



Setting a Kitchen Remodel Budget

All you need to know on how to set a budget for your kitchen remodel

Kitchens & Baths
UNLIMITED, INC.

Helpful Hints to Setting a Realistic Budget

When considering a kitchen remodel, the first step should be determining a budget. Many times people aren't sure where to start. They jump in the middle and start picking materials and appliances without the direction of a realistic budget. Depending on your situation you may be wasting a lot of unnecessary time and money. First things first...set a realistic budget.

A good place to start is to use The National Kitchen and Bath Association's (NKBA) form for setting up a budget (FIGURE 1). It breaks down the dollar allocation for the main pieces of a kitchen remodeling project. This tool can be very helpful when getting started. First, let's acknowledge what you are comfortable spending on a kitchen remodeling project and then we can determine if it is realistic in achieving the goals you want to achieve. After printing the form below, enter the budget you have in mind and calculate the category totals respectively. You will then have this sheet as you start to look at appliances and meet with possible kitchen design firms to help you determine if you are shopping in the right place.

FIGURE 1:

KITCHEN BUDGET: \$ _____		
CABINETRY	33%	= _____
LABOR / INSTALLATION	17%	= _____
APPLIANCES	14%	= _____
COUNTER TOP	10%	= _____
FLOORING	7%	= _____
WALLS & CEILINGS	5%	= _____
LIGHTING	5%	= _____
DOORS & WINDOWS	4%	= _____
FAUCETS & PLUMBING	4%	= _____
OTHER	1%	= _____

The following is an example of an average kitchen for the Chicagoland area. According to [Home & Gardens](#), the average kitchen with appliances, using semi-custom or custom cabinetry ranges from \$55,000-\$100,000.00 depending upon the material selections. For the purposes of this guide, let's assume something more in the "middle of the road".

KITCHEN BUDGET: \$75,000.00		
CABINETRY	33% =	\$24,750.00
LABOR / INSTALLATION	17% =	\$12,750.00
APPLIANCES	14% =	\$10,500.00
COUNTER TOP	10% =	\$7,500.00
FLOORING	7% =	\$5,250.00
WALLS & CEILINGS	5% =	\$3,750.00
LIGHTING	5% =	\$3,750.00
DOORS & WINDOWS	4% =	\$3,000.00
FAUCETS & PLUMBING	4% =	\$3,000.00
OTHER	1% =	\$750.00

Please keep in mind that this table is intended to be viewed as a guide. Every project is different in some way, shape or form. For example, you may not be replacing doors or windows which could allow 4% of the total budget to be earmarked for labor instead. From another perspective, the labor to your kitchen project could be extensive due to the age of the home and require a total reconfiguration that could well exceed the 17% allocation in the budget described above. Your best bet once you've determined a comfortable budget is to arrange an appointment with a professional kitchen designer or remodeling firm. Most firms will arrange for this first consultation at no charge; however, once drawings (designer's creative work) are rendered, chances are they will not turn over their work without a deposit. At this point, you can start to figure out what this project is going to cost and what material items will fit within your budget.

CABINETRY: The biggest piece of the puzzle

The biggest material expense in a kitchen renovation will typically be the cabinetry. There are three different types of cabinetry; stock, semi-custom and fully custom. The price difference amongst these different types can be significant. [See our blog for further information defining these cabinetry types](#)

[and distinguishing details.](#) The NKBA has found national averages to suggest approximately 33% of the total kitchen budget should be allocated towards cabinetry. After 30 years of remodeling kitchens, we find this statistic to be lower than our Chicagoland customer experience. We service predominantly the Chicagoland area and surrounding suburbs. This difference of cabinetry allocation could be due to geographical location and/or the types of materials being selected by local clientele. For example, the price increase between semi-custom cabinetry and fully custom cabinetry alone could easily be 25% or more. The quality of materials chosen to build a new kitchen is directly related to longevity and durability. Do it right the first time and avoid paying for it twice.

LABOR / INSTALLATION:

The next biggest ticket item is usually the installation/labor for the project. That said, sometimes appliances can jump into second place depending on quantity of appliances or the manufacturers being selected. Installation/labor from one kitchen project to another can vary drastically. Some of the major factors are the age of the home, how much reconfiguring will the new design require and the size of the room.

If a home is older and has not had much updating, the labor figures could be increased due to the following reasons:

- A necessity to upgrade the electrical panel or possibly rewiring the entire kitchen
- If the current walls and ceiling are plaster and lath rather than drywall.
- Removing soffits and adding recessed light fixtures becomes more labor intensive.
- Often gutting the room or ceiling down to the studs becomes a more efficient and cost effective option than trying to do a patch and repair approach.
- Plumbing is galvanized rather than copper and pvc. Old galvanized pipes are typically in need of replacement and in some geographical areas they won't meet regulatory codes.

Other labor conditions that could make the price fluctuate for your kitchen project are:

- New kitchen designs that require appliances or fixtures to be relocated to improve traffic patterns, esthetics, and functionality or simply to gain storage space.
- If you are relocating electrical and plumbing locations and the kitchen is on a slab/concrete floor.
- If you have already existing issues due to leaks, rotted subfloors, damaged drywall etc....

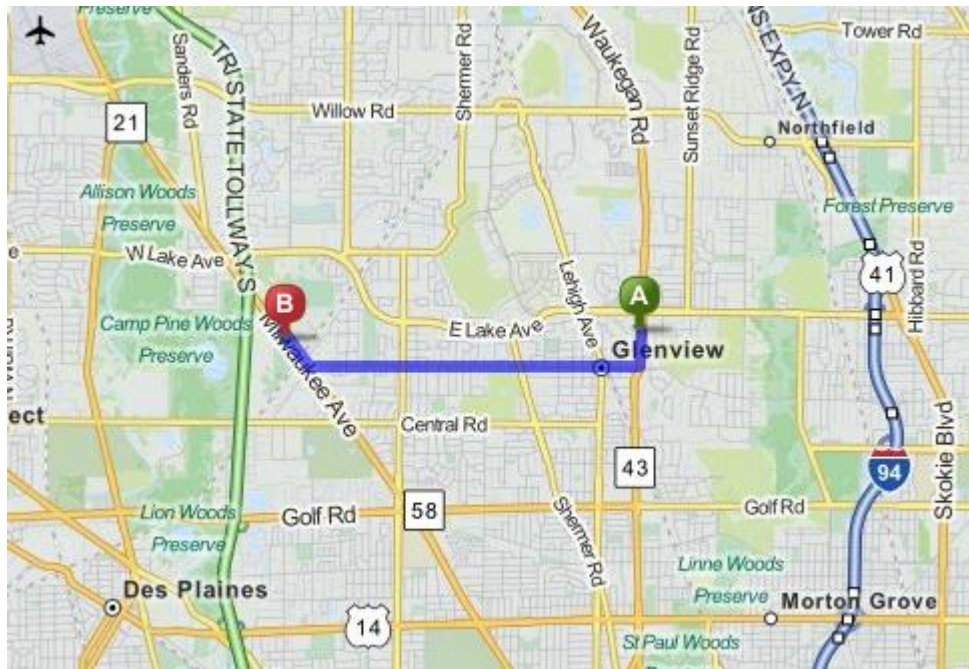
These are just to mention a few scenarios that can affect costs but it reiterates the previously stated, each space is different and comes with its own set of conditions.

APPLIANCES: How to Make the Right Selections?

Before buying new appliances, we recommend meeting with a kitchen designer and finalizing the kitchen design first. Often a kitchen designer will make recommendations based off of the size of the kitchen, flow patterns and visibility from other adjacent rooms. These recommendations may introduce new options that you may not have thought of without the guidance of a professional. After the initial design has been determined, then visit your local appliance store with the sizes and types of appliances agreed upon. After making the final appliance selections, your kitchen designer will modify the kitchen design slightly to accommodate the specifications of the determined appliances. The kitchen cabinets will be built around the specific appliances and therefore cabinetry cannot be ordered until appliances have been identified.

In the Chicagoland area, we find the average appliance allowance to be approximately \$15,000.00-\$20,000.00. This typically includes the following items: 36" cooktop, 30" double ovens, microwave, 36" hood, dishwasher, 36" counter depth refrigerator, stainless steel sink, ¾ hp garbage disposal and faucet. This would reflect manufacturers such as KitchenAid and GE.

A great way to get educated on appliances in order to discover what is out there and available today is to sign up for the free [cooking demonstrations provided by Wolf](#) or visit the [Abt Appliance Showroom](#). Abt (B) is conveniently located just 4 miles west of our showroom (A) in Glenview, Illinois. Kitchens & Baths Unlimited also has a large corner kitchen display at Abt in the atrium.



COUNTER TOPS: What are my options?

Material	Porous	Non-porous	Heat resistant	Maintenance	Price Level	CONS	PROS
Laminate		X		NONE	LOW	SEAMS, SCRATCHES	LARGE SELECTION
Corian	X			NONE	MEDIUM	BURNS, STAINS	BUFF OUT STAINS & SCRATCHES, INTEGRAL SINK
Granite	X		X	SEALING	MEDIUM - HIGH	REQUIRES SEALING	LOW MAINTENANCE, LARGE COLOR SELECTION, DURABLE
Marble	X		X	SEALING, BUFFING	MEDIUM - HIGH	SCRATCHES, STAINS, ETCHES	GOOD FOR BAKING AREA
Butcher Block	X			OILING REQUIRED	MEDIUM	SCRATCHES, BURNS	GREAT CUTTING SURFACE
Stainless Steel		X	X	NONE	MEDIUM-HIGH	SCRATCHES	EASY TO CLEAN, STERILE
Glass		X	X	NONE	MEDIUM-HIGH	SCRATCHES	STERILE
Concrete	X		X	SEALING	HIGH	SCRATCHES, STAINS	CAN MAKE ANY THICKNESS
Quartz		X		NONE	MEDIUM-HIGH	LIMITED COLORS	NO MAINTENANCE
Quartzite	X		X	SEALING	HIGH	REQUIRES SEALING	LOW MAINTENANCE, LOOKS LIKE MARBLE



FLOORING: Wood or Tile that is the question!

Flooring Questions to ask before determining your floor material:

- Does your kitchen open up to another room? If so, maybe consider installing the same material in both rooms for continuity.
- How many flooring materials do you already have on the same level as your kitchen? If the answer is more than a few, maybe consider selecting a floor material for the kitchen that will match one of the already adjacent flooring materials. Otherwise it starts to seem a bit fragmented and compartmentalized.

Wood Flooring Considerations:

- Wood flooring is typically less expensive than tile flooring. Not just the materials themselves but also the labor to install.
- Maintenance for wood flooring requires refinishing somewhere down the road as traffic patterns will eventually wear and become visible.
- Wood flooring is a little more forgiving on the body after a long day of cooking and also in the rare instance something gets dropped as it may not shatter as easily as on tile.
- Unfinished wood flooring is ideal over a prefinished floor. This is due to the fact that you can determine the best color after the kitchen cabinets have been installed. Your installer can stain color swatches on the floor to determine a best match. In addition, the finishing can be done last so workman are not damaging your brand new floor.
- Beveled edges or rustic planks are challenging in a kitchen because everything gets caught in the grooves.

Tile Flooring Considerations:

- If you are leaning towards wood kitchen cabinetry and have a lot of wood already throughout the house, consider a tiled floor in the kitchen for a nice contrast.
- Maintenance for tile flooring requires grout repair, grout cleaning and grout sealing.
- Tile floor is typically cold. Although a heated flooring system is always a nice option.
- Tile floor is easier with pets and water.
- Tile is more durable when it comes to winter months with tracking in from outside with snow, water, mud and salt.
- Minimize grout by doing larger tiles and minimizing the thickness of the grout lines.
- Consider [epoxy grout](#) for longevity and lower maintenance.

The budget percentages mentioned above typically represent installation prices only. Additional charges will be applied for floor removal and floor preparation. As every kitchen remodel is different, so is the removal of every existing kitchen floor. Some floors are installed on top of sleepers, some are on plywood, and some are on Durock or concrete. With every application being different, so is the labor to remove the old and prepare for the new.

WALLS AND CEILING:

An important condition to think about when doing a kitchen remodel or renovation project is how high are the ceilings do you have to work with? If they are 8' high, then typically keep it open and clean. In this case, you want to avoid hanging too many items from the ceiling that would only become obstacles. We do not suggest hanging pot holders, but possibly a few pendants or maybe a nice chandelier over the table. Often coffered ceilings are desired, however, these are typically implemented into kitchens with 9' high ceilings or higher.

The attraction to the majority of homeowners today, is to open up the kitchen by removing soffits and opening up walls to adjacent rooms. To have a “great room” and be a part of the family activity is a desirable feature for house hunters in today’s market. If you have young children this provides the opportunity to prepare dinner and still have a visual on your kids. Or if you are an empty nester it is nice for holidays and entertaining. Football on tv in one room, but easy to see and hear from the kitchen. This application is ideal for any lifestyle and all ages.

The budget percentage identified above is pertaining to basic soffit removal and minor drywall repairs. If your kitchen project includes wall removal, coffered ceilings, pass-thrus or even enlarging doorways, refer to your general contractor or kitchen designer for approximate costs.

LIGHTING: More is better!

Options for lighting in a kitchen would be:

1. Central light fixture
2. Recessed light fixtures on dimmer switches
3. Track lighting
4. Pendants
5. Chandelier
6. [Under cabinet lighting](#)
7. Above cabinet lighting
8. Rope lighting
9. Combination of some of the above

The ideal kitchen lighting would be to have recessed lighting on dimmer switches for the main task lighting in the kitchen complimented by LED under cabinet lighting. For accent and aesthetics, pendants over the island are a nice subtle design detail as well as hanging a chandelier over the table. The reason we say more is better is because you can never have too much light. You will want to make sure those options are well thought out when determining how they will be wired and make sure to always include dimmers. Your kitchen designer or general contractor will guide you on placement and quantity.

DOORS AND WINDOWS:

Often with a kitchen remodel, doors and windows are left as is, outside of new casings or window treatments. Sometimes the homeowner would like to replace the window above the kitchen sink, keeping it the same size but just updating it. A nice option for this application is [Pella’s window that has the blinds built into the glass](#).

If your new kitchen design consists of relocating windows and doors, then the 4% allotment identified above by the NKBA isn’t going to cover it. Typically in this application the electrical, plumbing and

sometimes HVAC will need to be rerouted. This will increase the labor directly. Although moving doors and windows can sometimes be costly, the potential gain in design, function and aesthetics can be remarkable and well worth it.



SINKS AND FAUCETS: Do you say Frank-e or Fronk-e?

Here are some suggestions on kitchen sinks and faucets that may help steer you in the right direction. Franke offers a nice selection of stainless steel sinks. They are triple insulated and have several configurations. The homeowner can select what side they prefer the smaller sink to be in order to place the garbage disposal if doing a double bowl sink. Franke also offers different depth options. Other high quality stainless steel manufacturers to consider are Elkay, Oliveri, Kohler and Julien. If you are considering a [cast iron](#) or [fireclay sink](#) consider Kohler and Rohl. [Blanco offers a Silgranit sink](#) that has started to take off and be of high customer demand. The Silgranit is a nice alternative to stainless steel and is available in multiple colors and over 20 configurations.

When it comes to faucets, longevity and durability are huge. Consider Grohe, Jado, KWC or Rohl. Today every homeowner wants to be able to pivot the head and pull out the spout for easy cleaning. This has basically become an expectation. However, homeowners are starting to seriously consider a motion-sensored faucet. Think of the times when you have raw chicken on your hands and don't want to touch anything. The sensor or pedal valve will eliminate the need to touch the faucet lever in order to receive water. Moen makes the [Arbor sensor faucet](#) and Kohler has the [Sensate faucet](#). A midrange sink and faucet will typically cost \$1200.00 or so depending upon the manufacturer.

Homeowners wanting a garbage disposal will usually opt for an Insinkerator or KitchenAid with $\frac{3}{4}$ horse power. The idea of an air switch is a nice feature to add when remodeling your kitchen as it will keep your backsplash cleaner by eliminating the switch on the wall. An air button is similar to that of a button you would find on a hot tub to get the bubbles going. This button is approximately the size of a quarter and it gets cut into the counter top in close proximity to the faucet. A garbage disposal will run approximately \$400 with an air switch.

OTHER:

Other items to consider when remodeling a kitchen that haven't been mentioned to this point would be:

- Backsplash
- Handles or knobs for cabinets
- Painting

This provides a comprehensive breakdown of the material and labor charges that would be involved in an average kitchen remodel. As we have consistently mentioned in this eBook, it is important to keep in mind that every kitchen remodel is unique and different. Many factors come into play when determining the pricing attached to each individual project. That said, all homeowners need to establish their budget in order to get started. This budget will be your guide throughout the design and material selection process. A good and professional kitchen designer will help keep you on target letting you know when you may be straying off the path.

Contact us for a [FREE KITCHEN REMODEL CONSULTATION](#). We would be happy to answer any questions in creating a dream kitchen and help you come up with a budget that is right for you.