



CHOOSING THE RIGHT KITCHEN COMPANY

Finding the right kitchen company to do your kitchen renovation is challenging. How do you know they are reputable; how do you know the quality of work they deliver; how do you know you can trust them in your home and how do you know they will give you honest, quality work for your price bracket? Here are some of our guidelines that may help you in finding your ideal kitchen company partner.

- Be realistic when chatting to kitchen companies. There is no point spending hours talking to a company if their primary market is for kitchens way above your price bracket. If a company tells you they don't work in your budget parameters they are not being rude or arrogant – they are being honest. Every kitchen company works in a particular market, working predominantly with certain materials and suppliers. This may mean that what they offer is not suited to you and your budget. It is vital that you get this right. If you opt for price reasons, to appoint a kitchen company that predominantly works on entry-level kitchens, and you are wanting a mid-range kitchen you might be disappointed at the final finish, attention to detail and the quality of materials used. Conversely if you ask a high-end kitchen company to quote you when you only have a mid-range budget you will walk away saying they overcharge, which is not the case - they are charging appropriately for their target market.
- Never just talk to one company – this is not to say that you should string along multiple companies, but you should get more than one quote – we suggest three. Allow each company to measure up and consult independently and allow each to give you their own design concept. Don't take a design from one company to another and ask them just to quote. Firstly, this is abuse of intellectual property, secondly you are not giving the company an opportunity to give you their unique insights. You will find that one of the three companies get your design style, needs and family functioning better than the others.
- Ensure the company in question complies with the Consumer Protection Act and offers a warranty for their kitchen cabinets and their installation. In accordance with the CPA this must be a minimum of six months. Remember all KSA members are required to offer a minimum guarantee of one year.
- You want to deal with a company that keeps you openly and honestly informed. Look for someone who supplies a detailed quotation so you know exactly what you are getting for your money and that you can accurately compare quotes. They also need to take you through their drawings and



terms and conditions thoroughly so that you have total understanding of what you will get, how long it will take and any special terms that may apply if there are delays on site etc.

- Chose a company that will tell you what materials they are using for the project so you know the quality of what the kitchen will be made from. If possible, look for companies using KSA suppliers that way the KSA can protect you down the supply chain.
- Look for a company that has a reputation to lose if they let you down and who are accountable to other parties like landlords etc. This helps ensure they cannot just pack up and disappear if something goes wrong. All KSA members have had background checks done on them.
- Does the company have a showroom? While there are plenty of good kitchen manufacturers who opt not to have a showroom, being able to visit a showroom has multiple benefits – it ensures the kitchen company is grounded and can't disappear overnight and it allows you to see an example of the workmanship you can expect to receive in your own home. In the event of a dispute the KSA will always hold our member to deliver to you the same quality as they show in their showroom
- Ask to speak to previous clients or view client testimonials and portfolios of recent work done. Don't be fobbed off by old work and old testimonials – you want to know how they are doing now not five years ago. A lot can change over time. You can also look at online reviews but be open minded here – a lot of online review platforms only give one side of the story and don't give the company the right to reply. Remember there are always two sides to a story. Also, if you are working off a word-of-mouth referral don't skip these steps – just because they did a good job for your friend doesn't mean they are doing it all the time.
- You want to find a company that listens to you and helps dissect your needs and find well planned solutions for them. They need to make an effort to understand your lifestyle and design a kitchen that fits with that. But they also need to be confident and informed enough to guide you if they believe you are making a poor choice or are asking them to do something ill advised.



- Don't be misled by special deals and massive discounts. Ultimately you do get what you paid for, and a special deal often has a lot of strings attached to it, is being used to get rid of old materials and stock, or is a desperate attempt to real in customers because the company is battling. Look carefully at specials before basing your choice on them.
- What is the company and designer's experience and track record? You want to work with an experienced team where possible.
- What payment structure is the company asking for? You want to be able to retain some of the fee until snags are completed and the job signed off. A benefit of dealing with a KSA member is that if you are nervous about payment terms you can negotiate the use of the KSA's holding account – this allows the two parties to negotiate payment terms or drawers with peace of mind.

Choosing and finding the right kitchen company will require a little homework on your side. Put in the effort. Know what you want, ensure your chosen company specialises in your budget range and do your research. Too many consumers are burned because they get taken in by a charming personality, a good story, good social media or a personal referral. Make sure that doesn't happen to you. By putting in a bit of work you can ensure you get the right match.