



Everything to Include
in Your Kitchen
Remodel Budget

About the Author



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Kevin Ahern, President and Co-founder of Litchfield Builders, Inc., founded the company with his brother, Jim Ahern, over 20 years ago. From the start, they quickly became a leading company in New Haven County through their high-quality work and their top, personal service to create lasting living and working spaces. By going above and beyond handling issues that remodelers usually don't, the Aherns cement a client relationship that lasts well beyond the pounding of the last nail.

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So, you've decided to renovate your kitchen. Before you can buy the materials or hire a contractor for your remodel project, first you must make a budget.

Budgeting for a kitchen remodel is a difficult task, and can be especially difficult for anyone who has never renovated their home before. A remodeling budget is made up of different components, including labor and materials.





Introduction

Developing a good understanding of these components and doing thorough research throughout the budgeting process will help you get ready for the remodel. To develop your budget, you'll need to meet with qualified contractors and understand what services you will be getting for your money. A qualified full service contractor will provide you with product and design knowledge you just can't get from any contractor or big box kitchen supplier. Understanding the difference between "Getting a good price on my cabinets" and having your entire project run seamlessly from design to implementation started is the key to a successful kitchen remodeling project.

At Litchfield Builders, we want you to have all the resources you need to get started with your kitchen remodel budget. In this eBook, we'll walk you through the process step-by-step, to make it as simple as possible.





Assess Your Remodeling Objective and Needs

Before any remodel, especially a kitchen remodel, it's vital to truly understand what your goals are and what's needed for a successful remodel. Having a clear vision and goal will help lay the groundwork for your budget, style, and types of products you will want to use throughout your project.

How to Maximize Your Kitchen Remodel

Whenever you're considering a home remodel, especially a vital room such as a kitchen it's important to understand what will add value and what won't.

Kitchen remodels are already the kind of project that can boost your property values, but there are many ways to maximize your return on investment.

For example:

- **Don't over-improve.** Installing expensive appliances, high-end furnishings and other expensive renovations can result in a remodel that costs more than you would ever get back by selling your home. To avoid this problem, work with your contractor to keep your improvements reasonable.
- **Stay up to date on the latest kitchen remodeling trends.** Know what buyers want, especially if you're planning to sell your home in a few years. If you're not sure what will interest buyers, work with your contractor.



Note the Must-Haves Vs. The Nice-to-Haves

As you develop your kitchen remodel budget, you'll need to determine what features are required and not required for your renovation. While all the required features should be covered in your upcoming kitchen remodel budget, it's also good to make room in your budget for a few special perks to make your renovation successful.

Common features that homeowners replace or install when taking on a home remodel includes:

Countertops. Natural stone countertops are a favorite among homeowners and home buyers, however, there are many different types of countertops that can meet a range of needs. Natural stone is typically the most expensive, but homeowners on a budget will be able to choose from a variety of solid-surface, laminate and other synthetic materials. Homeowners who prioritize sustainability can also choose from a variety of recycled countertop materials.

Cabinets. Many homeowners hope to replace their cabinets in hopes that they'll make more storage space, however, those who are simply looking to upgrade the appearance of their cabinets can save money by refinishing their existing cabinets.



Floors. Tile and laminate floors are both common choices for modern kitchens. Your contractor will be able to help you decide whether or not either of these materials is right for your needs.

Appliances. Many homeowners are eager to replace their old appliances for newer, more energy-efficient models. This can help save money and can make a good impression on buyers who might purchase the home later. When looking for the most energy efficient appliances, look for models that are labeled as ENERGY STAR safe.

Addition of space. The addition of space into your kitchen can make it easier to prepare meals and can also make it possible to entertain larger groups of people. Small kitchens were common decades ago, and now many older homes have kitchens that are considered unpleasantly small by modern standards. Adding space to your kitchen by knocking down a wall or installing a kitchen bump-out can help.

The items above are some of the most popular items to be replaced or installed during kitchen remodeling projects. When choosing the essential features of your remodel, return on investment will likely be one of your top considerations.

New countertops and cabinets tend to have the greatest ROI, but in some kitchens, the features that have the greatest ROI are those features in the greatest need.

For example, the best way to get maximum return from a remodel of an unusually small kitchen could be to open up the space and make it more useable. Conversely, a property with very old appliances may get the greatest return on investment by upgrading all appliances to more energy efficient models.

Once you've chosen the features that you must install for your remodel to be successful, leave room in your budget for a few non-essential items. These items may include a kitchen island, bookshelf for cookbooks or under-cabinet lighting. These extra touches will make your renovation truly satisfying.





Take Into Account Installation Costs

Many homeowners fail to take into consideration installation costs when budgeting for their kitchen remodel. After materials have been purchased, installation is the next step. For example, countertops are priced by the square foot, and installation is an additional expense. Many countertops are cut on site to fit the exact measurements of the space.

“Installation costs can be about (15-20%) of the budget.”

-National Kitchen and Bath Association

This is done with special tools and trained contractors, driving up the cost. Failure to take into account the cost of installation of your materials can result in a serious budgetary shortfall after starting work on your project.

Some of the most expensive parts affecting installation costs are those that involve:

- **Knocking down walls.** Load-bearing walls in particular are costly to remove. Walls that provide structural support to your home cannot be removed without involving a structural engineer, which can drive up costs significantly. In addition, walls that contain plumbing can also be costly to remove, as the plumbing must be redirected.
- **Moving windows and doors in the present footprint to allow for the best design options**
- **High-end appliances.** High end appliances can be expensive to buy as well as install for a variety of reasons. Many high-end appliances are an unusual shape and require the space to be cut out around them. This may require the cabinets to be custom built around the appliance, which is also expensive. Finally, some high-end appliances have special plumbing or electrical needs, requiring additional services outside the norm to get them installed.

Factor in Future Energy Costs

Once the kitchen is in place and all new appliances have been installed, the homeowner must remember that high-energy appliances may cause a change in electrical or water bills that could lead to more money spent over time. This should be factored into the cost of the remodel, because it will have a long-term effect on the homeowner's spending.



Get Bids from a Reputable Contractor in Your Area

Once you've decided the scope and budget range of your kitchen remodel, have researched the materials you would like to have installed and have considered what your top priorities are, then it's time to start talking to a contractor. They will help you turn your vision into a reality with years of professional experience. When you take time to meet with a contractor, they'll guide you through your ideas and how to make them happen. From their years of experience, they can give you a straightforward and professional opinion on how to best achieve your remodeling goals.

Meeting with a contractor will also give you a realistic idea of how much you can expect to spend on your dream kitchen. Remember, don't be lured in by the contractor with the lowest bid. Remember that quality and skill are just as important as price, and paying for a lesser experienced contractor or a contractor with a poor reputation can result in additional costs in the future.

Get Started Today

If you're ready to remodel your kitchen in the next few months, now is the perfect time to get started.

Don't forget to:

- Do your research.
- Assess your objective and goals
- Establish your priorities and must-haves
- Choose materials, styles and appliances for your renovation.
- Get in touch with a reputable contractor.

At Litchfield Builders, we've been renovating homes and remodeling kitchens in the New Haven area for more than 25 years. We've got all the experience it takes to complete your home's remodel. Our craftsmanship and timeless designs can add value to your home and deepen your satisfaction as a homeowner.

[**Click Here to Request a Kitchen Remodeling Consultation**](#)