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## KITCHEN REMODELING:

Best Return on Your Investment

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# Kitchen Remodeling: Industry Trends for the Best Return on Your Investment

*By Ivy Crouse and Crystal Kennedy*

There are many things to take into consideration when remodeling your kitchen, especially if you hope to sell your home in the future and recoup those remodeling costs. With proper planning, a kitchen remodel can dramatically improve the livability of your home and attract potential buyers willing to pay for those upgrades when the time comes.

In the Pacific Northwest, we are lucky to live in an area that has relatively high return on investment rates for remodel projects. In the Portland Metro area, 81% of a major kitchen remodel and 90% of minor kitchen remodel costs were recovered in 2012. So it can be worth it to do a major remodel, especially when it is done wisely.

Typically, a kitchen is one of the more expensive rooms to remodel. As designers, we have the benefit of visiting a variety of homes on a daily basis, giving us insight as to what selections and decisions hold their value over time. Our job is to guide you in the appropriate direction when making choices to best suit your lifestyle and plans for your home. If you are thinking of remodeling your kitchen with future resale in mind, here are some ways to guarantee the best return on your investment.

## **Layout**

When designing your kitchen, stick with a simple and functional layout that lends itself to versatility. Whether it's an



Top photo; Adhering to a style that is appropriate for the age and style of your home will be most alluring to buyers.

Left; Keep cabinetry simple and timeless.



In many markets, stone countertops and stainless steel appliances are not only preferred — they are expected.

Select a neutral, cohesive, and tasteful color palette.



island that also serves as a dining table, a peninsula with the option of seating, or a wide-open galley, choose what would agree with the broadest population.

Keep countertops open and available by avoiding features like a built-in desk or appliance garage, which can become clutter collectors and take up valuable prep space. One industry trend is to place appliances and sinks on the perimeter of the kitchen. This allows for the island to act as a multi-functional work area for kitchen prep or with family activities in mind, such as eating, homework, or baking. Installing a prep sink and multiple appliances can limit how you use the island space. You want your home to attract both new families and empty nesters. When designing your kitchen, keep in mind Universal Design (Aging in Place).

### Cabinetry

When selecting your cabinets, it's best to choose a door style that is low maintenance and has minimal detail. Avoid a strong wood grain, bold paint, or stain color that could be a turn-off to prospective buyers. What is trendy today may look dated when you go to sell, so choose something with timeless appeal. Shop for high quality cabinetry that offers solid wood drawer boxes, dovetail joints, cushion close doors and drawers, and full extension drawers. Most reputable cabinet manufacturers will offer plenty of up-to-date interior features as well. Do not skimp on these modern conve-

niences. Such items as pull-out shelves and under-cabinet lighting are becoming standard features in cabinetry and will satisfy the needs of most every homeowner.

### Appliances

Despite the trend toward large commercial appliances, the next homeowner may not be so thrilled about the 48" space occupied by your industrial grade gas range, or the cost to replace it. Shopping for standard sized appliances will cost you less upfront and they'll be easily replaceable if something breaks down. Stainless steel is the number one finish choice for current kitchens, so avoid buying new appliances in colors that are becoming dated, such as white, bisque, and black.

### Countertops

Treat yourself to stone countertops! Durable granite and quartz countertops are guaranteed to hold up for the duration of your time in your  
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Add a pop of color with accessories that can be easily changed.



Modern interior cabinetry features are becoming standard in new kitchens.

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home and will still look great when it's time to sell. In many markets, stone is not only preferred — it is expected. If you're concerned about maintenance, opt for the fifteen-year sealer that is now available, to guarantee that they stay well preserved for the next owner. Another benefit of going with a stone countertop is having the option to incorporate an undermount sink. Your stone top is custom fit to the sink you select, so it is important to invest in a durable sink that will last for years to come.

### Style

First and foremost, take into consideration the neighborhood, age, and style of the home when designing your kitchen. Be consistent with the other homes on your block and don't try and force a contemporary industrial kitchen into a quaint Craftsman bungalow — unless you know you will be in the home for decades to come. Adhering to a style that integrates seamlessly into the rest of the home will be most alluring to buyers. Of course, you may want to incorporate some of your own style choices. Make the space your own by having fun with the wall color and with accessories that can be easily changed out when it's time to go on the market.

### Materials

Aim for a neutral, cohesive, and tasteful color palette! Your new full-height tile backsplash is not the place to pull in a ceramic chicken border. Keep things simple and timeless, like an ivory subway tile, which will look great for years to come. Choose a flooring that is easy to maintain and durable, like hardwood or tile, so it won't need to be replaced when it's time to sell.

### Bottom Line

When considering resale, spend a little extra in the areas that count, especially if they are important to you. But keep in mind the taste of your potential buyers. If the thought of remodeling your kitchen is overwhelming, visit a local kitchen design center with Certified Kitchen Designers on staff. They will help take the stress out of the process and give you a kitchen that fits your needs and appeals to almost everyone! ■

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\*Source: Remodeling Magazine, "Cost vs. Value Report 2012" <http://www.remodeling.hw.net/2013/costvsvalue/division/pacific/city/portland--or.aspx>