

● COLOUR  
CO-ORDINATED

With a complete makeover,  
it is important to have the  
right design input.

A KITCHEN MAKEOVER CAN  
COST A LITTLE OR A LOT.  
MUCH WILL DEPEND ON  
YOUR BUDGET, THE STYLE  
OF THE HOME, YOUR NEEDS  
FOR SPACE, WORK STATIONS  
AND APPLIANCES, WRITES  
**AMANDA FALCONER.**

*knockout*  
**KITCHENS**

IF A FULL-SCALE MAKEOVER IS MORE TO YOUR TASTE, BE PREPARED TO PAY AT LEAST \$20,000.



**MORE AMBITIOUS**

INTERIORS

2

**More ambitious**

**FOCUS ON DESIGN**

If a full-scale makeover rather than a simple revamp is more to your taste, then be prepared for that ambition to cost you at least \$20,000, and often much more. With this kind of investment, it's important to have the right design input.

While squares are the dominant geometric shapes in most kitchens, it's a triangle - albeit an imaginary one - that is an important element of a kitchen's design and functionality.

The "work triangle" is defined as an imaginary straight line drawn from the centre of the sink, to the centre of the cook top, to the centre of the refrigerator and finally back to the sink. Experts suggest that the sum of the work triangle's three sides shouldn't be more than about 8 metres, and each leg should be between 1.5 and 3 metres.

Sydney-based designer Antoinette Richards agrees:

"I analyse this work pattern each time I design a kitchen layout and it's proven to be a valuable exercise. If the sum of the legs in the work triangle is too small, people will be tripping over each other and, if too large, food preparation could be a tiring task."

There are many styles of kitchen layouts, including the L-kitchen, galley, U-shaped and island style. Perth-based Ross's Makeovers says that both the U-shaped and the L-kitchen are popular because they're efficient, particularly in small spaces. On the other hand, while the corridor or double galley kitchen can also be efficient, it can cause traffic to snarl when appliance and cupboard doors are open or if the corridor is too narrow.

**COLOUR AND MOVEMENT**

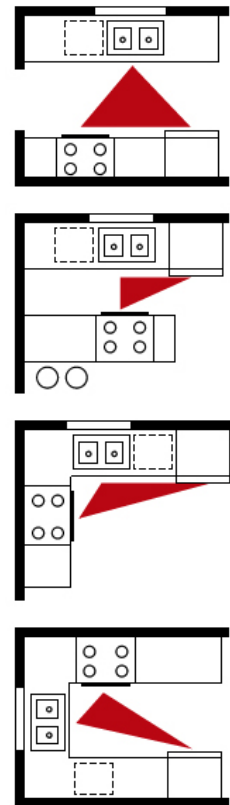
While shape is important for managing the movement of people around the kitchen, there are some key trends to be aware of as you plan your new kitchen.

Roger Franchi, Managing Director of New European Kitchens (trading as Schmidt Kitchens), says that people continue to like modern and streamlined kitchens with straight lines. "Galley kitchens are the most popular, with the wall oven, cook top and fridge against the wall, and the island with the sink in it," he says.

While we're still asking for the neutrals like white and beige, Franchi says, darker colours like brown are also sometimes used, and a strong cafe latte colour is popular. "But an Italian cafe latte," says Franchi.

There's also a trend for a contrasting colour inside the cupboard instead of basic white.

While looks are important, door hardware is critical. The tendency is to use silent closing doors and soft motion on drawers. Franchi says that Schmidt is launching a product that also allows you to open a door just by pushing it. "You still have the soft motion closing as well," he says. »



● **SHAPE UP**  
Kitchen layouts include, from the top, double galley, peninsula, L-kitchen and U-shaped.

COURTESY OF GRANITE TRANSFORMATIONS



BEFORE



AFTER

**Quick fixes**

**REPLACE CUPBOARD DOORS**

Joinery is one of the biggest cost items in a kitchen. However, if the basic structure of the cupboards is sound then replacing cupboard doors can be an easy way to create a large visual impact.

For a pre-made cupboard door off the shelf, the cheapest option is a laminated door for about \$15. Kastell Kitchens' director Vince Monteverde says a typical cupboard door is about 720mm by 600mm. "Doors with a two-pack polyurethane finish will cost around \$50 a door," he says, "with mid-priced veneers about \$60 and premium veneers about \$70 a door." Metallic finishes can cost up to \$100 for each door.

If you decide to install new doors yourself, make sure their width, length and thickness is the same as the old doors, and that the hinges attached to the old doors have the same fixtures as the new doors.

Many companies specialise in these quick makeovers. For example, Sydney-based Kitcheners Kitchens say that these kinds of makeovers can save thousands of dollars and be done in one to two days.

Paint could be another option if the cost of new doors is too expensive. With the right surface preparation - like ESP (Easy Surface Prep), for example - you can paint on almost anything. Ask your local paint supplier to recommend a surface preparation to suit your cupboards.

Finally, whether you're replacing or just re-painting the doors, changing the handles can update the look immediately. Simple stainless steel handles can add a modern touch. There are lots of options available at any good architectural hardware store.

**RE-COVER THE BENCH TOPS**

Another easy way to transform your kitchen is to replace the bench tops. A new laminate is likely to be the most cost effective option and, these days, there's nothing unfashionable about them. One product to explore is Freestyle™ from Laminex, a non-porous acrylic resin that can be thermoformed to create curved lines and seamless joins. It is also UV stable, and resistant to damage from stains, acid and fire.

However, if you're prepared to spend a little more then reconstituted stone could be the answer. Italian product Cristallino® is an engineered granite from national makeover specialists Granite Transformations. Fusing transparent tempered glass and semi-precious man-made stone fragments, Cristallino is heat, stain, and scratch-resistant.

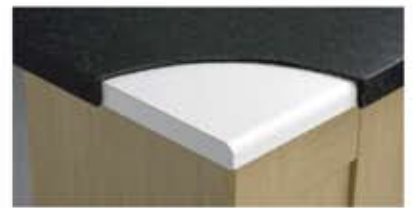
Corian® is another option. It's available through certified fabricators who can help with colour and design and can measure surfaces and provide a free quote. Corian is made of natural minerals and high-performance acrylic. ■

● **BENCH MARK**  
An easy way to transform your kitchen is to replace the bench tops.

**KITCHEN MAKEOVER SPECIALISTS**



BEFORE



AFTER

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