

Makeover Magic for Your Kitchen

page 1 of 3

“We have very little disposable income, but we just couldn’t live with the horror,” say the first-time homeowners who tackled this do-it-yourself project.

The jumbled pink-and-blue print wallpaper, the marbled brown linoleum floor, and the dark pine cabinets made them wince every time they entered their kitchen. So they set out to turn a kitchen makeover—one of the most intimidating projects a homeowner can face—into a manageable and inexpensive venture. Lowe’s is happy to provide this information as a service to you.



Tools

Basic Tools

- Hammer
- Pry Bar
- Palm Sander
- Drill/driver
- Screwdriver
- Finishing nails for shoe moulding

Countertop installation material

- Level
- Shims
- Miter bolts and same-size wrench
- L brackets and 1/2” screws
- Caulking

Wallpaper removal supplies

- Bucket
- Sponge or spray bottle
- Putty knife
- Wallpaper removal tool
- Wallpaper removal solution
- Sandpaper

Built-in shelf materials

- 12” pine shelving
- 1” strip of wood
- Liquid Nails adhesive
- 2” screws

Cabinet makeover materials

- TSP (trisodium phosphate)
- Sandpaper
- Steel wool
- Caulking
- Primer
- Paint

Flooring materials

- TSP
- Vinyl flooring squares
- Floor primer and liquid underlayment
- Trowel
- Mop with disposable head

A Kitchen Undo

The first step in this major overhaul was to undo some of the choices made by a previous owner—starting with the wallpaper. The couple first removed the wallpaper. Rough spots left behind were smoothed with an electric sander.

Ripping out the countertop came next. A laminate countertop with a separate backsplash had been unprofessionally glued in. To remove it, the owners pushed the countertop up from underneath with a hammer and pried it off with a crow bar. (Some countertops are secured with screws and simply require a screwdriver for removal.) Remove the sink before the countertop to avoid damage.



A tiny budget didn’t stop this couple from transforming their outdated kitchen into a charming and functional space.



This drab and outdated kitchen obviously needed a complete cosmetic overhaul.

Makeover Magic for Your Kitchen

page 2 of 3

A Logical Layout

With the countertops out of the way, it was easy to move the appliances, which had been awkwardly arranged on one side of the room, partially blocking a door. Only one foot of countertop separated the sink, stove, and refrigerator.

The couple followed the classic work triangle layout, which dictates that the total length between stove, sink, and refrigerator should be between 12 and 22 feet. A vacant corner on a diagonal to the sink was perfect for the refrigerator. Then they moved the stove 4 feet to the left where the refrigerator had been. This created a large workspace, completed the triangle layout, and provided space for a dishwasher and a 21-inch cabinet.



This built-in shelf cleverly filled an awkward spot left after moving a space-saver microwave.



Foam stamps are an easy way to paint decorative accents.

Like-New Cabinets

The original handmade pine cabinets had a clear polyurethane finish on top of a dark stain. Although in good condition, they made the room feel tiny, so the homeowners chose to paint them white.

They first cleaned the cabinets with a mixture of TSP (trisodium phosphate), a heavy-duty powder cleaner, and water. Then they sanded with 150-grit sandpaper, followed by steel wool. These steps roughed up the polyurethane coat and left the surface free of oils and buildup so paint would adhere.

Next, they applied a coat of primer, a crucial step to improve adhesion. Once the primer was dry, it was time to paint. An oil-based paint is the most durable and is often preferred in the kitchen; however light oil-based colors tend to yellow over time. Here a latex paint was used for that reason. The homeowners chose a semi-gloss, which is easier to clean than flat paint. Light colors require up to three coats.

Frugal Flooring

The self-adhesive vinyl squares used here are one of the least expensive and easiest ways to brighten up a floor. It was simple to cover up the old linoleum without having to remove it. First, the floor was cleaned with TSP. Then a floor primer was applied, followed by a liquid underlayment, which fills in any cracks or texture in the old linoleum for a completely smooth surface. Next, the squares were carefully put in place.

Makeover Magic for Your Kitchen

page 3 of 3

Starting Fresh

White paint further lightened the room and made it seem larger. This presented a clean slate for decorating. The couple decided to incorporate elements that coordinate with the rest of their house to add a splash of color.

The cherry wood countertop was selected because it has a natural look and plays off the color of the home's hardwood floors. The accent colors, Olympic Yellow Coneflower (#214-5) and Southern Heritage Colonial Green (#790-4), were chosen to match the adjacent dining room. The accent designs were easy to create with foam stamps. The diamonds were made by taping off sections of the wall with a low-adhesive tape.

The end result is a colorful and casual look that's durable and easy to clean—a good thing in a home with two dogs. “We're thrilled with it—and we never strayed from our budget,” say the owners. “Doing it ourselves was the best decision even though we had no experience. The cost would have at least doubled with professionals. It's a real confidence builder to realize that you don't have to pay someone if you're willing to learn.”



From top left: sample of countertop, and paint cards of green and yellow accent paints.