



THE HIDDEN COSTS OF A KITCHEN REVAMP

We all want to stay on budget when we embark on a build project. It is not as simple as it sounds. Hidden costs have a way of creeping in and throwing things off track. These are the typical pitfalls that throw most kitchen revamps out of budget:

NOT ALLOWING FOR FEES – Kitchen designers, as with architects and structural engineers, charge a fee for their design work. It may not be astronomical, but if you want the drawings before work commences or before you have paid your deposit, you will be charged for the drawings.



STRUCTURAL CHANGES – Consumers tend to underestimate just how much the consultation fees from an industry professional (architect, engineer) are. If you want to make structural changes to the kitchen space, you will probably need to consult an architect. If the walls you want to remove are load-bearing, you may need the advice of a structural

engineer. There is also a fee to get your plans passed. Ensure that the builder you appoint is reputable – a bad build can add a fortune to your costs.

PC AMOUNTS BEING TOO LOW – The PC amounts in quotes are often quite low, aimed at the entry level of a range. When you eventually get to choosing things like handles; and accessories like drawer inserts, pull outs and storage solutions, you may find that the PC amount in your budget does not cover the more upmarket product you now want. It is best to choose those accessories from the get-go so they are specified in your quote. This way you won't find you can't afford the final touches you really want.

FLOORS AND TILES – You may have planned to keep your existing flooring and wall tiles, but once the old kitchen has been removed your kitchen company may advise you that this won't work. There is quite a difference in the standard sizes and depths of modern kitchens to old ones. You may well find that the new kitchen can't be installed successfully meeting up with the existing flooring and tiling. Ensure you research this first and make an allowance to re-tile or re-lay the flooring if needed. If you do re-floor, make sure you give good consideration as to how the flooring will work and match up with other flooring in the house.

PLUMBING, ELECTRICS AND GAS – A kitchen revamp is the perfect time to update your electrics and plumbing. Give good thought to adding more accessible electrical points, ensuring your plumbing



is up to date and moving water points if needed. This all needs to be done before the new kitchen goes in, as it requires chasing of walls and sometimes floors (especially if you are putting in an island unit). If you are having a gas appliance, the gas line will need to be laid. If you only think about this once the kitchen is in, it could be costly and result in damages to the newly made kitchen.

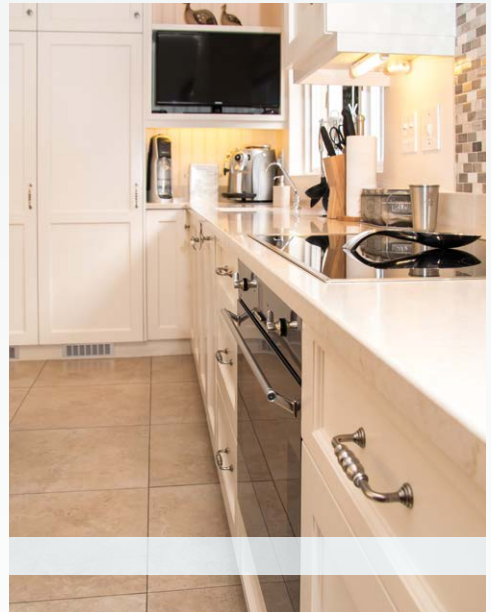
OUT OF SQUARE WALLS AND FLOORS – Very few homes have walls and floors that are perfectly in square. The kitchen company will design and manufacture, based on the assumption that your walls and floors are in square. All kitchen units are designed and made worldwide based on this premise. It is your job, as the homeowner, to check this and have the walls and floors re-screeded if needed. If the kitchen company arrives on site to find the walls and floors vastly out of square, they may have to make adjustments or even remanufacture to compensate for this. This will fall to your cost and will make the whole process a lot longer.

CHANGES ONCE ON SITE – Ensure you fully understand the drawings and design elements that you sign off. Once manufacturing and / or installation has begun any changes from your side will result in costly remanufacturing as well as additional time.

APPLIANCES – You should have a clear idea of what you are doing, appliance wise, by the time you sign off the drawings. The kitchen will be made to accommodate the appliance dimensions you give the kitchen company. So, if you have decided to keep your old appliances and then change your mind, this may mean remanufacturing to accommodate new ventilation and installation parameters. If you only have a vague idea of what you want appliance wise, and think you can slot something in at the end, it may prove costly. All appliances have specific installation instructions and dimensions that must be met to maintain the

guarantee. Many people also forget the installation fees. The kitchen company will not connect your appliances up for you. You will have to engage the services of a qualified electrician and/or plumber and /or gas plumber to do that for you. If you cannot prove that the installation was done by a qualified and registered person your guarantee may fall away and your insurance may refuse to cover you.

DAMAGE BY OTHER TRADES – It is best for the kitchen company to only start work once other tradesmen are off site. We hear alarming stories of people standing on glass top hobs to paint walls or standing on newly installed stone tops to fix a light. If your kitchen is damaged by another tradesman on site, the cost to fix it will fall to you.



THE KNOCK ON EFFECT – be prepared for the knock on effect. When one room has been renovated, it tends to make others look shabby and you may feel obliged to re-paint, re-floor adjacent rooms to keep them looking up to scratch next to your new kitchen.

The best way to ensure you don't get hit by a hidden cost is to ensure you have a solid contract with your supplier. Make sure it is clear in the contract that no changes or additions to the initial contract / drawings will be accepted unless they have been separately quoted on in writing and accepted in writing.