

Kitchen: everything in its place



Large sliding drawers let you store utensils smartly and access them easily. Why not store plates here instead of higher up?

Richelieu Hardware



With a spice-storage module in your drawer, everything is easily accessible and can be seen at a glance.

Photo provided by Richelieu Hardware



Under-sink space can be well organized with a storage module to house cleaning products and garbage bags.

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(Quebec) How can you make your kitchen functional without giving up comfort? By storing things in the right place, using the right type of cabinet, and by creating zones of activity. And don't forget to follow the golden rules of accessibility and visibility.

Why shouldn't you store plates in upper cabinets? When you take them out at arm's length, they can be heavy. The ideal place for your stacks of plates is in one of the new sliding storage systems with large drawers and multiple levels.

If you have an old-fashioned kitchen with deep cabinets, drawers can be integrated into the cabinets.

A little cleverness lets you modernize your space without changing it completely. Glasses can stay up above in a standard cabinet. Lids can be placed near plates or the dishwasher.

Large drawers can also hold pots and pans, as long as they are close to the cooking zone. What's more, you don't need to stare into a dark cabinet to find that one plate hidden all the way in the back. Instead, everything is there in front of your eyes. If you have an independent range and stove, make sure that they are not installed too far from one another.

Cooking utensils, spices, and condiments that are frequently used for cooking should be located in this zone. It can be handy to have spices up above in a cabinet next to the stove. But more and more often, they are stored in a lower drawer designed specifically to let you see all of the jars at a glance and access them easily.

Short distances

The preparation zone is the area where you mix, cut, peel, and so on. Ideally, this all takes place close to your stove so that there is only a short distance between the cutting board and the saucepan. Not far from these two zones should be the sink. The under-sink cabinet is often a place where chaos reigns, but new models offer clever storage space for sponges, soaps, and other cleaning products. It makes sense to put the trash can, recycling bin, and compost here. Sliding units offer the possibility of storing three bins in a row, making the most of your space and ensuring practical use. And for gadget lovers, drawers can be fitted with a system that opens with pressure from the knee. The dishwasher is usually not far away.

Storage zone

The refrigerator should be located in the storage zone. Next to the fridge, install the pantry, which can be neatly organized with sliding storage.

The sink zone, the cooking zone, and the storage zone should form an ergonomic triangle. To move from one zone to another, you only need to turn and take two or three steps. Large kitchens are nice, but it's not ideal to run a marathon every time you want to cook an egg.

The island is very prized: it offers additional storage and one more work surface. But to be really practical, it can't create an obstacle, such as between the stove and the fridge. If an island has drawers, the drawers can cross the island so that they can be opened from either side.

Small appliances must also have a place. The microwave can be placed in the pantry to keep it out of sight, though it is most practical in the cooking or preparation zone. Toasters, coffeemakers, kettles, and other small appliances that you use daily can stay on the counter in places that you decide are practical (don't plug in the toaster too far from where you make breakfast). Other appliances that are used less often should be placed in a cabinet or a large sliding drawer.

Major appliances such as the fridge, oven, and dishwasher should not be placed across from each other, so that traffic space can be preserved when appliances are open at the same time.

The form and organization of your kitchen should suit your available space and your lifestyle. A kitchen for a single cook is not designed the same way as a kitchen where meals are a family affair.

References: Many experts were consulted for the writing of this article. The team of Griffe Cuisine in Saint-Augustin de Desmaures advised us a number of times. These designers use many Richelieu products to create pleasant, functional spaces.

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Manon Leblanc also contributed to this article by offering a few practical tricks.