

# KITCHEN LAYOUTS

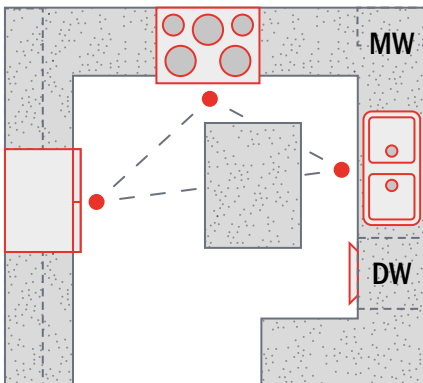
If you're a homeowner who has recently started designing your new kitchen or remodelling your existing one, you're probably aware of the number of details that go into the process. From choosing the kitchen layout to picking kitchen cabinet design ideas, there are a number of decisions that need to be made. One of which, is how to optimise your space. Each of the layouts below are 'typical' shapes which link back to an optimal ergonomic kitchen plan based on the magic work triangle.



The **magic work triangle** is a design premise that keeps your key zones (cooking/washing/cleaning) optimally separated but linked via a triangle. The primary tasks in a home kitchen are carried out between the stove/oven, the sink and the refrigerator.

Optimally the triangle should be as small as possible and as naturally shaped as possible. Each side of the triangle should measure no less than 1,2m and no more than 3m and, ideally, the perimeter of the triangle should be no less than 4m and no more than 8m. The idea is to reduce the amount of walking and unnecessarily expend energy between these zones to optimize your time in the kitchen.

Splitting your kitchen up into clear 'zones' will help you to plan for your storage/prep/cooking needs adequately and efficiently.



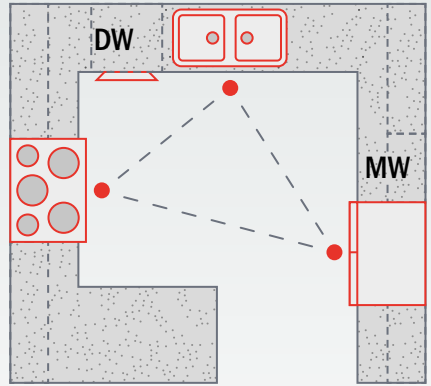
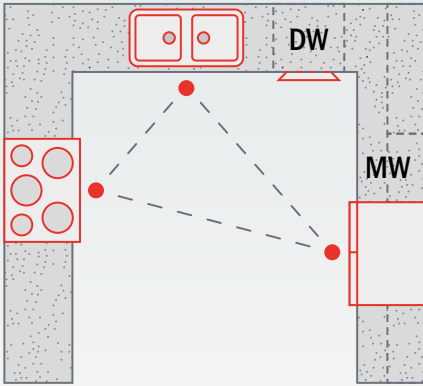
## THE ISLAND SHAPED KITCHEN

Here is when your kitchen design is centred around a kitchen island. Space becomes exceptionally important in this layout. The key is to ensure you have a good flow through the kitchen and good access to all cupboards within the island. The island should not become a hinderance.

Here you can work with two work triangles if you want. This allows you to keep the hob on one side of the island and the oven on the other. The island itself can form part of the triangle (if you are placing your hob or sink on the island) or totally outside of the triangle (if the island is purely for dining and counterspace). You can pair an island with a straight, u-shaped or l-shaped kitchen, depending on the size of the space available to you.

## THE U OR G-SHAPED KITCHEN

This is the easiest space to work with. It facilitates three runs of cabinets or work surface in the shape of a U or with a double back creating a G. Here applying the triangle is easy and allows you to have your hob, sink and fridge each on a separate run of cupboards.

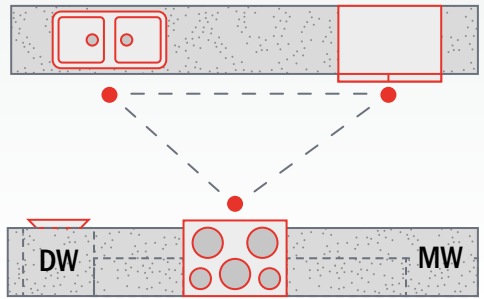


## THE GALLEY OR IN-LINE KITCHEN

Here you have one bank of cupboards, or two, running parallel to one another. To make the work triangle viable here, you need to elongate it.

Considering movement is very important on this layout – particularly in a galley set up. It is vital that both banks of cupboards and their appliances can be utilised by more than one person at a time, and that if someone is working in one zone, that it does not inhibit the use of the kitchen by others.

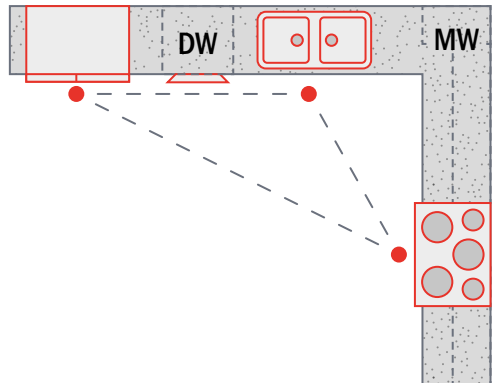
We would recommend that the distance between the two counters be a minimum of 1,2m to ensure space for an oven/refrigerator door to be open and for a person to still get past. It is advised that the sink and the hob are kept close and the fridge is pushed to the very edge of the triangle and at the end of the run of cupboards.



## THE L-SHAPED KITCHEN

Here you must have two zones or elements of the work triangle on the same run of kitchen units and the triangle becomes elongated.

L-shaped kitchens are tucked into corners and usually have two open ends which allows for different entries and exits. This means traffic can flow freely through the space. A free flowing kitchen can be really beneficial when entertaining because less traffic jams mean more room and less stress when preparing food.



No matter which of these layouts your home facilitates, there are certain design basics you need to keep in mind when planning the kitchen with your kitchen designer:

- **What is the average height of those who will be using the kitchen** – if anyone in the family is very tall or very short, allowances for this will need to be considered in the height of the countertops, the eye level cabinets and the extractor. You may need to add lift systems to top units so a shorter person can access them, or you may need to raise the countertop height so that a very tall person does not strain their back. Any special needs the user may have, need to be considered. Are they in a wheelchair? Do they have arthritis, or other physical hindrances? These special considerations will affect the layout, design and hardware you select.
- Consider beforehand what elements your kitchen layout needs to incorporate – an eating area, an entertainment area, a view, open plan harmony with another room, a work or office space.
- What storage needs does the space have to cater for - Look at your small appliances that need special access storage like mixers or



beadmakers? Do you have large platters for entertaining, a warming tray or baking equipment that need unusual sized storage? Do you have a lot of silver or glass wear that you would like to have displayed? Do you have pets and want special storage for their food? All these aspects, unique to your lifestyle, will influence your design and layout choices.

On the whole, a successful layout will give you optimal workspace. This is best achieved by placing tall units, like pantries, outside of the triangle and at the end of a bank of cupboards. Ideally, a good layout will give you adequate prep space between the sink and the hob.

What all the above tells us, is how important pre-planning is. You, as the homeowner, need to have done some homework before you chat to the kitchen designer so that they have all the information they need to suggest the optimum layout and design for your lifestyle and your needs.

