

Seven simple ways to update your kitchen



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Maybe I'm overstating it a bit but changing how your kitchen looks and operates can have a positive effect on your day-to-day living.

Interior space should always enhance your life not be an obstacle to living as happily and as healthily as possible. From early on in history, the kitchen has been central to the home as it was the source of heat, light and food. Not much has changed today as the kitchen has remained a key room with often the most money spent on it.

In resale, it's often the kitchen that ultimately sells the house. Here are some easy ideas to make your kitchen a more effective ally in a chaotic life and will help to wring more value out of it when the time arises to sell.

1. Add additional lighting. An under lit kitchen is not useful as this is one space where multiple and bright light sources count. One overhead fixture doesn't cut it. If you can add pot lights throughout the space, do it!

If this isn't in the budget, consider halogen track lights rather than a single light. This spreads the light around and often this light is brighter. In the kitchen, more light sources are better so add lighting anywhere: under cabinet, overhead, over specific areas like a bar or island.

2. Declutter the counter. Easy to say, hard to do, but assess if you need EVERYTHING out on the counter. Definitely keep the essentials you use everyday like the

toaster and coffee pot but if it's not in your daily routine, put it away. If this is hard, buy baskets or bins to group items rather than having them loose. I store a lot of items in large, clear jars on my counter and I can immediately dispose of their packages.

3. Invest in interior cabinet storage. There are lots of bins, wire shelves, metal pull-outs, turn-tables, racks and plate holders that can be purchased at numerous retailers like Ikea or Storage Solutions at reasonable prices to make the most of interior cabinet space.



AFTER: Lighten walls for a brighter feel or paint dark wood cabinets to refresh the entire space. It may be a bit of work but the overall change is worth it. Photography by Brandon Barre.

I bet if you look in any cabinet at home right now, there is space to double up or stack items higher. That's where additional storage systems can make more of the room you do have.

4. Paint walls or cabinets. A simple paint job can completely change a room. Lighten walls for a brighter feel or paint dark wood cabinets white to refresh the entire space. Today's paint technology means easier cleanup and good coverage. It may be a bit of work but the overall change will be worth it.

5. Upgrade the countertop and sink. If you have a bit more money to play with, think about removing a plastic laminate top and replacing it with granite or quartz. Both offer better durability and a huge range of colours are available. With changing this also comes changing the sink. Opt for an under mount sink that's deeper as this makes a



BEFORE: Tired of the same-old, dated, tired looking kitchen? There are several simple ways to update your kitchen and make the room feel new.

difference when cleaning or filling large pots.

6. Add a cool backsplash. Tired of having no backsplash? This is a pretty easy fix as there are lots of great options from cool tiles, to mirror and glass or porcelain sheets made to look like any stone out there. This is one place to draw attention as it's at eye-level and pretty visible.

7. Install new hardware. This is one of the easiest ways to update your kitchen. If you have light oak cabinets, for instance, select black knobs to make the cabinets look more substantial. Or choose from silver, chrome, brushed

bronze or even, yes, gold (it's back!) to add flash to the kitchen. No one ever said bling was a bad thing.

These are simple things to update your kitchen. They don't need a lot of money or time to complete but they can

make this room feel like new.

— *Author, television personality and celebrity designer Jane Lockhart appears as a regular guest on the Marilyn Denis show and is considered one of Canada's leading design experts.*



For better storage, there are lots of bins, wire shelves, metal pullouts, turntables, racks and plate holders that can be purchased at retailers everywhere.