

Kitchen Improvements With New Worktops

If your kitchen is looking tired and dated, you do not necessarily need to rip it all out and start again. Replacing the kitchen worktops will instantly give your kitchen a major face lift whilst saving you lots of money and hassle.

There are many different types of worktop to choose from including granite, Corian (a composite of minerals and acrylic polymer, from about £400 a square metre), Raustone (similar to Corian, but less pricey), rubberwood (cubes of wood bonded together), stainless steel, Formica, real wood such as oak, beech, walnut, cheery, iroko and basic laminate. Granite, Corian, Raustone and stainless steel should be fitted by professionals.

Wooden kitchen worktops including oak, beech and walnut are the simplest option for those looking for the 'do-it-yourself' option because they are easy to cut compared to laminate, granite and stainless steel.

[Oak worktops](#) are the first choice for those looking for strength, durability and classic traditional elegance. Oak's rich color and fine markings lend grace to any kitchen, maturing over the years to add character and warmth.

Walnut is a dark wood of immense warmth, with a rich grain and strong character. Walnut wood contains natural exotic patterns that set it apart from its contemporaries.

Cherry is an elegant and colorful wood, fast becoming one of the most popular choices for kitchens. Cherry worktops have a subtle autumnal red appearance that darkens gracefully over time to a rich maturity.

Beech is the most popular and versatile of all the hardwoods. The light tone and soft grain produce a bright feel that complements any style of kitchen.

Iroko - The dark hues of this rich African hardwood produce a stunning effect when used in the right kitchen environment. Often called 'African Teak', it is a most durable worktop due to its high resistance to staining.

Plan Ahead

Before you begin on your kitchen worktop project you will need to work out exactly how much new worktop you require to get the job done. If the existing worktop is a good fit then this job is done for you as you can simply use this as the template. If the worktop not to replace an exiting worktop or you require extra then you will need a measuring tape and cardboard to create the template. Even in new build houses, unfortunately corners are rarely at right angles so you will need to check carefully. Remember to order all trims, brackets and fittings when you order your worktop.

Kitchen Worktop Saw Points

If you are cutting laminate, kitchen fitters recommend using a circular saw with the laminate facing down. A jigsaw is fine for cutting out big holes for example, the sink but be aware of it fraying. Many people choose to hire a circular saw from a local hire shop. However, you will require very steady hands to do a professional job. The other crucial thing with laminate worktops is getting the mitered joints just right. These can be cut by a joiner with precision equipment, for a small fee.

Kitchen Worktop Fitting

A spirit level is essential when fixing the worktops with their supporting brackets, timber battens, or KD blocks, used especially in kitchen fitting. Leave a fall of about 2 degrees away from the wall at the back to prevent spills and dirt accumulating. Do any wall tiling work after fitting the worktops, so there is a permanent level edge to work upwards from. Seal any cut laminate surface to stop damp and between joints with a compound. Use silicone sealant between tiles and worktop and put reflective aluminum tape around cooker/hob to protect from radiant heat; use waterproof seal - unless a rubber gasket is supplied - around the sink.

If all this seems a little labor intensive, you might consider getting a professional company to provide the kitchen worktop, cutting and fitting as a package. You can then take advantage of their experience and workmanship to make sure the job is done to the highest standard. The worktop will be cut and finished to your own personal needs which will save you time and inconvenience.

About the Author

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classic traditional elegance.

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