



SURVIVING A KITCHEN RENOVATION

Any form of renovation can be stressful but a kitchen renovation is particularly so, as you are having to live without one of the most important rooms in the house for a 4–8-week period. We have, therefore put together our advice on how best to survive your renovation and stay sane through the process.

TIP # 1 Make other arrangements

Your kitchen will be out of commission for some time. Make other arrangements as to where and how you will cook and wash dishes during this time. You might have to set up a make-shift kitchen in another space, you might have to rely on microwave meals and take-out. Whatever plan you make, ensure you have it all sorted before they start work on the kitchen. This way you will be prepared for the inconvenience and irregular diet. If you are lucky your 'other arrangements' will include eating out or with friends, but if eating out becomes a regular thing make sure you have factored for that additional expense in your budget.

TIP # 2 Stick to your budget!

Give yourself budget parameters for the project and ensure you stay within them. You can avoid costly additional expenses with proper planning and ensuring you don't make changes once the kitchen company has commenced manufacturing your goods (this is once the final plans and drawings have been signed off).

All changes, once production and / or installation has begun, will add considerably to your final account as well as to the completion timeline.

Make sure your original budget was well researched and realistic and included for the removal of the old kitchen and any structural or plumbing / electrical changes. Your budget should have an allowance for delays and any possible problems (as few jobs run 100% smoothly) and that it doesn't forget sundries – those small things that always come up with a renovation job.



TIP # 3 Keep an open line of communication.

It is crucial that during a renovation there is good, clear and concise communication between the involved parties.

If communicating with your contractors, follow up in-person or phone conversations with confirmation emails so that there is a clear chain of communication. While WhatsApp is very useful, we have found that using it as a primary means of communication on a renovation leads to misunderstandings and problems.

Communicating amongst your family is important too to ensure that you are all on the same page about time lines, who will / will not be on site and who is facilitating access to the contractors.

It really helps to have one designated family

member who liaises with the contractor and their team. This avoids conflicting arrangements and instructions. Second guessing between the client and his/her partner will only lead to confusion and mistakes on the part of the contractor as they are not sure who to listen to.

The better and more effectively the parties communicate with one another, the less stressful the renovation.



TIP # 4 Get the whole family involved in the process.

Buy-in from the family, and communal excitement in the prospect of the new kitchen is important. If you are living in the house during the renovation, you will be ‘camping out’ for at least 2-4 weeks without a kitchen, so make it fun. Get the kids involved in cooking ‘camp style’ and washing up in a basin. If it’s seen as an adventure, not an inconvenience, your stress levels will be highly reduced.

Keep the family informed as to who will be on site and when, and ensure everyone knows the people who should and should not be on site – this is for everyone’s safety.

If you are in a relationship, make sure you and your partner work as a team on the project and communicate well so that there are no mixed messages going to the contractor and you are both on the same page as to what is happening and when.

TIP # 5 Prepare yourselves for disagreements.

Any remodel or project with a significant expense is going to have the potential to cause disagreements, particularly if not well planned and if expectations are not realistic.

Disagreements between yourself and the contractor are bound to happen. What is important is that you both keep written records of all discussions and sign any agreements off together to ensure you are on the same page. While you may disagree, it is important common ground is found again to ensure the project’s successful completion. Ensure you are knowledgeable about

organisations, like the KSA, that you can go to for help and guidance in the event of a dispute.

There is also a high likelihood of family disagreements. You will all start feeling the stress of living without a kitchen and on a building site. This is to be expected. Try and reduce the chances for these disagreements by planning well in advance.

TIP # 6 Be organised.

Pack up your kitchen carefully to avoid breakages. Mark boxes clearly so you know where everything is and where it should be going when you start unpacking. Give thought to what you may need while the kitchen is being renovated so that you don’t have to go scratching in boxes for things in the middle of cooking dinner.

Plan your temporary space well. Make sure your makeshift kitchen space has all you will need and will not get in the way of other day to day activities.

Keep all paperwork and communications related to the project in one place and filed in an orderly manner so that everything is easy to find and accessible if you need it.



Confirm all discussions in writing and carefully go through all paperwork before signing it.

Plan your schedule of who is doing what so that you know in advance who will let the renovation teams in and out, who will sign work off and who is on call if needed. Equally have a plan on who is cooking dinner and who is fetching kids.

A little pre-planning goes a long way. The more calm and organisation you put into your daily routine the easier it will be to deal with any unexpected issues with the renovation if they happen. Remember, the first delivery of carcasses that gets installed is a far cry from what your finished product will look like. Allow the installation team the space to get on with their work and complete the installation before snagging is done. Lastly, make sure your contractor is KSA registered. This way you ensure you have recourse should something go wrong and objective advice on hand.