

CUT MASTERS CONSTRUCTION -630-514-6184

Remodeling a kitchen is a huge and exciting project. It can also be one of the most difficult to live through. Even for people who don't cook, the kitchen truly is the center of the home, where families gather to prepare and eat meals and socialize. At the very least, it's where drinks and ready to heat meals are stored.

Before the first cabinet is torn out or the appliances are discarded, plan on setting up a temporary kitchen in another room. Doing so will make the weeks or months of renovations ahead that much easier on everyone.

Follow these steps to set up your temporary kitchen and plan for your next few months of makeshift dining.

Step 1: Choose A Location

Set up your temporary kitchen in a room that's convenient for basic cooking and cleaning. Ideally, this will be a space with a sink and running water, such as a bathroom, basement or utility room.

There should also be adequate outlets for plugging in small appliances. If possible, have your refrigerator relocated here, too. Otherwise, have it moved to the garage and invest in a smaller unit for your makeshift kitchen.

Be sure you have adequate lighting and ventilation, to help reduce food odors. Your contractor may be able to help by moving a few of your old cabinets into your temporary kitchen space. If the cabinets no longer have a countertop, lay a piece of plywood on top to make a work surface and a place for small appliances.

Step 2: Gather Essential Items

If you need additional space beyond the makeshift countertop, set up a long folding table for small appliances and meal preparation. A few small appliances can go a long way here: a countertop microwave, toaster oven and coffee maker are all essentials, but you might also find that a slow cooker, waffle iron and sandwich press give you a much wider breadth of meal options. A hot plate or single coil burner also makes a great addition.

While no one wants to add to the landfill, disposable plates and utensils can make life a lot easier during the remodeling process, so you might want to consider making an exception just in the short term.

If your budget allows, eat out or order take out to avoid cooking every meal and to give yourself a break from the chaos of construction.

Keep commonly used kitchen items, such as utensils, in clear plastic storage containers and label them accordingly. This will make it easier to find what you need.

Step 3: Pack Away Unnecessary Items

Space will be at a premium once the kitchen remodel begins, so keep out only what is really necessary. Pack away breakables and valuables such as decorative accessories, oven cookware, and fine china.

Remember to leave out microwave safe plates and bowls, as well as things like plastic wrap, hot mitts, and a microwave cookbook or two. Use large plastic bins to store non-perishable foods such as cereal.

Step 4: Simplify Clean Up

With no dishwasher, paper plates and plastic cups will help cut down on the washing. Use a permanent marker to write each family member's name on a cup each morning to cut back on the number used.

Keep an empty plastic tub nearby for real dishware that will require cleaning. When full, the entire tub can be carried to the bath or utility sink for washing.

If you don't have a utility sink, make do with a backyard garden hose and large tub. Be sure to store garbage in an airtight lid with a plastic liner and empty it at least once a day.

Step 5: Plan Ahead For Meals

Use your outdoor barbeque grill as much as possible to reduce odors and indoor cooking activities (Pro tip: rub bar soap on the bottom and sides of your pots to make washing off black soot from the grill a breeze).

Keep plenty of snack foods like fresh fruit, granola bars, chips and crackers handy. If you're still going to have a freezer during the remodel, make some big meals ahead of time and freeze them in smaller portions so that you can defrost single-meal portions and reheat them in the microwave. Frozen foods and precooked meals that can be nuked in the microwave oven are a great way to reduce meal preparation messiness and prepare meals quickly.

And be sure to start clipping restaurant coupons now! If you plan and budget for dining out you'll have more money to invest in your remodel.

A project of this scale is bound to be somewhat inconvenient, but taking the time to set up a temporary kitchen can help stem the chaos. Create a space apart from the work zone for food preparation and storage, and life will be easier for everyone.

Now that you've got your temporary kitchen set up, it's time to begin the remodeling project...this is when the real fun begins! Follow the last part of our guide, Six Steps to Sanity, to keep yours during the remodeling process