

KITCHEN WORK TRIANGLES/ZONES

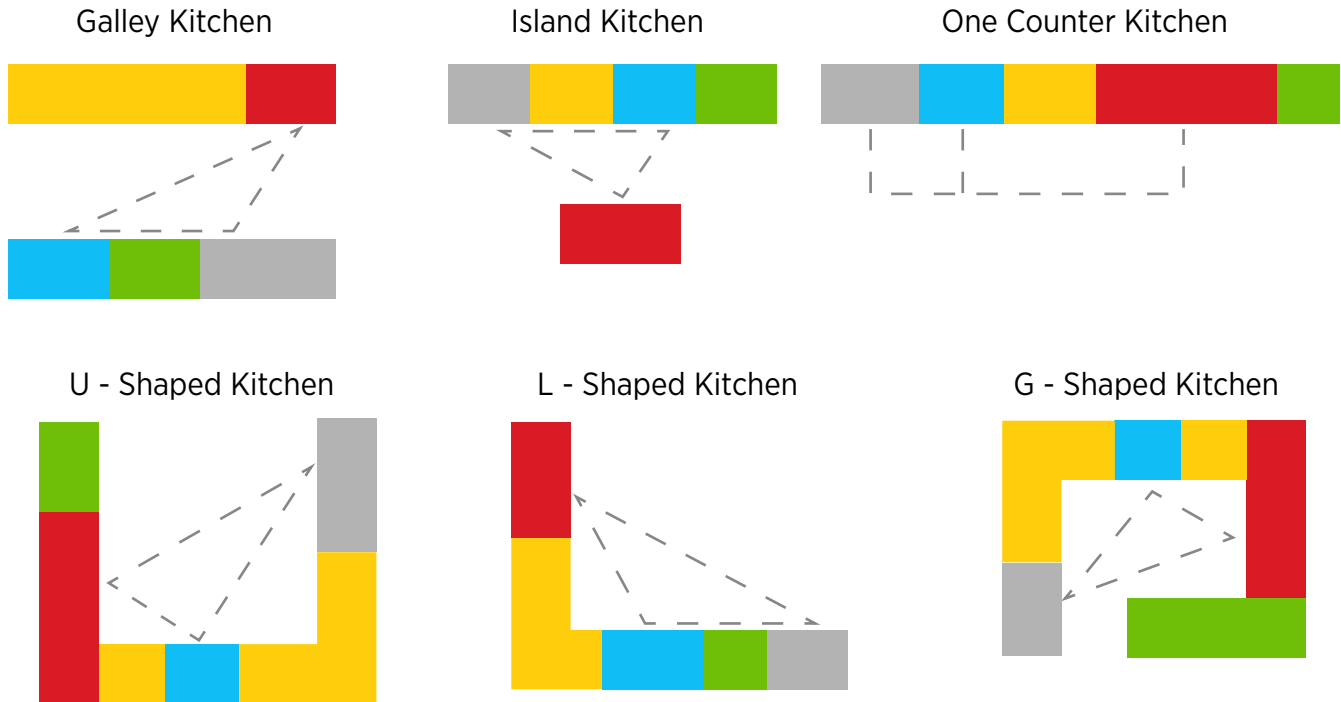


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KITCHEN WORK TRIANGLES



Every kitchen can be divided in 5 zones regardless of the kitchens size and shape.



What is a Kitchen Work Triangle?

The kitchen work triangle is a concept that was developed back in the 1940's when kitchens were very compact and appliances were very large. The kitchen was considered as a cooking space only. The kitchen work triangle was created at a time when kitchen decoration and entertainment were not the elements that worth some serious consideration. Nowadays, kitchens are larger and have become the focal points of every home, open sharing space with the living and dining rooms for easy entertaining. The triangle connects 3 main work areas within the kitchen - the range (cooking zone), the sink (cleaning zone) and the refrigerator (consumables zone). Even if you have a tiny kitchen, you still probably have the side essentials besides the main ones: some cabinets (non-consumables zone) and a little countertop space (preparation zone). A general rule is that the distance between these three areas should be between 4 feet and 9 feet, no more and no less, with the sum of the three sides lying between 13 feet and 26 feet. In a case where the distance is very small, then the kitchen will feel not only blocked, but also cramped. On the other hand, a too large distance makes the entire cooking process a hassle.

Once you've mapped out your zones, you're ready for the next step.

KITCHEN WORK SHAPES

Most kitchens can be divvied up into these areas.

Even if you have a tiny apartment galley kitchen, you still probably have the essentials: a fridge (consumables zone), some cabinets (non-consumables zone), a sink (cleaning zone), a little countertop space (preparation zone), and a stove (cooking zone). Once you've mapped out your zones, you're ready for the next step.

The basic work zones to think about in your kitchen are as follows:

Consumables zone: The area used to store most of your food. This may actually be split into two zones: one for your refrigerator (fresh food) and one for your pantry or food cabinets (dry goods, oils, etc.).

Non-consumables zone: The area used to store everyday dishes, including plates, bowls, glasses, and silverware.

Cleaning zone: The area that contains the sink and dishwasher (if you have one).

Preparation zone: The area where most of your kitchen prep happens. This may be a stretch of countertop, or a kitchen island.

Cooking zone: The area that contains the stovetop, oven, or range, and possibly the microwave.

- Store items as close to their related zone as possible.
The point of dividing your kitchen into zones is so you can store things in the right place to improve your cooking flow! For example, knives, mixing bowls, chopping boards, spices, and other prep utensils should be stored where you do most of your prep work, in the preparation zone. Cooking utensils, pots, pans, and bakeware should be stored as close to or near the stove or oven, in the cooking zone.
- Store your everyday dishes in the cabinet closest to the sink or dishwasher.
Digging into the details on this a little more, this diagram notes you should store your everyday dishes (the non-consumables) right next to the cleaning area, or where your sink and dishwasher are.

This makes a lot of sense when you think about it. What are you normally unloading from the dishwasher? All your everyday plates, glasses, and silverware! So whatever cabinet is closest to your dish rack or dishwasher, that's where you should store your dishes if possible.

- Create prep space as close to the stove as possible.
Another thing we noticed in this diagram is how the prep area is situated next to the stove. We agree. One of the most important things in setting up a kitchen is to have adequate counter space close to the stove. Ideally you shouldn't have to take more than a few steps to put your prepped food into a pot on your stovetop, or in the oven.

If you don't have enough countertop space next to your stove, this is where you need to get creative! Whatever space you do have, clear it off and prioritize it as a prep space. Remove the microwave and move the fruit bowl! You need that space to chop vegetables or mix ingredients, so let it be just that.

SHAPE OF YOUR KITCHEN

What is the Shape of Your Kitchen?

The shape of your kitchen plays a major part in how the work triangle can be arranged. However, no matter the shape of your kitchen, a kitchen work triangle can be utilized.

Let's take a look at different kitchen shapes.

Galley Kitchen

The galley kitchen is essentially two parallel workspaces. Generally, this kitchen design is found in smaller houses, condos or apartments.

Now, the most challenging kitchen shape in which to create a work triangle can be the galley kitchen. However, when taking a look at a floor plan it is easy to see that a kitchen work triangle can be created.

In this type of kitchen like the L-shaped, two of the appliances should be placed along one wall and on the other. Thus, a functional work triangle will be produced.

By contrast, if all three were located along one wall, at times the meal preparer would have to walk past one workstation to get to another. This is inefficient and wastes movement. It also creates the need to walk around someone else who may be using the fridge or other workspaces.

Island Kitchen

A island kitchen is the most desirable kitchen layout. Having an island in your kitchen is a look and feature that is growing in popularity. However, you need the space to have this.

This feature can be incorporated into any of the above kitchen layouts. It can be used to help create a more functional design by acting as another point to your working triangle.

This can be for the sink, hob or a dedicated prepping area. It can also serve to create a more social environment by adding a seating area on one side.

Even if you love the idea of a kitchen island and think you have to have one, be careful. A kitchen with an island that shouldn't have one will be a nightmare to live with.

A peninsula kitchen layout is where one of the runs of cabinets coming off the kitchen isn't against a wall. The key difference of a peninsula kitchen is that this extra section is accessible from both sides.

A peninsula layout is, in some ways, an addition to other layouts. It can turn a single wall kitchen into an L-shaped kitchen of sorts. Creating a breakfast bar/seating area off the wall into the room as a peninsula can be a great way to introduce a more social element to your kitchen layout.

Using a peninsula instead of an island is a good idea if you are limited on space, but want the functionality and social aspects of an island.

SHAPE OF YOUR KITCHEN

One Counter Kitchen

The single wall kitchen pretty much does what it says on the tin. Everything is designed and fitted along one wall. It's becoming more popular in smaller spaces such as flats and lofts and is often designed with a more contemporary and minimalist style in mind. This can be a great option if you want to have an open-plan space but don't have much room. By only using one wall, this frees up space in the rest of the room to have dining or living sections.

U - Shaped Kitchen

The U - Shaped kitchen is probably the easy kitchen shape in which to create a triangle. Given that there are three walls with counter space in a U - Shaped kitchen, pathways and angles can be arranged in many efficient ways. Of course, windows, doors, and structural elements can limit or require placement of appliances and therefore shape and alter the pathways in a triangle.

The placement of the refrigerator and the range creates a straight line. This makes bringing ingredients from the fridge to the stove efficient and saves motion.

The sink then is placed so that there are two straight lines to the fridge and the stove. This means that taking items from the fridge to be washed in the sink and then to the stove to be cooked is the most efficient walking path.

L - Shaped Kitchen

The L- Shaped kitchen presents some challenges in creating a good kitchen triangle. However, it is quite possible to create one.

The key is to place two of the three appliances along one wall and the third on the other. This preserves the kitchen triangle and creates a functional kitchen layout. In this arrangement, the pathways can be effective and efficient.

G - Shaped Kitchen

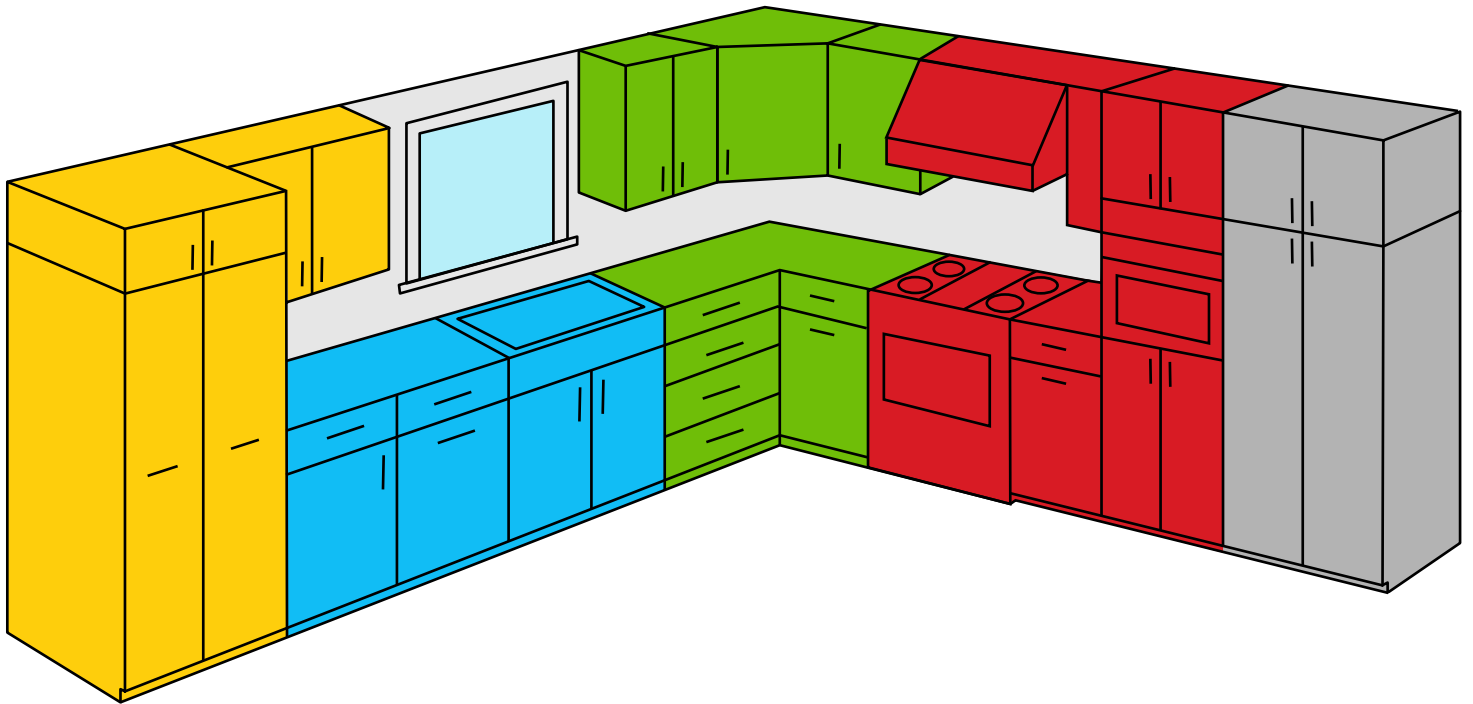
Sometimes just referred to as a galley kitchen – although that would technically be a single wall kitchen. A double galley kitchen is when you have two runs of cabinets opposite each other. This is usually against two walls, although this doesn't have to be the case.

The name is taken from the name for a ship's kitchen. A double galley kitchen layout can be an efficient working arrangement and easy to implement the working triangle.

All you need to do is place the sink on the opposite run of cabinets to the hob and have the fridge at the end of the run (on either side). This can create a nice workflow in a small space.

Make sure to allow for enough clear worktop space either side of the hob for your prep and other kitchen task zones.

KITCHEN WORK ZONES



CONSUMABLES

NON-CONSUMABLES

CLEANING

PREPARATION

COOKING

CONSUMABLES

This area contains both chilled and non-chilled foods and includes both your fridge and freezer.

CLEANING

This zone contains the dishwasher and sink unit, as well as waste bins, household cleaners and cleaning utensils.

NON-CONSUMABLES

This kitchen zone, used for utensils, cutlery, glasses and small appliances (such as coffee makers and tea kettles), accounts for almost 30% of all kitchen storage items.

PREPARATION

This area, which should be located next to the Cooking zone, contains your large pots, pans, lids and bulk items.

COOKING

This area includes your stove, microwave, small electrical appliances, cutting boards, mixing bowls, food processors, as well as vinegars, spices, sauces, etc.

What is Kitchen Work Zone Design?

Work zones can be termed as the product of the kitchen work triangle's natural evolution. As kitchens enlarged and opened up to other rooms, including the living and dining rooms, it became hard to place appliances in a well-organized triangular layout. Also, apart from the conventional appliances that were synonymous with the kitchen back then, more advanced appliances are now in use, something that has made the shift from the kitchen work triangle to kitchen work zones inevitable. Furthermore, people are socializing and working more in the space than before. Therefore, sectioning off the kitchen into work zones maximizes the efficiency in a larger space. It will be possible to accommodate more cooks and guests better than you can in a work triangle.

In a work zone, it is advisable to group fixtures and appliances according to use. Work zones are pretty easy to set up because you simply have to think about the tasks you perform on a regular basis, such as prep tasks, storing food, baking, cooking, eating, serving, making coffee, chilling wine, cleaning etc. This means each work zone will contain everything you need to perform a specific task. For example, dishwasher should be placed near the sink while a compost and garbage bin are placed close to each other to streamline kitchen cleanup.

You can also store items at the right places in a manner that makes it possible to access when working in a given work zone. Apart from grouping fixtures and appliances according to use, always ensure there is enough storage in each work zone to make it easier performing different tasks.

The baking zone is ideal for rolling out pizza and kneading bread. The bread-baking and making tools should be stored in the cabinets beneath. This makes it possible for one person to work in this station while someone else prepares food in a different part.

You should also ensure that there are landing areas next to main appliances. Place a counter landing area next to major kitchen appliances, such as the wall ovens, microwave and cooktop in order to increase efficiency and safety. It is also important to consider how you're going to set down something hot without moving halfway across the kitchen to find a suitable area to place it. This gives you another cooking work zone where you can place items such as cutting boards, knives, pans and pots in the cabinets and use their countertops for chopping and cooking prep purposes.

You should also create a kid's zone in case you're blessed with children. If you have enough space, set up a zone in the kitchen where the children can do their homework, eat snacks and hang out. This is great in the sense that you and your little ones will be in the kitchen together without them feeling left out.

Another zone worth considering is the one for your guests. If your kitchen is open and you like to entertain, I bet you understand how important it is for your guests to have a place to hang out and chat while you're busy preparing a sumptuous meal for them. Having a large island or a peninsula is ideal for such a situation because it can effectively act as a barrier that prevents your visitors from interfering with you while at the same time giving them some comfortable place to relax while you work. You should also consider placing the items you use for entertaining and serving in the cabinets for easy access.