

A Kitchen Worth the Wait

Two years spent refining the design and details brought this cluttered kitchen out of the dark

Fort Collins, Colo., designer Cyd Coogan didn't have to search hard or look far to find someone to transform her own dark, dated, circa-1959 kitchen into an open, inviting space. The task of transforming concepts into cabinets was left to her husband, Dan, who isn't a carpenter by trade but rather an accounting-software consultant. Perhaps that's reason enough why the cost of their kitchen renovation came in below their \$20,000 budget.

By bringing both of their talents to the table—including Dan's newfound construction prowess—the two were able to renew life to the heart of their home. Working on the existing kitchen's layout, the two pushed the design toward flow and function with their sights set on a distinct cottage style.



BEFORE



AFTER



Problem: Upper cabinets blocking valuable daylight

Solution: By eliminating the upper row of cabinets, the room feels less confined due to enhanced sightlines and increased amounts of daylight. Also, the ability to interact with those in the adjacent sitting area brings the space a sense of inclusion it had been lacking.

Problem: Dated cabinetry

Solution: Site-built frame-and-panel cabinets with inset doors refresh the kitchen. A one-piece toe kick helps to conceal all evidence of the dishwasher, which is faced with a custom panel. The toe kick is removable should the dishwasher demand maintenance in the future.



Problem: Out-swing doors blocking the main traffic path

Solution: By relocating the attic access to a more convenient part of the house and swapping out-swing doors for sliders, the closet space was expanded and redefined as a hardworking pantry. It's fit to house the clutter of everyday life like recycling, an office zone for mail, cell-phone chargers, receipts, catchall baskets for his and her junk, and even the microwave—all without impeding the flow of the kitchen.



Cool detail

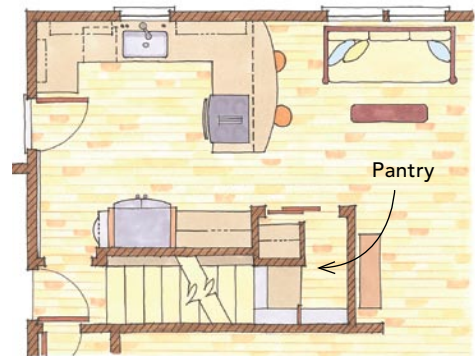
Lacking a mudroom, the couple created a nook in the side of the refrigerator cabinet to serve as a space to drop keys or to slip on boots. The unit has a 10½-in.-deep seat, eight cubbies, hat hooks, and a convenient storage shelf below.

Before



Attic access

After



"aha!" moment

The search for the one element that informs a design can be elusive. Often, answers are found not in a large addition, but rather in the simple rearrangement of spaces. Moving the dining room to a part of the house with better views and transforming the space adjacent to the kitchen into a sitting room helped to set the tone for much of the overall design. The couple wanted the kitchen to be an extension of the living space. The design strikes a balance of utility and comfort.

Designer: Cynthia "Cyd" Coogan, True North Design, Fort Collins, Colo. **Builder:** Dan Coogan