

The Path to your *Dream Kitchen*

Before going to Ikea...

Review the CAD plans and SketchUp models. Imagine using the kitchen layout with the day to day and special activities you do now. Look at kitchen pictures on *Houzz* and *Pinterest* and make a list of features and appearance you would like incorporated.

Think about the **microwave oven**. What *style* and *location*? Below or above the counter, hinged door or slide out drawer? Size? Below counter models have more space, you can heat up both your meals at one time. [See summary of different microwave oven types.](#)

Think about the refrigerator. Your current refrigerator is 32" wide, most new **refrigerators are 36" wide**. Should cabinets be sized to allow a 36" wide?

Review the *Ikea Kitchen Planner* model. Think about **doors versus drawers**. Drawers can make a more efficient use of storage space particularly for smaller items. Drawer heights should be sized to accommodate one layer of items—so cutlery should be 2" high for example. But shelves with doors are better for large items. Cabinets above the counter which are 15" deep are always doors—great for dishes, glasses. Below the counter, cabinets are 24" deep and full extension drawers are convenient and efficient. But even cabinets with doors for large items should have slide-out shelves so you can easily get to items at the back. The *Ikea Kitchen Planner* automatically generates a full item list with prices. Note that I have put Ikea appliances in the model to help with cabinet planning but they also show up in the price list.

Think about countertops. Quartz and Granite last forever and some granite is maintenance free. Wood looks nice but retains food juices (and bacteria), stains permanently, and requires regular maintenance.

Think about door and drawer front styles and colors and door/drawer handles. Ikea fronts are the easiest but they have limited styles and colors. Third party fronts look nicer, have more styles, any color you want but are two to three times the price (think \$2000 to \$3000 more!). An alternative is custom wood fronts from large mid-western factories that specialize in this. They make whatever size you want, predrill for Ikea hardware and are the cheapest—even cheaper than Ikea fronts. But you have to have them painted here. Easy to find a professional paint shop to do a great job in any color and finish you want and they will still be probably less expensive than Ikea fronts. Handles and drawer pulls can also be bought on line frequently cheaper than Ikea.

When you are ready to go to Ikea.

With the answers to the above questions and the *Ikea Kitchen Planner* program, you will be ready to finalize the design and order. Go early, the wait time later in the day for a consultant to sit at a computer with you can be long. They will review the design for missing items, fit, and details.

The first thing they want you to do is bring in all of your measurements—you have even better, all the measurements are in the *Ikea Kitchen Planner*. I also have CAD floor plans with all the dimensions in great detail. Even though they want these dimensions to start the discussion, they require that their team come and make their own measurements before they place the order. This is \$300 but gets refunded when you order.

They will tell you a delivery time for cabinet boxes (and fronts if you order from them). For countertops, they have to measure again after the cabinets are installed and then the countertops are cut and installed about 2 to 3 weeks later.