



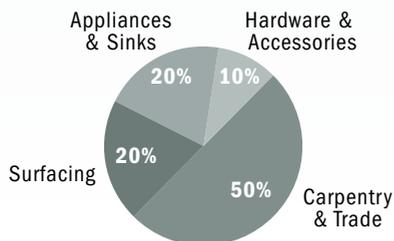
## PLAYING WITH YOUR BUDGET

**When we ask people what their budget is for their new kitchen, they tend to look at us slightly confused and say they have no idea. But, having a budget is vital.**

It is true that there are no real guidelines for how much a kitchen will cost you. It all depends on the size, materials used and layout. You can get a kitchen for R50 000 and a kitchen for R550 000. This is why it is vital for the kitchen designer to know what you are prepared to spend on the project, so that they have an idea of what restrictions are in place when it comes to design parameters and material selection.

It is often a good idea to tell your kitchen designer that they have between 'amount A' and 'amount B' to work with. This gives them a little flexibility. They can put two options together for you – one using the lower amount and another using the full budget. You can then look at what you like from the more expensive option and pull those key features into your design but leaving out those costly items that may not be necessary. This way, you get a kitchen with the bells and whistles that you really want, but that also does not break the back of your budget.

**Traditionally it is recommended you allocate your budget as follows:**



But this is just a starting place and is not set in stone. When you break your budget up into bite size chunks like this, it allows you to identify the key areas in the kitchen and where you would rather spend your money. This excludes any additional trades that are linked to renovations, such as electricians, plumbers, builders etc.

**To help you in the process it is a good idea to give some thought to two things:**

- 1) Why am I doing this project?**
- 2) What are the things I absolutely have to have in this new kitchen?**

With question one you are helping to identify if the investment is for you or for someone else. If you are not going to be using this kitchen yourself, then taking the time to identify the key areas and allocate the spend appropriately is not really that necessary – unless the special needs of an end user who is physically disabled needs to be considered. But, if this kitchen is a dream kitchen revamp, then it is vital that you take the time to ensure it will fulfill those dreams; and to do this you need to understand where and how to spend your budget.

Question two will help you identify those areas where you would be willing to spend a little bit more. If, for example, you have always wanted engineered stone tops, or a gas/electric freestanding cooker, or a pull-out pantry; then these items must appear on your 'must have' list. This list will help the kitchen designer to see if she needs to adjust the customary budget split, giving a little more to one area and a little less to another.

A good example would be a scenario where the client already had appliances in good condition which they were happy to reuse. This would free

up 20% of the budget. If the client then wanted stone tops and additional hardware accessories, this 'freed-up' 20% could be shared between the hardware and surfacing budgets to ensure the client was getting exactly what they wanted.



Your carpentry and trade make up half of your budget. In order to make this part of your budget work, your kitchen designer needs a good brief so that they can make sure they are using your money to its full advantage. For example, if your budget is small but your kitchen is fairly large the kitchen designer will be able to ascertain that when she designs, she will need to use less drawers and more 1200cm carcasses. This is because the 1200mm carcass with two 600mm doors is the most cost-effective cabinet to make. So too, she knows that drawers are more costly to make because they use more material and hardware.

Your designer will also be able to ascertain what finish is best suited to your budget. While we

might all love the slick finishes of duco and veneer, they are not suited to everyone's budgets. A good kitchen designer will be able to adapt what you are looking for aesthetically into materials more viable for your budget, such as melamine and PVC foil wrap. Remember, don't turn your nose up at a material until you have seen it used.



Perhaps the most important things to remember with your budget, is that no matter how much you can afford to spend on your new kitchen, you are entitled to the best kitchen that your budget can buy. Don't be fooled into believing that two quotes varying by R40 000 are giving you the same thing. Make sure that your designer is quoting you on good reputable materials and products that have a guarantee or warranty, and that come from a reputable supplier. Remember a kitchen is an investment in your home and needs to last you for at least 15 – 20 years.

