



SHAPING UP IN THE KITCHEN

Whether you are renovating or starting from scratch, deciding which kitchen layout you want can be a difficult task. Kitchen designer Natalie Du Bois talks us through some options.

THERE IS NO RIGHT OR WRONG LAYOUT IN A KITCHEN. EACH OFFERS DIFFERENT benefits to you and your home. Often the shape of the room dictates the way the kitchen should be placed. The working triangle used to be what people based a kitchen layout on but nowadays there is more to kitchens than an oven, sink and fridge freezer. We need to consider so much more which means we end up with several working triangles. I tend to base my designs around “kitchen activity centres” like cooking, preparing and cleaning. Careful consideration needs to be placed on the distances between these centres. If they are too close it can feel cramped but if they are too far it can become a chore to do anything. The following examples show six common kitchen layouts.

ABOVE The kiwi favourite — an Island kitchen in an open plan setting. This kitchen can be viewed in Jennian Homes Anselmi Ridge show home in Pukekohe.

THE SINGLE LINE KITCHEN

Generally used in small apartments when space is limited. Try to use a wall without windows or doors to maximise the storage capacity. If the length is too long it can be unsuitable, as walking from one side of the room to the other in one line is not as practical as the galley or island kitchen where the work centres can be brought closer together.

RIGHT A sleek Single Line kitchen design which includes a scullery at the far end. Designed by Beaver Kitchens.

BELOW This U-Shape Kitchen by Du Bois Design has a continuous work surface — practical when moving from the hob to the sink. A breakfast bar keeps others out of the working area so you can move around without bumping into others.



THE U-SHAPE KITCHEN

This is where there are three sides to your kitchen, with two adjoining corners. Usually three walls are used for the kitchen storage or a peninsula if the space is open plan. This is a practical space, but make sure that you do not have to walk too far between work stations. Usually more benchtop and storage space is created but this can be inaccessible due to hard-to-reach corners. Storage mechanisms are available through kitchen hardware suppliers to minimise this. These generally help with access but not in creating extra storage. Also bear in mind that most benchtop surfaces will require joins somewhere – if you prefer a seamless look you might want to opt for products like corian, timber or stainless steel where the joins are not visible. Granite and quartz composites come in sheets, so in a U-Shape kitchen at least one join will be visible. In smaller U-Shape kitchens you will need to pay attention to the distances between opening doors, especially fridges and dishwashers.

THE ISLAND KITCHEN

Today's most popular layout for a kitchen — especially in New Zealand. These kitchens are great for the way we like to live, with a social and family focus. An island kitchen means we have several ways into a kitchen. Great for people with young children because you can keep an eye on them and access them more easily. They also can be designed to direct people to the outskirts of the kitchen allowing for a definitive work space. Be careful that you don't put an island into a space that is too small for an island; it will quickly become an obstacle if you have to walk around it in order to get to somewhere that should have been a couple of paces away.

RIGHT Island kitchens create two or three ways to access a kitchen. In this Kube design by Snaidero of Italy the back wall has the cooking and cleaning area while the island can be used for preparation, dining and socialising.



WHICH LAYOUT WORKS FOR YOU?

Before deciding which layout to have in your kitchen here are some questions to consider:

- ▶ How many people need to be able to work in this kitchen?
- ▶ How much benchtop space is adequate for you?
- ▶ How much storage space do you need?
- ▶ How many preparation surfaces are sufficient for you to work on?
- ▶ Do you like to have privacy while working in a kitchen or are you a social entertainer who is happy to have people included in the activities of food preparation?
- ▶ How much do you want to invest in your kitchen?



THE L-SHAPE KITCHEN

Ideal for country kitchens where the centre area accommodates a central table and chairs. Having a table in the centre usually means through-

traffic is kept to a minimum. This type of kitchen can accommodate several people working at the same time. The table can be used for preparing too, an added advantage.



THE GALLEY KITCHEN

The galley kitchen runs along two parallel walls. This is a very practical kitchen as everything is usually closeby. It is a favoured design for professional chefs. Having two rows running parallel means it's easy to move between activities. If the space is too narrow it can get congested, so make sure there is enough room between opposite benchtops. Check openings of ovens, dishwasher doors and fridges to make sure that you can access everything and they don't clash. If possible a galley kitchen should not be integrated into a home where the kitchen area is the only access to adjoining rooms as this will create too much congestion. This is a perfect design for those who like to work in a compact kitchen on their own or with a partner but is not ideal for people who like to socialise in the kitchen.

LEFT A Galley style kitchen using plywood and stainless steel. Designed and manufactured by W.F Wilson Kitchenmakers in Tauranga.



ABOVE An L-Shaped kitchen in a large open plan setting from Vivo Kitchen Furniture. **LEFT** When the door is closed it neatly hides away this Stonewood Homes kitchen scullery leaving an open plan space — without the clutter.

THE "SEPARATE IDENTITY" KITCHEN

This is where the main kitchen is in a separate room from a larder or scullery. If the room is large enough separate areas can be closed off and used for various functions like a scullery area for cleaning. This is especially good for people who love socialising in their kitchens but like to hide areas which can become messy. These tend to be designed into new homes more than renovated kitchens as you can dictate the size of the room easier. The 'modern' scullery or larder is now being used as a secondary kitchen as opposed to just food storage. Often benchtops with a second sink and dishwasher are designed into this area, along with a microwave area. ■

Owner of Auckland based company Du Bois Design Ltd, Natalie Du Bois designs kitchens, bathrooms and laundries nationwide. Visit Natalie at www.duboisdesign.co.nz