

# LEARN THE LAY OF THE KITCHEN:

A Beginner's Guide to Kitchen Layouts

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- 5 Common Kitchen Layout Archetypes
- Pros and Cons of Each Style
- Homescapes Showrooms
- Planning Recommendations from NKBA



# INTRODUCTION

Functioning as the heart of your beloved home, the kitchen is where your family gathers to kick-off the day, where you come to re-fuel, and where you host your guests on those special occasions. But your kitchen won't account for these various uses automatically, it's up to you to dream up and map out an effective layout that takes all of these elements into consideration.

Most kitchens share common elements like refrigerators, stoves, counter-space, and sinks but the nuances of kitchen layouts often go unnoticed to the untrained eye.

Planning the perfect kitchen layout is full of variables, including appliance placement, clearance requirements for doors and shelves, and integrating your kitchen into the traffic and usage patterns of your entire home.

Planning your kitchen's layout can be downright daunting. The good news is that it doesn't have to be. This guide will walk you through a series of common floorplan archetypes to help jump-start your imagination, present a succinct list of kitchen planning recommendations from the National Kitchen & Bath Association (NKBA), and leave you with some immediately applicable tips and tricks. Cultivate a unique vision for your dream kitchen and start planning for a new kitchen layout today!



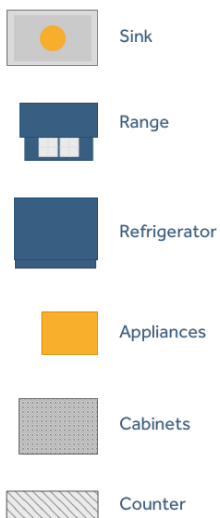
# GALLEY

The galley layout is essentially two parallel one-walled kitchens, creating a classic work-triangle setup. The galley layout makes the most of tight spaces, making for an effective kitchen layout but simultaneously limiting dining space. Because of its tight quarters, the galley layout forces your guests into another room while you cook, and makes it difficult (if not impossible) to hang out with your family without running into them.

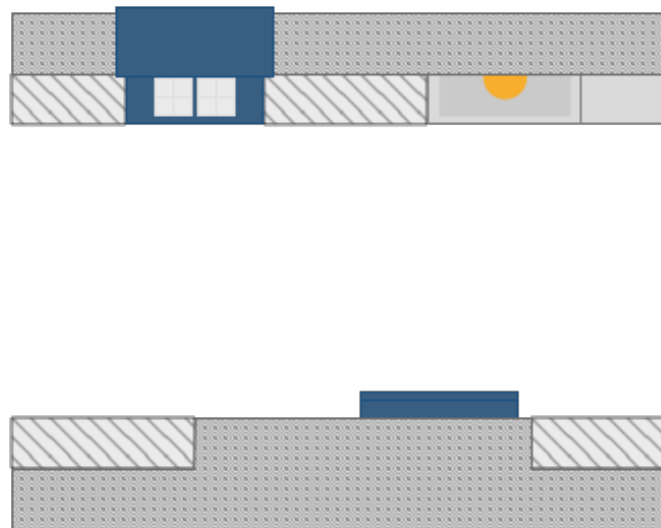
If you're concerned about the space issues that come along with this layout, you should consider a galley that opens up into adjacent rooms on either side. This will make the space seem more capacious and connected to the rest of your home. If you're a one-cook-show, the galley layout is right up your alley.



## KEY



## GALLEY



**"Historically the galley is the most efficient use of space. It eliminates corners while maximizing storage and countertop work space."**

*—HomeScapes Kitchen Designer*



**"At-home chefs love this layout because it keeps traffic out of the prep areas and cooks' work zones. Ideal for preparing multiple dishes at once."**

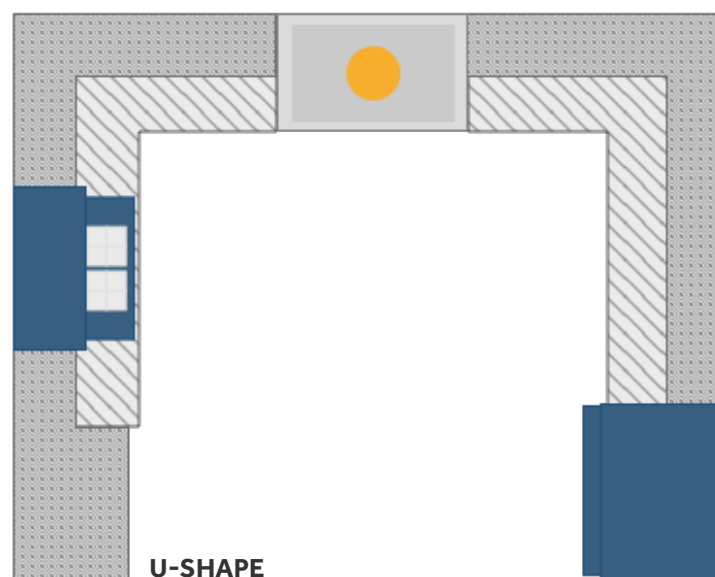
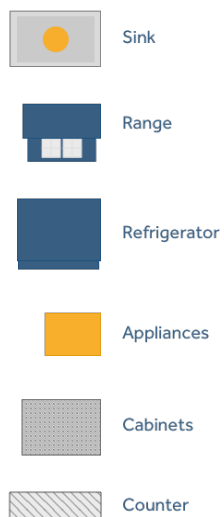
*—HomeScapes Kitchen Manager*

## U-SHAPE

Often considered the most social layout of the bunch, the U-shaped island combination allows for more people to be in the space without compromising the workflow of the cook. The U-shape layout requires more space than many of the other layouts, but it's space well spent if you're looking for a kitchen that can churn out delectable meals while entertaining guests. This layout also permits you to get creative with the creation of your work triangle. It's not uncommon to place the range on an island in the center of a U-shaped kitchen, opening up all sorts of workflow pathways that aren't as easily achieved with the other layouts. The island can also be commandeered for simple storage and seating, keeping your work triangle fixed on your perimeter counters.



### KEY



# ONE-WALL KITCHEN

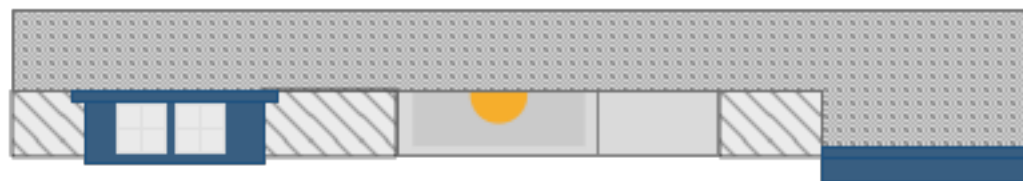
The one-walled kitchen layout is dynamic in its application. From small, cramped spaces, to sprawling open floor plans, the one-walled layout keeps your kitchen compact and contained. Although this style minimizes the space needed to fit the requisite kitchen accommodations, it interrupts the classic litmus test for a highly functioning kitchen: the work-triangle (the optimal path between the sink, refrigerator, and stovetop).

However, even without an intact work-triangle, one-walled kitchens can still be effective work-stations. For instance, sinks are typically situated between the range and the refrigerator in order to streamline kitchen activity. This utilizes the sink as a checkpoint that's ideal for meal prep and cleaning up once the salt has settled after a chaotic cooking session. One downside of this layout is that the counter space can be limited. So, if you prefer spreading out when cooking, you may want to consider another layout that accounts for more ample counter space.

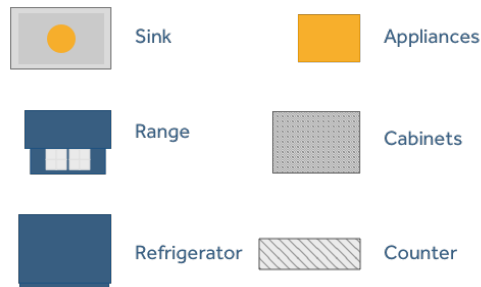
**"The one wall layout is very efficient. It lends itself to open floor plans, great rooms, and can even be ideal as secondary kitchen."**

*—HomeScapes Kitchen Designer*

## ONE-WALL KITCHEN



### KEY



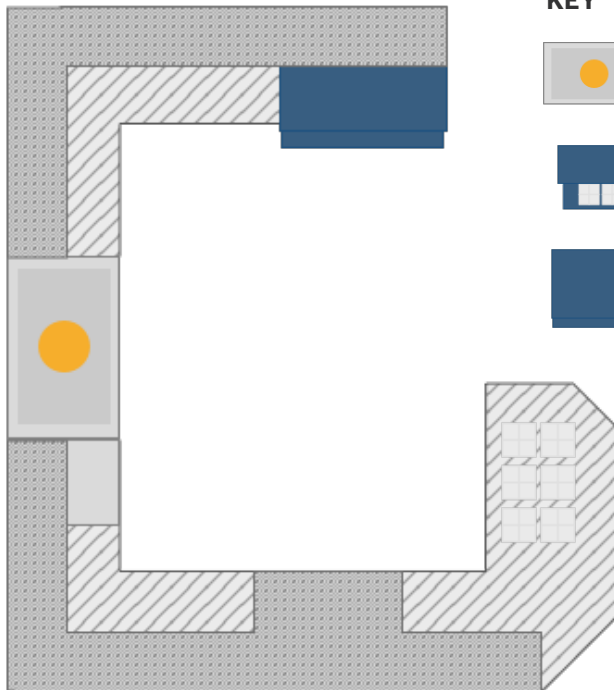


# G-SHAPE







The G-shaped layout is the most enclosed layout of all because of its extra counter-leg that wraps around from either the right or left side. Essentially, you can visualize a G-shaped layout as a U-shaped floorplan with an added peninsula that stems out from one of the parallel legs of the kitchen.

The G-shaped layout is ideal for robust, comprehensive kitchens, allowing you to disperse elements like cabinets and counter space over a larger area. They're certainly not limited to this arrangement but the majority of peninsulas in the G-shape layout are used as a range-dining area combination. The G-shape layout can seem cut-off from the rest of the home because its opening is the smallest of all of the archetypes, but the peninsula helps to create an a feeling of connectedness and fluidity between the spaces.

## G-SHAPE



### KEY

	Sink		Appliances
	Range		Cabinets
	Refrigerator		Counter

**An overhang on a peninsula adds a space for guests to sit and chat with the cooks. The added space allows for multiple food preparers. Efficiently moves traffic away from the cook.**

*—HomeScapes Kitchen Designer*



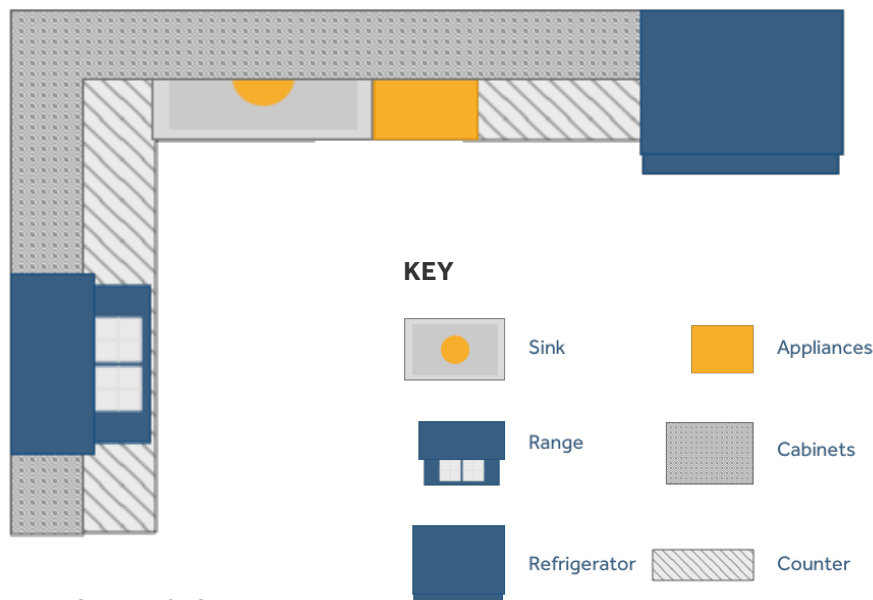
**"Most traditional of all kitchen shapes because it is the most efficient, economical, and ergonomic of all work spaces."**

*—HomeScapes Kitchen Manager*

## L-SHAPE

Similar to the one-walled layout, the L-shape layout lends itself nicely to the burgeoning trend of open style living. The days of compartmentalizing rooms based on use-case are coming to a close. Because this layout only consists of two perpendicular legs, it can easily support more than one cook in the kitchen at a time, is ideal for mingling with guests, and feels connected to all of the other parts of the home.

Throw an island into the mix and this layout still retains its feeling of openness, welcoming people into the space. The island can be used to house storage, a sink, a range, or dining space. And if you want to experiment with alternatives to the widely accepted work-triangle approach, this layout is great for a zoned setup. Zoned kitchens characteristically have four separate areas with distinct purposes: prepping, cooking, baking, and clean-up.



**L-SHAPE & ISLAND**

# NKBA GUIDELINES

Now that you have a better idea of what your kitchen layout options are, it's time to make a work space out of them! But don't be too hasty, there are other things to consider (31 of them to be exact) before you begin. Below, we have listed an abridged version of the National Kitchen and Bath Association's (NKBA) kitchen guidelines to keep you on the right track. From calculating clearance zones to lighting recommendations, this comprehensive list will save you time and effort throughout the duration of your project.



## Door/Entry

A clear opening of a doorway should be at least 34 inches wide.

## Door Interference

No entry door should impede on appliances. Appliance doors should not to interfere with one another.

## Distance Between Work Centers

In a kitchen with three work centers, the sum of the distances between them should total no more than 26 feet. No leg of the work triangle should measure less than 4 feet nor more than 9 feet. When the kitchen includes additional work centers, each additional distance should measure no less than 4 feet nor more than 9 feet. No work triangle leg should intersect an island or peninsula by more than 12 inches.

\* The distances between the three primary work centers (cooking, cleanup/prep and refrigeration) form a work triangle.

## Separating Work Centers

A full-height, full-depth, tall obstacle should not separate two primary work centers

## Work Triangle Traffic

No major traffic patterns should cross through the work triangle.

## Walkway

The width of a walkway should be at least 36 inches.

## Work Aisle

The width of a work aisle should be at least 42 inches for one cook and at least 48 inches for multiple cooks.

## Traffic Clearance at Seating

In a seating area where no traffic passes behind a seated diner, allow 32 inches of clearance from the counter/table edge to any wall or other obstruction behind the seating area. If traffic passes behind the seated diner, allow at least 36 inches to edge past or at least 44 inches to walk past.



## Seating Clearance

Kitchen seating areas should incorporate at least the following clearances: At 30-inch-high tables/counters, allow a 24-inch-wide by 18-inch-deep knee space for each seated diner. At 36-inch-high counters, allow a 24-inch-wide by 15-inch-deep knee space. At 42-inch-high counters, allow a 24-inch-wide by 12-inch-deep knee space.

## Cleanup/Prep Sink Placement

If a kitchen has only one sink, locate it adjacent to or across from the cooking surface and refrigerator.

## Cleanup/Prep Sink Landing Area

Include at least a 24-inch-wide landing area to one side of the sink and at least an 18-inch-wide landing area on the other side.

## Preparation/Work Area

Include a section of continuous countertop at least 36 inches wide and 24 inches deep immediately next to a sink.

## Dishwasher Placement

Locate nearest edge of the primary dishwasher within 36 inches of the nearest edge of a sink. Provide at least 21 inches of standing space between the edge of the dishwasher and countertop frontage, appliances and/or cabinets placed at a right angle to the dishwasher.

## Waste Receptacles

Include at least two waste receptacles. Locate one near the sink(s) and a second for recycling in the kitchen or nearby.

## Auxiliary Sink

At least 3 inches of countertop frontage should be provided on one side of the auxiliary sink and 18 inches on the other side.

## Refrigerator Landing Area

Include at least 15 inches of landing area on the handle side of the refrigerator or 15 inches of landing area on either side of a side-by-side refrigerator or 15 inches of landing area no more than 48 inches across from the front of the refrigerator or 15 inches of landing area above or adjacent to any undercounter refrigeration appliance.

## Cooking Surface Landing Area

Include a minimum of 12 inches of landing area on one side of a cooking surface and 15 inches on the other side. In an island or peninsula, the countertop should also be extended a minimum of 9 inches behind the cooking surface.

## Cooking Surface Clearance

Allow 24 inches of clearance between the cooking surface and a protected noncombustible surface [e.g., a range hood] above it. At least 30 inches of clearance is required between the cooking surface and an unprotected/combustible surface [e.g., cabinetry] above it. If a microwave hood is used, then the manufacturer's specifications should be followed.

## Cooking Surface Ventilation

Provide a correctly sized, ducted ventilation system for all cooking surface appliances; the recommended minimum is 150 CFM.

## Cooking Surface Safety

Do not locate the cooking surface under an operable window. Window treatments above the cooking surface should not use flammable materials. A fire extinguisher should be located near the exit of the kitchen away from cooking equipment.

## Storage

The total shelf/drawer frontage is: 1,400 inches for a small kitchen (150 square feet or less); 1,700 inches for a medium kitchen (151 to 350 square feet); and 2,000 inches for a large kitchen (351 square feet or more).  
accommodate all uses.

The recommended distribution for the shelf/drawer frontage is

	Small	Medium	Large
<b>Wall</b>	300 in.	360 in.	360 in.
<b>Base</b>	520 in.	615 in.	660 in.
<b>Drawer</b>	360 in.	400 in.	525 in.
<b>Pantry</b>	180 in.	230 in.	310 in.
<b>Misc</b>	40 in.	95 in.	145 in.

## Microwave Oven Placement

The ideal location for the bottom of the microwave is 3 inches below the principle user's shoulder but no more than 54 inches above the floor. If the microwave is below the countertop the bottom must be at least 15 inches off the finished floor.

## Microwave Landing Area

Provide at least a 15-inch landing area above, below or adjacent to the handle side of a microwave. 54 inches above the floor. If the microwave is below the countertop the bottom must be at least 15 inches off the finished floor.

## Oven Landing Area

Include at least a 15-inch landing area next to or above the oven. At least a 15-inch landing area not more than 48 inches across from the oven is acceptable if the appliance does not open into a walkway. the floor. If the microwave is below the countertop the bottom must be at least 15 inches off the finished floor.

## Combining Landing Areas:

If two landing areas are adjacent, determine a new minimum by taking the longer of the two landing area requirements and adding 12 inches.

## Countertop Space

A total of 158 inches of countertop frontage, 24 inches deep, with at least 15 inches of clearance above, is needed to accommodate all uses. ments and adding 12 inches.

## Countertop Edges

Specify clipped or round corners rather than sharp edges. accommodate all uses.

## Storage

The total shelf/drawer frontage is: 1,400 inches for a small kitchen (150 square feet or less); 1,700 inches for a medium kitchen (151 to 350 square feet); and 2,000 inches for a large kitchen (351 square feet or more). accommodate all uses ments and adding 12 inches.

## Storage at Cleanup/Prep Sink

Of the total recommended shelf/drawer frontage, the following should be located within 72 inches of the centerline of the main cleanup/prep sink: at least 400 inches for a small kitchen; at least 480 inches for a medium kitchen; and at least 560 inches for a large kitchen.

## Corner Cabinet Storage

At least one corner cabinet should include a functional storage device. This does not apply if there are no corner cabinets.

## Electrical Receptacles

Electrical Receptacles: GFCI (ground fault circuit interrupter) protection is required on all receptacles servicing countertop surfaces. cabinets.

## Lighting

Every work surface should be well-illuminated by appropriate task lighting. countertop surfaces. cabinets.

