



## CLEVER STORAGE SOLUTIONS

**Optimising space in a kitchen is vital. It is one of the rooms in the home that has the most items that need to be stored out-of-sight and yet easily accessible when needed. Very few of us manage this. We scabble in the dark recesses of corner cupboards and at the back of drawers in the vain hope of finding that missing utensil but often not without bumping our head and issuing a few expletives.**

If you look at Pinterest and the glossy magazines they are full of wonderfully clever ideas on how to find pretty solutions to your storage problems but most are not ideal. They involve open shelves and boxes and jars all of which look very pretty in a photo shoot but practically they become cluttered and gather dust. To solve your storage issues properly, you need to look for solutions invented by the kitchen industry for the kitchen. These items have been developed over time to ensure they work to enhance the practicality of your kitchen, making your life easier.

Finding the right solutions starts with proper planning. I have a friend who recently redid her kitchen. It took her ten years to decide exactly what she wanted but she did her homework and it worked for her. Her kitchen works perfectly for her needs, her lifestyle, her appliances and accessories. She ensured this by looking at what she used on a daily basis and how she wanted to access it. This led to custom made cupboards for the display of her crystal, the storage of her hot trays, the storage of her dog food; and pull out storage for her bread maker and mixer that allows her to operate the machines from their storage space when they are

pulled out for use. It is a very clever kitchen and all it took was a good brief from the client. This is where you must start. Once you can tell the kitchen designer what problems, storage-wise, they need to solve, they have a treasure chest of hardware and accessories they can draw on to come up with the right storage solution for you.

What you want to avoid is dead space. No part of your kitchen should be under-utilized or inaccessible. Corner units are notorious for this. There are a variety of corner unit hardware solutions that can make this space of better use to you. These units swivel into the dead space and then pull out into the kitchen so you can easily access the items stored in the hard to reach part of the corner cupboard. You can also find drawer units



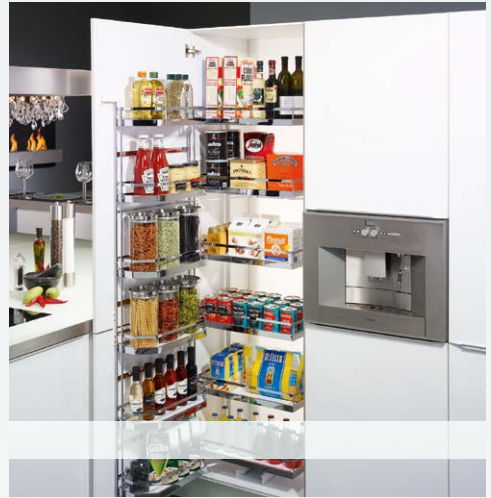
that are designed for that awkward corner so that you can opt for a more ergonomical drawer-based solution to the problem.

The pantry is a much prized addition to a kitchen but honestly not many people can keep on top of what is where with all the packets and bottles and the cupboard can easily become a mess. There is a vast array of pantry towers that operate in various ways – full pull out units or pull out shelves. These assist you to have full access to the bottles stored at the back of the pantry as well as those on the top shelves. It also means you can separate your pantry items into produce themes allowing you to have better control over what you do and do not have.

Accessing and fully utilising under-counter cupboards has also, always been a bug bear. Now there are two options to ensuring you get easy access to the back of the unit and can actually store more. If you want to stick with under counter cupboards then fit them with internal pull out shelves. These increase both storage capacity and accessibility. The growing trend now is to opt for under counter drawer units. These can vary in depth and can even have a drawer within a drawer for separation of items. With the hardware and accessories that are now available you can safely store plates and dishes in drawers as well as the usual pots and pans.

Storage of utensils, knives and forks can be a headache but with practical internal accessories for your drawers you can divide up the drawer space in a way that works for your utensils and cutlery. A messy cutlery drawer is one of the most frustrating messy zones in the kitchen, if you can clear the clutter with each utensil having a place, your cooking time will not be quite as stressful.

If you love to cook, put thought into the addition



of a special storage cupboard for your baking trays. This doesn't take much room but allows them to be stored vertically making them easy to access and put away. A good cook always wants easy access to their herbs and spices. There are a wide variety of spice drawer inserts and pull outs available. Look for the one that best works for you bearing in mind you want to be able to easily see which spice is which and avoid spillage.

Small appliances can take up a lot of space and work surface area. Look at providing for a special countertop cupboard where the smalls can be hidden from view by a roller door. This keeps them accessible without heavy lifting but not cluttering up the kitchen.

Make proper use of the cupboard under your sink. This space so often goes to waste. You can now get waste pipes that run to the back of the cupboard, thereby opening up some of this space for taller cleaning materials. Combine this with a pull out internal shelf/ drawer and you will get far better access to your cleaning materials and use of what is a traditionally dormant space.

Making sure your new kitchen stores all you need it to, is easy. It just requires a little thought and input from you, the client. Good storage solutions will add to your overall cost but will more than pay for themselves in their practicality. Ensure you put some of your budget aside for the storage solutions that will last and help to make your life easier.

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