



## ARE THERE ITEMS YOU SHOULDN'T STORE IN YOUR KITCHEN CUPBOARDS?

**It may seem strange to you but there are actually some things that it is advisable not to store inside a kitchen cupboard or drawer. We are accustomed to our kitchens being the perfect place to store most things but what if the things we are storing, or how we are storing them, is affecting the longevity and functionality of the kitchen and also potentially putting your family in harm's way.**

Your kitchen hardware, in particular runners and hinges, are one of the most important parts of your kitchen. If you have invested wisely and purchased good quality runners and hinges, they can keep your kitchen operating smoothly for years. Unfortunately, if exposed to the wrong substances even the very best product can develop corrosion.

A second area of concern is your sink, in particular, the underside of it. No one ever thinks to check the underside of their sink for corrosion but we have had reports of sinks actually rusting away from the underside because the wrong items have been stored in the cupboard beneath it. Leaving frozen items to defrost on the drainer of the sink can cause condensation on the underside of the drainer also leading to corrosion.

Rust, or corrosion, can develop in various ways depending on the type of metal and the conditions it is exposed to. Even top-grade stainless steel can develop spot rust and pitting. With a good quality hinge or runner, it is unlikely that rust like this will affect the actual workings of the product, however it will affect the aesthetics, making the cupboards

look old and uncared for. Unfortunately, with less reputable products, both the aesthetics and functionality can be affected.

Other than living in a damp climate near the sea, most corrosion on the underside of sinks, runners and hinges occurs because of how they are looked after and as a result of what is stored in the actual cupboards. As a rule, your runners and hinges should be cleaned with nothing more than water and a soft cloth. Any dirt or build up should be cleaned away as soon as possible so as not to affect the working mechanisms. After cleaning they should be wiped dry. If left damp, the hardware is made even more vulnerable to a reaction with the goods being stored in the cupboard, resulting in rust and corrosion.

The cupboard under the sink is commonly used for the storing of cleaning products and chemicals, but this is probably the worst place for them. Not only is it an easily accessible storage space where children can get their hands on potentially lethal chemicals, but these chemicals and cleaning



materials can, over time, cause serious damage to the sink, metal fittings, as well as the hinges of the cupboard. The biggest risk products are bleach, acids – like pool acid, drain cleaners, toilet bowl cleaners, hard-water stain-removal products, ammonia-based cleaners, dishwasher salt or tablets and laundry detergent. It would be recommended that all these types of products are rather stored at high level in a laundry or garage. If that is not possible, then ensure that all containers, bottle, bags etc are tightly and properly sealed. If not, place them into a sealable container that is clearly marked as to the contents. When not properly sealed, the fumes from these products can cause corrosion.

It is not only cleaning products that can cause corrosion. You need to give thought to avoiding moisture build up in any cupboard. This is why, when cleaning the interior, you must dry it thoroughly. You also should avoid putting damp wash cloths, sponges or tea towels back into the cupboard or drawer, and rather wait until they are dry to do so.

Some cooking staples also need to be watched. Table salt, in any format, and baking powder contain highly corrosive elements that can cause damage. Believe it or not, the fumes from some spices can, over time, facilitate corrosion too. Any food item preserved in vinegar, like pickles, should be tightly sealed after each use and the lids of vinegars themselves should always be fully and correctly closed. If you are unable to properly close or seal the original packaging then repack into another storage container, or store these items in the refrigerator. This will not only keep them fresh and uncontaminated but protect your hardware too.



If you wish to keep your kitchen looking its best, and have no choice but to store items like these in your cupboards and drawers, then it is recommended that every six months or so, the underside of your sink and your hinges are sprayed with a silicone spray then wiped dry, so as to increase their longevity.

*Thanks to the following KSA members for their assistance with this article:*

