

# DESIGN, PLAN AND FIT A KITCHEN

## SKILL LEVEL



Fitting a kitchen requires a great deal of skill, and is most suited to the more advanced DIYer. There are a wide range of skills involved, and you will need to have knowledge in the following trades; Carpentry, Plumbing, Electrical and Tiling.

## SAFETY FIRST

There are many safety factors involved in fitting a kitchen: always check for electrical cables and water pipes, using a pipe and power detector before drilling in to floors or walls.

When using power tools always use an RCD protection device, making certain that all power tool leads are in good condition. Always wear safety equipment.

## INTRODUCTION

To fit a new kitchen you will need to be an advanced DIYer, as there are many different skills involved, however the results will be very rewarding, not to mention the amount of money you'll save by fitting it yourself.

## 2 - Planning and Design

### Getting started

Carefully measure up your kitchen in centimetres making a precise scaled plan

Measure in a clockwise direction, starting from the door, and note which direction the doors open.

Be careful to check the following:

- Take the ceiling height at several points.
- Ensure the kitchen is square by measuring diagonally (or compare opposing walls).
- Carefully mark the location of existing power points, plumbing, gas supply, air vents and any permanent features such as windows, sills, radiators and boilers.
- Always check dimensions, if in doubt measure it

again.

- Note the space required for your kitchen appliances.
- Finally check what the walls are made of to ensure that you buy the correct fixings for your unit.

### **Planning your kitchen**

It's important to design a kitchen that revolves around your needs. Creating a triangle between your cooker, sink and fridge will make a better working environment. This will ensure that your workspace is never cramped, allowing you to move freely between appliances.

The layout you choose will depend on the size and shape of your room - and the position of windows and doors. Plumbing and electrical points can usually be moved, so do not let these restrict your design.

Most kitchens fall into four basic designs, a single line of units, a double line (galley), and an L-shaped or U-shaped kitchen.

By combining cabinets imaginatively to these designs it is easy to totally transform your kitchen to suit your lifestyle.

### **Working out the detail**

Using the dimensions of the cabinets you wish to purchase, sketch your chosen units to scale. Alternatively, cutting out the shape of the cabinets to scale allows you to move individual units around your kitchen plan and work out the best layout.

### **Hints & Tips**

#### **DO**

- Try to position your sink by a window, so you have a view.

- Position electrical sockets a minimum distance of 150mm above worktops.
- Position extractors or cupboards a minimum distance of 750mm above hobs.
- Use heat or fireproof cable on cookers or hobs.
- Locate dishwashers and washing machines close to sink to minimise plumbing work.
- Ensure that wall and floor units are of similar widths-so the doors line up.
- Keep tall units at the end of the worktop runs, to maximise the working area.
- Place your hob or free-standing cooker in position this minimises the distance needed to carry hot pans across the walkways in the kitchen.
- Allow at least 300mm of clear space each side of the hob to allow for protruding pan handles.
- Position extractor fans on (or close to) outside walls.
- Allow adequate space around free-standing appliances for easy access, (refer to manufacturers fitting instructions).

#### **DON'T**

- Locate a cooker or hob beneath a window where curtains could catch fire - or where it is dangerous to reach over to the window.

- Plan a wall unit above a hob without an extractor fan.
- Plan a hob next to a tall unit, corner wall or at the end of a run.
- Plan appliances in a corner.
- Put an inset sink near worktop joints.
- Position a sink or cooker near or next to opening doors.
- Box in boilers or other gas appliances as these require air flow to operate properly and safely.
- Put a cooker hob under or near electrical sockets.
- Position cookers next to fridges or freezers.
- Block up existing air vents if there are gas appliances in the kitchen.

### **Everything you need to Take Away today**

Once you have decided on your units and worktops don't forget the other exciting accessories that can add those finishing touches - such as plinths, pelmets, cornices, handles, decorative legs and wirework.

Consult a plumber if in doubt about the positioning of a sink or dishwasher as it is not *always* possible to reposition them - you will need to take into account the positions for waste pipes and drains. It is also important to consult a Corgi registered fitter about air vents and an electrician about electrical work.

### **Useful phone numbers:**

Corgi - 01256 372200

Institute of Plumbing - 01708 472791

Institute of Electrical Engineers - 020 7240 1871

## **3 - Removing your old kitchen**

You should only start to dismantle your old kitchen when you have purchased your new Take Away kitchen and appliances - just in case you can't get everything you want.

### **Getting ready**

First of all clear everything out of your kitchen. Be sure to empty all the cupboards and clear all worktops. Turn off the kitchen electricity and water supply - then disconnect all lines to the sink and drains.

Next, disconnect any appliances. You may want to use another room as a temporary kitchen - an electric kettle and microwave are particularly useful while your kitchen is out of use.

### **Safety tips**

Remember, it is law that gas appliances should only be disconnected or connected by someone with CORGI Registration. Take care when working with electricity. If in doubt call in a qualified electrician.

### **Removing old cabinets**

First remove all the drawers and doors from the cabinets. Next remove worktops by looking underneath to locate the attachments to the base cabinets.

Wear safety gloves and goggles when removing the cabinets - two people will be required to remove the wall cabinets.

Remove any screws and fasteners and ease the worktop off. If it has been glued down, you may need to use a crow bar to pull the worktop off - remember to protect the wall by putting a piece of waste wood between the wall and the crowbar.

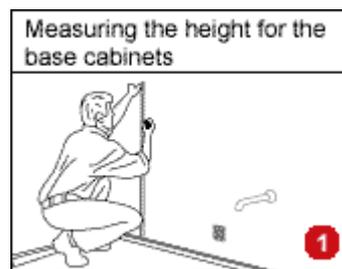
Now you simply have to unscrew the cabinets, detach and clear the kitchen.

## Making good

This is a good time to make any repairs to the walls, or even apply a first coat of paint. Re-flooring, boxing in pipes or getting any professional help such as an electrician or plumber should also be considered at this stage.

## 4 - Installing your new kitchen

Starting in the corner where you plan to begin your installation, use your spirit level to ascertain if the floor is level. If not, mark the highest point of the floor on the wall (1).



From this mark, measure up 870mm for the height of your Take Away base cabinets (includes 150mm to allow for plinths or legs). Then make a level line for the top of the base cabinets - mark level lines for the top and bottom of the wall cabinets at the right height for you.

Double check your level lines to make sure they are straight and level. This will ensure that your cabinets are straight, even if your walls are not.

## 5 - Cabinet assembly

Although the units are easy to put together, do read the assembly instructions before you start work as you'll be more familiar with the task in hand.

In the unlikely event that you ever get stuck, call the B&Q helpline on 01769 575500 from 8.30am - 5.30pm Monday to Friday.

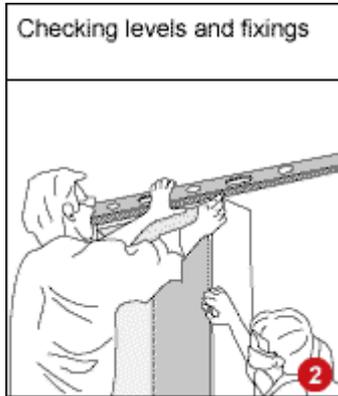
### Hints & Tips

- Clear a large area to assemble and store new cabinets.
- Do not attempt to lift or carry boxes alone.
- Open one box at a time and assemble each cabinet before moving on to the next.
- Avoid scratching surfaces by assembling on a carpet

or on an empty cardboard box.

- Match each assembled cabinet to the corresponding door by sticking on masking tape and then numbering.

## 6 - Installing base and wall cabinets

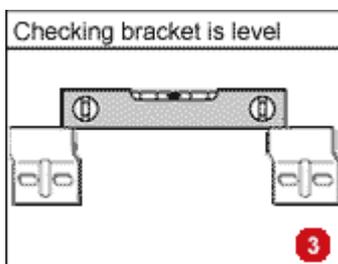


### Installing wall cabinets

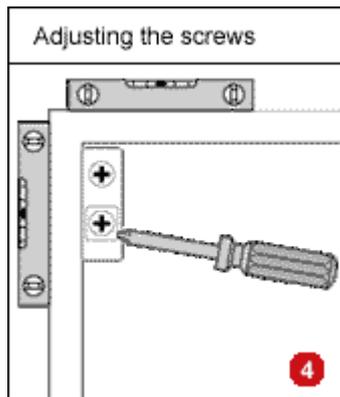
Work methodically, starting with a corner cabinet and working out in both directions. Make sure someone is there to assist you and steady the cabinets while you check levels and fixings (2).

### Hints & Tips

- Make sure the unit is pulled out from the corner to match your layout plans and template lines.
- On plasterboard walls, use cavity wall fixings to attach cabinets if the fixing positions do not coincide with wall studs.
- Check adjoining cabinets are level and straight before moving on to the next cabinet.

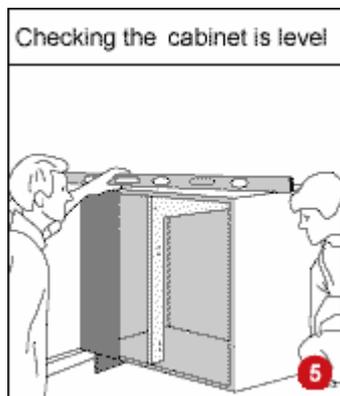


Fix the bracket to the wall (3), hang the cabinet and then adjust the screws that affix to the bracket to ensure it's level (4) and as close to the wall as is possible. Your spirit level is essential!



### Installing base cabinets

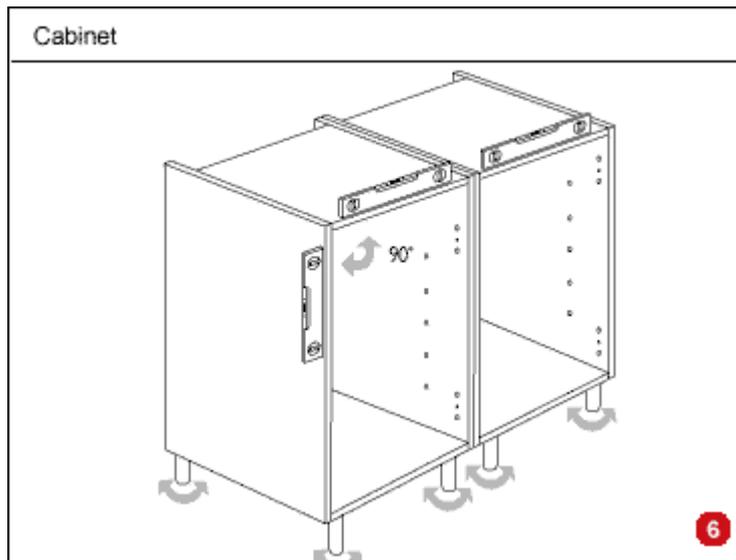
Begin in the same corner as you did when fitting your wall cabinets. Make sure the cabinet matches your plan - and is correctly positioned according to the wall cabinet.



Once again, you need to make sure that the first cabinet is level (5), even if your floor isn't - follow the marking lines.

Leave the doors and shelves until last, as it is easier to adjust an empty unit!

Before affixing the cabinet to the wall, rotate the legs to adjust the height (6), making sure the units are level. Once the height matches the marking line or other units and is level then use the appropriate fittings to secure cabinet to the wall.



#### Hints & tips

- Do not screw cabinets tight to wall until levels of adjoining cabinets are checked.
- Drill holes for pipes before installing the sink cabinet.

## 7 - Installing worktops

If the kitchen is fitted with three worktops i.e. one at the end and the other two running at right angles to it, you will need to install the end one first.

Measure the distance from the wall to the edge of the cabinets and cut the worktop to the required length, allowing for any defects in the walls or awkward angles. If in doubt cut a template of any odd shapes.

When all the worktops are cut, fit the joining strips to the worktops using silicone sealant to seal the ends and edges of the worktops. Position the worktops on the base units and check that they all fit.

Fix the worktops down using suitably sized woodscrews and check the joints to make certain they are level and square.

You will need to cut out areas for hobs and sinks etc. before finally fixing the worktop.

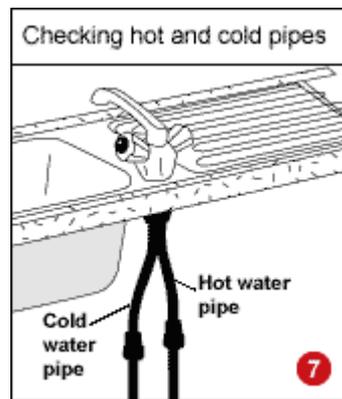
Worktops can also be jointed with mitre joints and connecting bolts. However this is best carried out by a carpenter as it requires special tools and a high level of skill.

## 8 - Installing an inset sink and taps

The tools you require and the amount of plumbing needed will vary depending on the type of sink and taps you have chosen.

Start by carefully measuring up, marking out the sink outline - a template is usually provided with the sink. Remember you're not measuring out to the full width/length of the sink as a lip around it will hold it in place. Once marked out, carefully cut out with a jigsaw.

With the sink on its face, seal around the rim. Fit the securing clips to the sink - this ensures the sink is firmly attached to the worktop. Now is the time to fit your taps, following the instructions you receive in the packaging.



### Mixer tap tips

- Look to see whether the hot pipe is on the left as you look at the sink (7).
- When undoing the cap nuts of each connector and you've slipped the nut and olive onto each pipe, use a spring-clip clothes-peg below each pipe to stop them slipping off.
- Read and fully understand the instructions before you start.