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OCTOBER/NOVEMBER 2019

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APPLIANCE DECISIONS

By Brad Little

As you embark on your kitchen remodeling project, it's an exciting time to think about what your kitchen will look like with fresh new cabinetry, countertops, flooring, and tile.

While those are certainly significant decisions, one of your first decisions should be choosing the right appliances for your needs. The last thing you want to do is put a lot of effort and resources into a great design, only to find that the appliances you need will not fit. Most importantly, your level of investment in appliances will depend on whether or not you're a frequent user of DoorDash or you're auditioning for Food Network.

The following is a brief overview of appliance considerations, and how they will affect your kitchen design.

Refrigerators

The most common refrigerator available is freestanding and designed to fit into a 36-inch by 72-inch space. It's also available in a counter-depth size to keep it from protruding into tight pathways. For a more custom look, a built-in refrigerator gives a cleaner appearance. If you want it to blend in with the cabinetry, choose an integrated model that accepts cabinetry panels and has a seamless appearance. Built-in and integrated



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refrigerators offer more choices regarding functionality and space ratios to fit your specific needs and can range greatly in width and height.

Cooking Appliances

This is where the choices get really expansive, so let's start with an easy question: Will you need more than one oven? No? Then begin with ranges. The most common sizes are 30-inch-wide and

36-inch-wide in both electric and gas. If you need more than one oven, consider a wall unit to supplement your range, or go with double ovens and a range top only. I recommend avoiding wall units if your kitchen is on the smaller side because they take up precious cabinet and counter space. For larger kitchens, the number and size of cooking appliances are uber customizable and depends on your specific needs. For microwaves, I recommend the drawer type that is built into a base cabinet.



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Ventilation

One of the most overlooked decisions is selecting the type of ventilation you will need. Start with the appearance. Do you prefer a stainless-steel hood or a wood-vent hood built to blend in with the cabinetry? Often, the hood becomes the centerpiece of the entire kitchen. Once you make your decision, your appliance and kitchen remodeler will help you with the size, motor placement, and accessibility for ductwork.

Other Considerations

Don't forget about the dishwasher, but for design purposes, this is usually one of the easiest decisions to make because most are the same size. Also consider the many choices for specialty appliances such as built-in espresso machines, wine refrigerators, refrigerator drawers, warming drawers, ice makers, and kegerators—my personal favorite. ♦

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