

# BEFORE YOU START...

For a successful kitchen or bathroom reno, **planning ahead is key.** Read on for all the things you need to keep in mind

- 1. THINK ABOUT YOUR LIFESTYLE** Ask yourself some questions: is the kitchen the hub of your home or a showpiece? Are you a serious cook? Is your bathroom used by the whole family or just you?
- 2. PLUMBING & ELECTRICITY** Do you plan to move connections or add extra plumbing and electricity lines? This will cost more.
- 3. START A SCRAPBOOK** Fill it with things you like from magazines, websites and blogs. Make a moodboard for colour schemes.
- 4. VISIT KITCHEN & BATHROOM SUPPLIERS** Look at everything from budget to luxe to see what you're willing to skimp on and what you're not. Then draft up a budget for materials and appliances. Buy the best-quality tapware you can afford as they are in constant use. A basin mixer might be used as many as 50 times a day!
- 5. ASK ABOUT DELIVERY TIMES FOR MATERIALS** Appliances, fixtures and fittings – it can take up to six weeks for certain items to be delivered. Confirm the details in advance so there are no costly delays when the reno starts. You need to have everything ready to go.
- 6. CONTACT YOUR LOCAL COUNCIL** Ask if you need approval before you start designing your new kitchen or bathroom. Ask to be sent a list of guidelines, then lodge your plans if required.
- 7. FLOORING** If you're going to change the flooring in an open-plan kitchen/dining room, now is the time to do it.
- 8. BE ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY** Visit [Yourhome.gov.au](http://Yourhome.gov.au) for tips on designing a "passive" kitchen and bathroom – rooms that run on the least possible amount of energy and water.
- 9. KITCHEN LAYOUT** This is very important for when you cook. For example, you need enough bench space for chopping, and you don't want to walk too far from fridge to bench to oven. See diagrams at right.
- 10. REUSE MATERIALS** Are there any items in your kitchen or bathroom you could reuse in the renovated versions? This is a good way to recycle and save money. For instance, you could have the bath resurfaced rather than buying a new one.
- 11. GUTTING & RUBBISH REMOVAL** Incorporate this into the budget. It will be cheaper if you can remove existing fittings yourself. You may need a skip. Be aware that removing tiles is a tedious and physically demanding affair. You may want your builder to do it.
- 12. DON'T FORGET LIGHTING!** You need a combination of ceiling lights and task lighting for kitchen benches. An island bench is the perfect place for a statement pendant – or three.

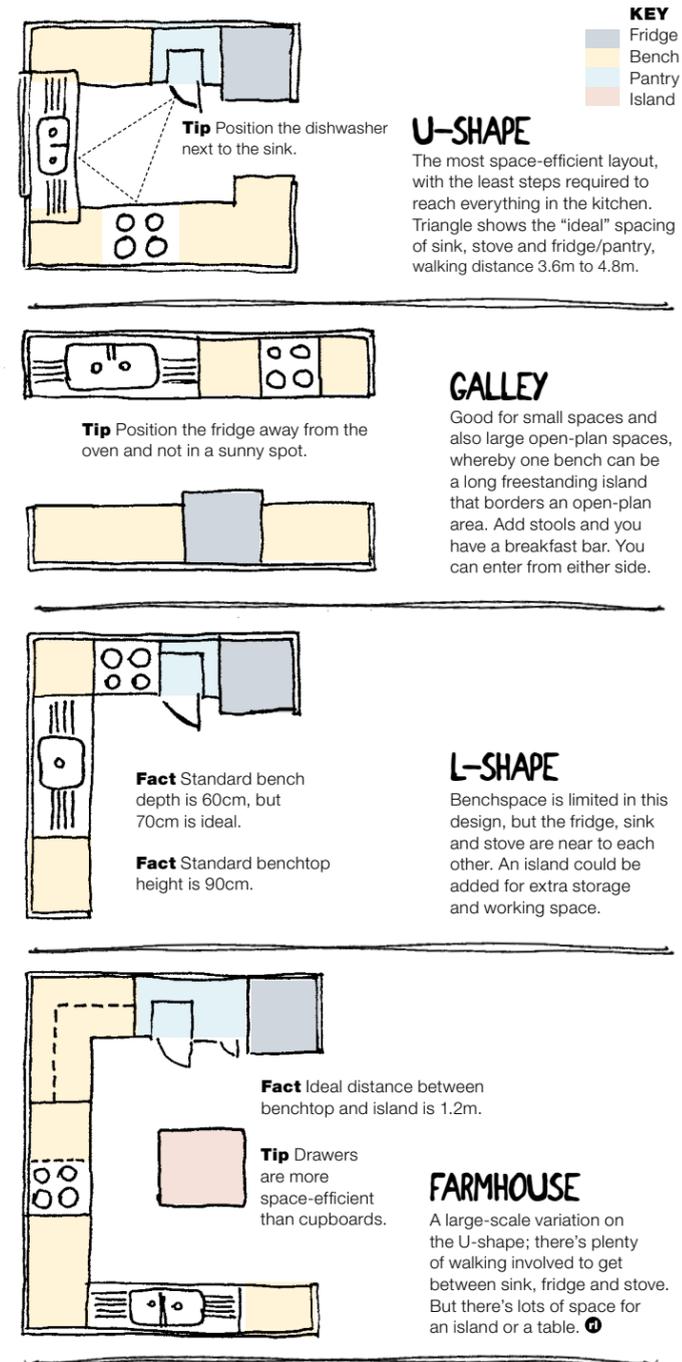
**DEALING WITH TRADIES:**  
**BE POLITE IN YOUR REQUESTS. AN AGGRESSIVE APPROACH ON THE PART OF THE HOMEOWNER WILL LEAD TO BAD FEELINGS AND A NEGATIVE APPROACH TO THE JOB.**  
**MAKE SURE YOU PAY YOUR TRADIES AS AGREED AND ON TIME.**  
**DON'T STICK YOUR NOSE IN WHERE IT'S NOT REQUIRED. LET YOUR WORKERS GET ON WITH THE JOB AND MAKE INSPECTIONS WHEN THEY ARE NOT AROUND, IF POSSIBLE.**

- TIMELINE:**
- STAGE ONE: KITCHEN & BATHROOM**
- \* Style is chosen & design planned
  - \* Room measured up
  - \* Plan drawn up (in conjunction with interior designer/specialty kitchen or bathroom company, if using one)
  - \* Tradespeople sourced
  - \* Appliances, fixtures & fittings ordered & delivery times checked
- STAGE TWO: KITCHEN**
- \* Stone benchtops measured up & ordered if you are using them – they are pre-cut at the factory
  - \* Old kitchen removed
  - \* Replumbing & electricals done
  - \* Materials installed in this order: flooring, cabinets, countertops, splashback, appliances, kickboards
  - \* Testing, then cooking!
- STAGE THREE: BATHROOM**
- \* Old bathroom comes out
  - \* Walls repaired & new piping & electricals installed where required
  - \* Waterproofing installed and left to set for at least 3 days
  - \* Structural frame built for bath (unless using a freestanding bath)
  - \* Floor reinforced where required – necessary if using a freestanding bath
  - \* Tiling, grouting & cleaning
  - \* Bath/shower/toilet installed, drains connected
  - \* Clean-up & ready to use

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## TYPICAL KITCHEN LAYOUTS

It used to be the case that most houses had closed-off U-shaped kitchens. But the rise of open-plan spaces and apartment living has seen other styles come to the fore, as well as variations on the U-shape, with one kitchen bench open to the dining/living area rather than being against a closed wall.



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