



HOW BEST TO USE COLOUR IN THE KITCHEN?

The use of colour, whether it be in interior design, fashion or cosmetics, is a way for an individual to express themselves. It's no wonder that colour finds its way into the kitchen – the most used room in the home.

Traditionally, kitchens were kept in muted tones to look clean and sterile, but from the 1940's we started to see subtle and then bold uses of colour. Over the past sixty years we have seen the use of colour change dramatically. We have seen the rise of bold primary colours as well as pastels in the 50's and 60's. Strong naturally based colours like avocado, brown and orange in the 70's. The 80's and 90's saw a move back to more neutral shades using timber and whites or off whites. In more recent years people are wanting to once again use colour to express their taste and personality in the kitchen.

When deciding how to bring colour into the kitchen, it's important to remember that a wall can easily be repainted, but it's not so easy to change the colour of your cupboards or counter-tops. If you are certain you want your tops or cupboards to be in a non-neutral colour, then give consideration as to how quickly that colour will date. It is vital that a kitchen has longevity and can be adapted to changes in trends and tastes. Your new kitchen should add value to your property, increasing its resale value. If your kitchen is too bold, many a potential buyer will be unable to see past it or conceive how it can be adapted to their own tastes. This does not mean you should not be adventurous. There are colours that can stand the test of time, particularly if combined with a neutral shade or a timber. Give consideration to the durability of the colour and how it shows dirt and finger prints.

It is important to remember that your choice of colour will affect the sense of space. Dark colours absorb light and make a space seem smaller. At the moment dark greys, blues, greens and blacks are popular but should only be used in a space with a lot of natural light, big windows or a skylight; or in a large room that you are looking to make feel cosier. The use of a dark colour can be very dramatic. Current trends in Europe see dark walls combined with dark timber cupboards and dark marble effect

tops. If opting for this look, make sure you invest well in good lighting for accent, mood and general purposes.

By opting to work with neutral and natural shades, you are making the kitchen more accessible to a wider audience. However, sometimes the lack of colour can make a space seem cold and stark and very large. Sticking with mostly light and neutral shades works very well in a small space. The colours reflect the light rather than absorbing it, increasing the sense of space.

If you are too nervous to add your colour to the actual kitchen units or tops, then your walls are the next best canvass. A feature wall that showcases a bold colour, whether it be dark or pastel, can be a lovely focal point in your kitchen and can accent a particular part of the kitchen assisting with the sense of space and flow. The nice thing about an accent wall colour is that it can be easily changed as trends and your tastes do, and not at an exorbitant price. When selecting your accent colour, remember that colour affects mood. Reds, oranges and yellows generate warmth, energy and a cosy feeling. While greens, blues and mauves tend to give a relaxed, cool and calm feeling. Which ever colour combinations you opt for, it is vital that the correct paint is used. A kitchen generates a lot of steam and grease. Speciality paints designed for kitchens and bathrooms are available. These are hard wearing, withstand moisture and can be cleaned should you have to scrub them down.

The final way to bring that splash of colour to the kitchen is by how you 'dress' it. Make use of colourful accessories and appliances to express your love of colour. You can opt for a theme of one bold colour such as a red or a pastel blue or you can combine colours like black and silver or bronze.

Express your colour tastes wisely. Remember, you may have to live with this choice for some time and you would hate your passion for colour to be the reason that you don't get your asking price when you one day come to selling your home.

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