

Spotlight

The narrow turquoise **glass tile** (\$18.77 per sq. ft.) is durable and makes a good foil for the softer texture of the plaster.

Butcher block (\$19.80 per sq. ft.) alternates with the other counter materials and was owner-fabricated.

The resin-impregnated **paper counter** made by PaperStone (\$40 per sq. ft.) can be worked with carbide woodworking tools.

Hand-scraped **maple flooring** (\$11.25 per sq. ft.) is durable and has a soft patina that's easy to keep clean.

The **copper counter** (\$82 per sq. ft.) is made of 17-ga. copper wrapped around two layers of ¾-in. plywood.

on Textures

An Oregon contractor wrestles more function from his small vintage kitchen

BY JAY B. LANE

I got my start as a contractor in 1996 building fences and decks. Over the years, I progressed from doing remodels of bathrooms, entryways, and front staircases to starting my own window and door company. It wasn't until recently, though, that I got to apply my skills on my own house, specifically my tired old kitchen.

Never having remodeled a kitchen before, I teamed with Melissa McCall of McCall Designs to assist me with the layout. The footprint of this small space was complicated by the six entryways that all converge at the kitchen. On top of that, I really wanted an island—a centerpiece both to define the work area and to offer a place for guests to gather while the meal is being prepared. Of course, storage and natural light were both big items on my list.

Squeezing out every inch of space

My whole idea with the layout was to create a freely flowing space where a



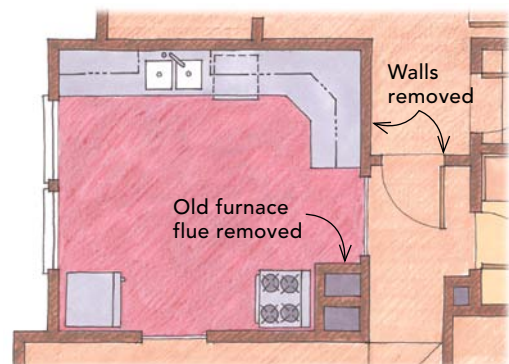
BEFORE

It's really the same space.

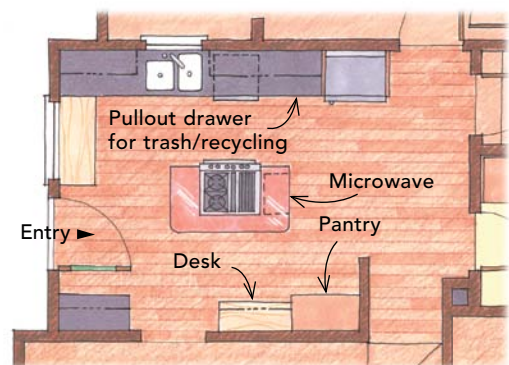
The only thing that this remodel didn't change was the kitchen footprint. A new window over the sink, new cabinets, and a new lighting scheme made the transformation.

SUBTRACT A LITTLE, GAIN A LOT

The trick here was to stay within the footprint of the original kitchen. The author was able to carve out a little more space by removing the central flue and by rearranging the hallway between the kitchen and the bathroom. Once the floor was clear, he added an island to center the kitchen's work area.



Before



After

Designer: McCall Designs, Portland, Ore.

Cabinets: J. Crawley Woodworks



couple of people could work at the same time. To minimize distances, I grouped the work triangle of sink, fridge, and range all within easy access of each other. Now I can reach everything I need for prepping food, washing and storing dishes, and cooking without having to walk more than five steps. This way, guests can sit at the island and give the cook some elbow room. It's where everyone gathers for evening cocktails.

The new island houses a Jenn-Air gas cooktop/electric convection oven, and a microwave is tucked into one side. (Hiding the microwave minimizes its visual impact.) I chose a range with a downdraft vent because

I thought a hood would make the kitchen feel small. Unfortunately, a downdraft vent is not as effective. The laws of physics dictate that the suction of the fan tends to pull the flame (and heat) away from the pan. Furthermore, the suction really cannot pull the smoke from the top of a pan. It does work satisfactorily with the grill side, however. Installation was easy because the basement isn't finished; I just ran the vent to the exterior of the foundation.

In addition to being the kitchen's focal point, the island is also the control center. I installed the room's lighting controls next to the microwave. The texture on the back of the island is a cloverleaf pattern stamped

onto heavy-gauge steel panels that I also used on the bar-cabinet doors. Available in many hardware stores, the material is typically sold in sheets and is used to build radiator covers. My shop mate, Jason Crawley, built the custom-size cabinets. If I'd gone with standard counter-depth cabinetry, I'd have lost a precious 2 in. of space in the galley walkway.

No such thing as too much light

This is Portland—a cloudy place—so we grab any chance to get more daylight in a house. I added Velux's largest motorized skylight with a remote control and a sensor that automatically closes the window when

Notable elements

Remote-controlled skylight Velux.com • Island pendant lighting Rejuvenation.com • Range Jennair.com • Undercounter dimmable xenon



Get the work triangle right. The placement of the island, sink, and fridge was a conscious effort to minimize the distances between the cook's task areas. To maintain the division of labor, guest seating is arranged on the island side opposite the cook.



Island workstation is center stage. Arguably, the most important addition to the new kitchen is the island, which centralizes cooking with the range, the convection oven, and the microwave. The room's lighting controls are mounted within easy reach of anyone standing at the range. The added skylight makes a big improvement over the old kitchen by introducing more natural light.

it rains. I flared out the shaft to the inside to maximize incoming light. I also wanted the kitchen to feel as if it were on the exterior wall instead of abutting the porch, so I installed a new Marvin window over the sink that looks out through the back porch.

In the artificial-light category, I used a variety of lights to create an infinite amount of moods. All fixture groups are independently dimmable with three-way switches at the entries. Six overhead recessed fixtures provide the main ambient light. The pendant light fixtures hanging over the island are from Rejuvenation, and the fixture over the sink counter is from a local salvage store. I use

the island fixtures most frequently when preparing food. Xenon undercabinet lights serve the counter space. The art wall has its own spotlight for a hanging picture.

A bright mix of color and texture adds a sense of space

Part of the plan was to highlight textures, and those of the colored plaster walls dominate the room. John Macnab Plastering of Portland used a Venetian plaster on the walls and the ceiling. Although it looks tough, the plaster is susceptible to stains, so it's a good idea to protect it with a good tile or masonry sealer. The other main texture on the walls is the

glass tile that covers the area around the sink. The tile's copper accents work with both the tile color and the copper island counter. The black PaperStone and maple butcher-block counters add variety to the mix.

Although the cabinets are painted, I stained the crown molding, baseboard, and door trim to match the rest of the house's trim. The flooring is factory-finished, hand-scraped maple with a wonderfully soft patina. □

Jay B. Lane runs Jack of the Woods, a firm specializing in window and door restorations, in Portland, Ore. Photos by Charles Bickford, except where noted.