

Beautiful
KITCHENS
SPECIAL REPORT

HOW TO get your **STORAGE** RIGHT

Every kitchen needs good storage, no matter what its size. So read on for the lowdown on the latest innovations, as well as practical advice and helpful hints from leading designers and industry experts

FEATURE HAYLEY GILBERT

No matter what size and shape

your kitchen, it will function far more efficiently with carefully planned storage. Buying a new kitchen is a major investment, so it pays to get it right from the very start. 'When designing a new kitchen, I always advise clients to work out the amount of storage they'll need – then add half again,' says Jane Stewart, design director at Mowlem & Co.

When you consider the vast amount of essentials your kitchen needs to contain, from pots, pans and crockery to cookware, gadgets and appliances, not to mention food and ingredients, it's a wonder we manage to squeeze it all in. Thankfully, there are plenty of storage solutions to help keep things in order.

STORAGE SOLUTIONS

THREE EXPERTS SHARE THEIR TOP TIPS FOR DECLUTTERING YOUR KITCHEN



Jamee Kong, head of design at Design SpaceLondon

- Clever zoning, such as having dry food storage close to the fridge freezer, can improve efficiency.
- Locate drawers or cupboards close to the dishwasher, so that dishes and cutlery can be stored away quickly.
- Bins should be near the sink area for disposing of vegetable peelings.
- Store your glasses near the wine cooler.
- Storage areas that need to be accessed frequently should be set away from the working area.
- Keep utensils, pots and pans next to the hob so that they are close to hand when cooking.



Jane Stewart, design director at Mowlem & Co

- Spice drawer inserts are incredibly handy, as you can see at a glance whether you need to replenish your stocks. They also prevent small jars being lost at the backs of cupboards.
- Knives stored in blocks are far safer than having them on your worktop, as long as you have spaced the handle positions sufficiently so it's easy to grab and chop.
- Incorporate a worktop inside a larder, so you can leave small electrical appliances, such as the blender and juicer, plugged in ready for use.



Neil Lerner, principal designer and owner of Neil Lerner Kitchens

- Space-saving tambour units are ideal for concealing mixers, blenders and toasters.
- Use hanging rail systems on the splashback for storing frequently used items, such as utensils, cookery book holders, storage jars and spice racks.
- Shallow drawers set into plinths make great use of otherwise wasted space.
- Taller and deeper units can create up to 40 per cent extra volume.
- Organise bottom cupboards with wire pull-out baskets, so that you can see and access the contents easily.

According to kitchen fittings specialist Blum, 66 per cent of new kitchen buyers were dissatisfied with their storage capacity after installation

TRENDS FOR THE FUTURE

Seymourpowell is one of the world's leading design and innovation companies. We asked one of its senior designers, Ian Whatley, what the future holds for kitchen storage: 'I think people's desire to be more considerate of our environment

will be a significant driver on space efficiency. Recycling is the current buzzword but people will only do this more effectively if it's made easier for them to do so. I think there are some big improvements that can be made to the management of waste recycling

within kitchens. For example, I'd expect to see some much smarter integrated recycling systems become commonplace within the kitchen market. Perhaps further down the line, cupboards and fridges will be specifically designed to house bespoke storage

containers in a space-saving format. These would be removable and used to transport food directly from the supermarket shelves, creating zero disposable packaging. This would really revolutionise how we store things in our kitchens.'



1 PlusModo drawers from Poggenpohl feature the +Motion mechanism, so no matter how softly they are pushed they will easily slide back into place. A fully installed kitchen starts from £25,000

2 This kitchen from Mowlem & Co features a compartmentalised utensil drawer and crockery storage, with adjustable pegs for different plate sizes. From £30,000 for a kitchen

3 In-drawer accessories from SieMatic feature oak compartments and stackable containers. Prices start from £50 for a cutlery tray at Urban Interior

4 The two-in-one plate drawer from Leicht combines a soft-close, handleless drawer with plate storage below and cutlery drawer above. The beech plate holder starts at £88

5 Tall bottles can be tricky to store so this bottle drawer from Plain English is a great idea. Kitchens start at £35,000



DRAWER OPTIONS

Decent drawer storage is one of the first defences against kitchen clutter but it's what's inside the drawer that counts. You'll find Blum interior fittings at all good retailers and these include everything, from concealed pull-outs to drawer dividers. If your style is more traditional, you can specify anything from luxury beech plate racks to wooden peg inserts, which help keep crockery secure. Removable cutlery drawers can be taken with you to the dishwasher and dining table, while pull-outs are good for storing tins. Basket drawers offer a rustic look while keen cooks will love the latest spice drawers and glass-topped jars that enable you to see at a glance what the contents are. Deep pan drawers can be used for pots and pans as well as storage for bread, potatoes and onions if you add a wooden box or two. 'What makes drawers clever is their detailing,' says Katie Fontana, creative director at Plain English. 'I love designing drawer and cupboard interiors for specific items.'

Cotteswood is seeing a trend towards deeper drawers, as managing director Glyn Rodney explains, 'Customers are favouring a drawer system, moving away from doors to provide easy access and the storage of larger items. We also design pull-out shelves.'

When shopping around, check the quality of the drawer runners. Make sure they are fully extendable and choose soft-close wherever possible. ▶





LARDERS

One of the joys of having a bespoke kitchen is being able to create your own custom-made larder or walk-in pantry. You can specify the size, shape, materials and details, so consider what it is you want to store and how much you have.

Open shelving will make it easier to grab jars on the go, while closed-door base units can be used for items that are only brought out on special occasions. A tandem rack system offers ease of use, as the rear section moves forward as you open the door. Tall cupboards with shelving inside and on the back of the door offer a more contemporary solution, while a dresser-style larder is perfect for more traditional schemes. A marble or granite shelf will keep dairy products cool, and provide a spot for pastry rolling.



'Larders are my favourite storage solution. They can be so versatile, providing a bespoke space to hold all your dried foods or kitchen gadgets'

TIM HIGHAM, MD, HIGHAM FURNITURE



SHELVING

Use wall space wisely, as your choice of storage is crucial to the success of your kitchen. The main options are traditional wall units, open shelving or a hanging-rail system. Wall cabinets now feature the latest swing mechanisms for lift-up opening, as well as unobtrusive concertina doors for small spaces. There are feature panels to break up the look and even slatted glass designs that use sensor technology to open and close. 'There are three main options,' says John Sims-Hilditch, managing director at Neptune. 'Glazed, panelled or open shelf. Choose glazed for the ultimate display option with the practicality of an enclosure to keep dust out. Panelled designs offer fantastic, easy-to-access storage that is instantly tidy when closed, while open allows for a bespoke dresser-style look.'

There is also a wide range of internal systems that can be used within wall cabinets, such as SieMatic's MultiMatic, which can increase storage by up to 30 per cent. If space allows, consider floor-to-ceiling cabinets with sliding or 'pocket' doors, the latter of which can be hidden in a narrow space beside the unit but, if you have a small kitchen, try to keep wall cabinets to a minimum. Instead, consider hanging-rail systems, a plate rack or open shelving, which can be designed to create a traditional or modern feel. For a classic kitchen, think bracket-supported shelves set between a pair of wall cupboards and for more contemporary styles, look to Ikea's floating shelves. ▶

- 1** If you like the idea of open shelving but you're not the neatest person around, why not have the best of both worlds by covering them up with a sliding door? Varenna's Twelve kitchen starts at £13,400 for a 4.61m section
- 2** Open shelving is a cost-effective way of adding more storage and creates a more informal-looking kitchen. The Original Artisan kitchen starts from £17,000 at John Lewis of Hungerford
- 3** Open box shelving can break up a run of wall or base units but is for the seriously tidy only. Available from In-toto, where kitchens cost from £12,000
- 4** Fired Earth's Bastide fitted kitchen is designed by Charles Smallbone and features a Weald Green cabinet with mesh inserts. Kitchens start at £35,000
- 5** This floor-to-ceiling unit has storage shelves within its door and is part of a Chamber Furniture design. Prices start at £40,000 for a whole kitchen



- 1** Higham Furniture designed this maple dresser, priced at £3,100
- 2** The pull-out tandem larder from Metris has a huge storage capacity. From £750 for a 500mm cabinet
- 3** This corner larder is lined in walnut, with herb and oil racks attached to the inside of the door. It's part of a painted range from Chamber Furniture, where kitchens start at £40,000
- 4** Neptune's Chichester Grand Larder features full-height cabinets, available in a variety of options to suit your needs. This version combines two larder cabinets with a bridge link cabinet above an American-style fridge freezer and costs £3,350, excluding the appliance
- 5** Modulnova's My Kitchen collection is available from Alternative Plans in a matt black or white gloss finish. The pull-out larder is a fantastic space-saver. Kitchens start at £25,000

- 1 Plain English designs all sorts of bespoke storage solutions, including this clever corner with curved wooden shelves on the door. Expect to pay from **£35,000** for a kitchen
- 2 This pull-out shelf system allows you to easily access individual shelves. Aluminium sides keep contents secure. Available at Stoneham, from **£515**
- 3 This corner cabinet is part of the Front Framed range from John Lewis of Hungerford, where prices start at **£17,000**. It has a false door complete with faux hinges and handles
- 4 This gloss black Diamond corner unit has a practical wing opening and costs from **£700** at Belle Interiors
- 5 The Space Corner is Blum's unique solution for notoriously difficult corner units. It features full-extension drawers, so there's no unreachable or hidden space at the back. Ask your retailer for Blum components



CORNERS

Cabinets in corners can be tricky. If left to their own devices, they will quickly become the black hole of the kitchen – you'll put things in there that you might never see again. The good news is that many manufacturers have developed a range of corner solutions to combat this problem. 'One of my favourite storage solutions is the Le Mans unit,' says Glyn Rodney, managing director of Cotteswood. 'It comprises two figure-of-eight trays that pull right out to allow maximum storage, so you won't have to reach into dark corners to find anything.'

Other options include bi-fold, wing or carousel doors, while the pull-outs of Blum's Space Corner are designed to maximise space by creating a stack of organised drawer boxes with internal fittings that reach right to the back of the corner unit. Other features include non-slip bases and a smooth glide action.



'I'm a huge fan of the streamlined look with ingenious doors that fit corners, so you don't have to sacrifice style for intelligent storage'

SONIA MURTON, FOUNDER, BELLE INTERIORS



UNDER SINK

The space beneath the sink often becomes a dumping ground for cleaning products, cloths, bin liners, kitchen rolls and all manner of miscellaneous items. The key to being able to find what you want quickly and easily is to create a more organised set-up with drawer dividers, boxes and shelves. Some drawers have a special U-shaped design to fit underneath a deep-bowl sink while standard base units can be fitted with shelves and pockets on the back of the door. A removable caddy is perfect for carrying cleaning items around the house.

The space beneath or next to the sink is also the perfect place for hiding the bin and the latest designs incorporate recycling bins to help you manage waste more easily. The most practical solution is to have one bin larger than the other and look for full extension runners or a tilting design for easy access. ▶



'Hideaway storage is a trend that shows no signs of disappearing. Clever concealed cabinets that pop out when needed will maximise space'

NEIL PARTRIDGE, DESIGN DIRECTOR, NGI DESIGN



- 1 This cupboard under the sink is part of a bespoke kitchen by Mowlem & Co, where prices start at **£30,000**
- 2 A drop-down sink store has enough room for soap and sponges. Shown as part of Smallbone of Devizes' Macassar kitchen in a hand-painted finish, kitchens start at **£35,000**
- 3 Organise your paper, plastic and glass with Ikea's Rationell waste-sorting boxes, priced at **£9.18** for a pack of three
- 4 These handy tilting bins are ideal for separating your recycling. The small bin on the right can be removed and placed on the worktop for composting if required. It costs from **£410** at Stoneham
- 5 In this Henley kitchen from Neptune there is a handy bin cabinet near the sink. At 465mm wide, the unit comes with two bins to keep recycling separate from everyday rubbish. Kitchens start at **£8,000**



SPACE SAVING

Small kitchens will especially benefit from space-saving solutions, such as pull-out ironing boards and worktops, folding breadboards and shelves that have a lift-up mechanism for when you need to use heavy items, such as a food mixer. Slimline options can also be squeezed into the smallest space, such as spice racks that slide out next to the oven.

The latest trend is for tall units fitted with pocket doors. Unlike sliding doors, which slide across and cover up a section of storage, pocket doors open then slide smoothly back into the wall, revealing the contents inside. Laurence Pidgeon, director of Alternative Plans, says, 'It is crucial to have doors that don't eat into space by opening out into the room, so the ideal solution is pocket doors, which slide away completely out of sight when opened.'



'My favourite space-saver is a pull-out unit that comes with a knife block, chopping board and cutlery holder – ideal for decluttering worksurfaces'

KATHARINE POULTER, SHOWROOM DIRECTOR, B&Q

1 Wall space is often unused so make the most of yours with RWK's solutions for small everyday items, such as cutlery storage. POA at Kitchens International

2 B&Q's pull-out unit comes complete with knife block, chopping board and cutlery drawer, priced **£109**

3 It's hard to know where to store heavy items that you use frequently, but Neil Lerner has the solution with a lift-up mechanism for an electric slicer or mixer. When not in use, it simply slides back down. Prices from **£250**

4 Free up worktop space by having your scales built into a drawer. Warendorf's Varino internal organisation systems are also used for cutlery, spices and utensils. Kitchens start from **£20,000**

5 With a bespoke kitchen, you can ask for anything when it comes to storage. Smallbone of Devizes' Pilaster kitchen has a pop-out chimneypiece for spices. Kitchens start at **£35,000**

