

The Newlyweds' Guide to Designing Your First Kitchen Together

Psst: It's equal parts style, substance, and smarts.

BY [JENNIFER TZESES](#) JUL 7, 2021



A truly bespoke kitchen, where all your culinary aspirations can come to life, is what dreams are made of, right? And whether you and your newly appointed spouse went straight from your honeymoon right into your first home or are remodeling an existing space, the possibilities are endless. But where to begin? Beyond simply being a home for those porcelain platters and ceramic plates gifted from your registry, your kitchen requires expert craftsmanship and keen attention to detail so it functions like the well-oiled machine you need.

Start with the essentials

Creating the perfect starter kitchen requires style and substance—a mix that begins with impeccably crafted appliances. “State-of-the-art appliances are more efficient,” says Allison Babcock of [Allison Babcock Design](#) in Sag Harbor, New York. “Many offer WiFi connectivity, which allows you to control them from a mobile device no matter how far from home you are. They give you flexibility, peace of mind, and a little pampering,” she says.

The [Leap Into Luxury](#) appliance packages from Thermador instantly elevates any kitchen with essentials that are as smart as they are sleek. The handcrafted set includes the [Masterpiece Oven with Professional Handles](#), which features a variety of cooking modes, quick pre-heating, and WiFi connectivity to monitor meals remotely via the Home Connect app. The suite also comes with a stainless steel [Freestanding Refrigerator](#) (with either [Masterpiece](#) or [Professional](#) handles) that features configurable shelving and two produce compartments with independent climate control. Any complete kitchen needs a dishwasher, and the [Emerald Dishwasher](#) lets you load even the most awkward tools thanks to a roomy third rack—and then control wash cycles on your smartphone.

DISCOVER "LEAP INTO LUXURY" PACKAGES



Thermador Leap
Into Luxury
Package - Tier 1

[LEARN MORE](#)



Thermador Leap
Into Luxury
Package - Tier 2

[LEARN MORE](#)



Thermador Leap
Into Luxury
Package - Tier 3

[LEARN MORE](#)

Look to the layout

Once your appliances are settled, think about how to make the space as workable as possible. While the layout often depends on the size and shape of your kitchen itself, Babcock suggests sticking to the “work triangle,” especially for a smaller space.



THERMADOR / GETTY IMAGES

“It’s a tried-and-true layout that places the cooktop, refrigerator, and sink in a triangle formation, making tasks easier to complete,” she says. Babcock also recommends keeping the color scheme as an extension of the rest of the home, which can create the illusion of more space simply by way of cohesion.

If you have room for an island, make sure you allow for enough space to open major appliance doors and for people to pass through (though not too far that appliances are out of reach). You might consider placing your sink and dishwasher in the island for added functionality. Just make sure you leave ample counter space to eat on it, as well.

Give it your own stamp



Adding personality can be as involved as installing new countertops or as simple as a DIY backsplash or freshly-painted cabinets. Incorporating registry gifts, whether that's a colorful mixer or set of gorgeous dinnerware, is a super quick way to inject a dose of you into a kitchen.

If you're doing a more extensive refresh, or working with a blank slate, there are several ways to customize your cooking space. For countertops, Babcock recommends a durable surface such as quartz, since it's resilient and easy to clean. Depending on your style, quartz can be iterated in everything from a minimalist concrete-like slab to more elaborate looks that mimic the patinas of industrial materials or the luxury of marble.

Another way to sprinkle a bit of yourself into kitchen design is a striking backsplash. If you don't want to go to the trouble of installing new tile, or can't quite decide on a permanent look, try vinyl peel-and-stick wallpaper, which is rendered in everything from subway tile and glass mosaics to faux antique tin. "It's easy to install and inexpensive, so you could change it seasonally," Babcock says.

The ultimate "make it yours" accessory is statement lighting, which is like jewelry for the room. The idea is to select fixtures that add to, and complement, the architecture. If you have an island, opt for one central chandelier or several small pendant lights to hang over it. Babcock also loves the look of wall-mounted picture lights above shelving.

Make room for more



When all of the big-ticket items are in place, you'll want to consider storage space; Babcock suggests hanging floating shelves. "They are a great option for storing plates, glasses, and serving platters, which can double as décor," she says. "Very often, people feel they need a place to hide things behind cabinet doors when actually open shelving forces you to edit what you have and stay tidy." Adding greenery or propping a piece of artwork against the back wall will also infuse a little personality. "Open shelving allows you to play with the arrangement," she says. And a bit of curation goes a long way.