it looks - will not perform successfully.

Each point on the work triangle must be planned for ease of movement from one stage of the meal preparation process to the next. This logic of balanced spatial relationships extends to seating/dining areas and traffic flow patterns throughout the kitchen.



Although a large kitchen may have several task areas and related work triangles, the basic layout always includes:

■ **Storage**

Aside from the fridge, there may be a tall pantry cabinet or walk-in. A deluxe kitchen would include specialty storage such as wine chillers or refrigeration drawers for easy access to drinks and snacks.

■ **Food preparation, cooking, and plating**

These tasks require adequate counter space to organize meal ingredients plus cabinetry and shelving for small appliances, cooking utensils, and serving ware.

■ **Clean up**

At the minimum, we like to have a sink and dishwasher. Under-the-counter pull out cabinets for recycling and trash are nice to have too.

The core principles of efficiency embodied in the work triangle concept hold true for kitchens large and small, expensive or not.

Sometimes the kitchen you inherit when you buy an older home doesn't work for you because it was designed for an earlier generation. The role of the kitchen has evolved since the mid 20th century.



What's Wrong with My Kitchen?

Sometimes kitchens don't work because they were designed for an earlier generation of homeowners. They don't satisfy our modern preferences for open space and natural light. Sometimes kitchens don't work because a previous homeowner remodeled them poorly.

Here are a few reasons why you may be ready to renovate your kitchen:

■ **Outdated layout**

You bought a house with a kitchen that hasn't been updated since it was built! The floorplan doesn't have adequate clearance for traffic to flow around (not through) work areas, nor does it have separate seating and perching areas for socializing. Doorways into the kitchen or out to the yard become bottlenecks when there's a crowd in the kitchen.

■ **Dysfunctional layout**

The kitchen was renovated once or twice by previous owners, but they didn't go far enough. The updated countertops and appliances don't resolve problems that stem from the overall layout of the room and the relationships between task areas.

■ **You've outgrown it**

You were a family of three when you purchased your home. Now there are five in the household--plus the family dog. There's not enough space.

■ **You've earned a new space**

College tuitions have been paid. The kids have launched out on their own, finally. You'd like to make something gracious and spacious for yourselves to enjoy every day—and maybe encourage extended visits with those wished for grandchildren...

Who to Hire: Two Common Approaches to Kitchen Renovation

Unless you are planning a “Do It Yourself” renovation project, in which case you would be acting as your own kitchen designer and/or remodeling contractor, there are two main methods for you to consider when hiring professionals. They are called “replacement kitchen” or “kitchen redesign.” Your choice will depend on the complexity of the project and scope of work required.

We’ll go over the basics of each method so, based on your needs, you can contact the right type of kitchen remodeling professionals.



Method 1: Replacement Kitchen

A replacement kitchen project doesn't prescribe any changes to the layout of the kitchen. It's a simple update. Only the contents of the room are upgraded. This typically involves replacing:

- cabinets
- countertops and backsplash
- appliances
- lighting fixtures
- and sometimes flooring

You will hire a kitchen designer and remodeling contractor for this. Your contractor will remove the old kitchen elements and install the new ones. There won't be any upgrades or customizations to the electrical or plumbing. Updated appliances and fixtures (range, refrigerator, sink, dishwasher) will be installed in the same locations as the old ones.



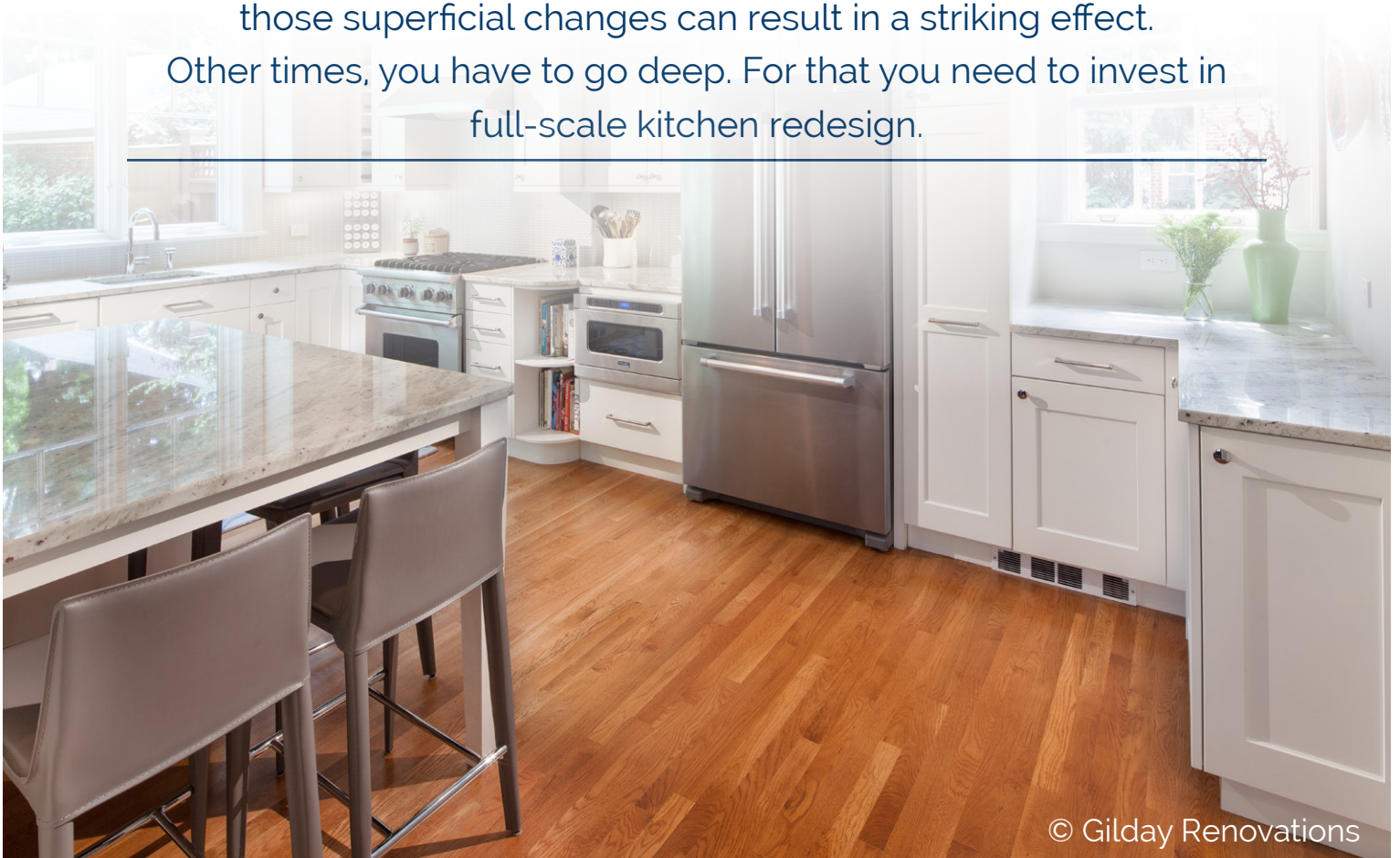
Your kitchen designer will help you select and sometimes purchase cabinetry, appliances and other finish materials directly from retailers. Assisting with selections is only one part of the benefit you will receive by working with a kitchen designer. They can be invaluable in making the installation process go smoothly because they have the experience to anticipate issues related to the nuances of plumbing, electrical, and carpentry on the job site.

The two advantages of a replacement kitchen project are:

It is less expensive--because you aren't investing budget dollars into custom remodeling. This could allow you to purchase your top choices in products and finishes.

A replacement kitchen doesn't require as much downtime as a full-scale redesign. You can expect a moderately sized replacement project to be completed in four to six weeks if everything goes smoothly and the materials have been secured in advance of the project.

Sometimes a replacement kitchen is all that is needed--and those superficial changes can result in a striking effect. Other times, you have to go deep. For that you need to invest in full-scale kitchen redesign.



Method 2: Kitchen Redesign

The requirements for a custom redesign project are significantly different from those of a simple kitchen update. If you are unhappy with the layout of your existing space, you'll hire a kitchen designer to redesign it. A redesign would involve reconfiguring the floorplan, relocation of plumbing, and electrical & lighting upgrades. It could also call for wall removals or a room addition to increase the size of the kitchen. Depending on the complexity, these structural changes would require an architect or builder with engineering review of the plans.

A kitchen redesign may involve wall removals, reconfiguring the floorplan, relocation of plumbing, electrical upgrades, or even an addition to increase the size of the kitchen and open up the space.



Working with a kitchen designer provides several critical benefits in a kitchen redesign and reconfiguration scenario:

- A good designer gains a deep understanding of the space—its potential and its limitations. Based on this understanding, they will offer creative input that takes your original ideas further.
- Designers can analyze your current space to see where the problems are and can recommend subtle changes that maximize usability. Small changes can have a significant impact, on both the project and its costs.
- Because they ask many questions, designers understand how to fulfill your expectations. They take an inventory of your food preparation and storage habits to determine how much space you will need while optimizing the functionality and beauty of the room.
- In a typical renovation process, the homeowner will need to make as many as 70 decisions about their kitchen. During the design and planning stage and continuing through the early stages of construction, kitchen designers make all of the critical decisions easy for you—and even fun.

A key difference between the two approaches is cost. A custom redesign approach comes with a higher price tag than a replacement kitchen because of the extent of the design work and craftsmanship involved. But homeowners who take this approach believe the additional investment is necessary because it opens up a range of possibilities and enables them to make improvements that are transformative.



Making the Final Decision

When it comes to hiring a kitchen designer and remodeling contractor, you have choices--a dizzying number:

You can work with a kitchen designer either directly or through a kitchen showroom. Or you can hire an architectural or interior design firm with a kitchen designer on staff.

After you've chosen the kitchen designer, you will select a remodeling contractor or builder to implement the design.

Alternatively, a one-step solution would be to hire a design-build firm that is staffed for architectural services, kitchen design, and construction.

Here are a few points to consider to help you choose the kitchen design professionals best suited to carry out your vision:

- Do they have experience specific to the scope of work you desire?
- Do you feel confident that they fully comprehend your vision for the type of kitchen you've described to them?
- Do their designers understand construction and do their builders understand design?
- Will the designers accompany you on trips to select tile, countertop material, flooring, lighting fixtures, appliances, cabinets, and cabinet hardware?
- Have they taken time to assess existing conditions in your home and how those may affect project costs?
- Does their cost estimate accurately reflect the quality of finishes you expect to have in your kitchen including any structural changes specified in the design plan?
- Are your comfort and convenience included in the cost? For example, will a fully functioning temporary kitchen be provided for the many weeks of construction?

A custom kitchen redesign comes with a higher price tag than a replacement kitchen because it goes deeper, opening up a trove of creative possibilities for improvements.

The Best Kitchen Renovation Method for You

Now you know that unless you are planning to do-it-yourself, the success of your kitchen project will depend on the expertise and collaborative skills of the kitchen designer and remodeling contractor. You also know that a talented designer and remodeler working as a team will bring construction experience, the ability to anticipate problems, a knowledge of kitchen products and materials, and an eye for design. This guarantees that you will maximize your investment and avoid mistakes that could spoil your kitchen renovation and experience.



Be sure to carefully consider your needs, budget, and timeline before deciding to go forward with a kitchen renovation. Whichever method you choose, it's important to solicit the help of reliable professionals who have the experience, skills, and vision to deliver that dream kitchen you've always wished for.

About Gilday

Gilday Renovations is an award winning home design and construction firm located in the Washington DC Metro area. Led by Kevin Gilday, the firm has consistently provided excellent architectural design and home remodeling services since 1976. The firm excels at the planning and execution of complex, multifaceted renovation projects. In addition to owner management, each project team consists of seasoned architects and interior designers, talented craftsmen, and dedicated project managers. The team collaborates to manage every detail of your project to provide a seamless "no headaches, no regrets" renovation experience for you.



**SCHEDULE A KITCHEN PROJECT
DISCOVERY SESSION**

Request a kitchen design discovery session
with the experts at Gilday Renovations.

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