

A Hard-Working Bungalow



Small, smart, and beautiful, this kitchen makes the most of

BY DEBORAH KADAS

Nine years ago, my husband, Steve, and I bought the home of our dreams. It's a 1920s bungalow in a wonderful neighborhood near Oregon State University. Although our new home had great bones, it needed updating, especially the kitchen. It was so cramped that anyone sitting at our tiny table had to get up to allow room for the back door to open.

When it came time to remodel, we faced a tough decision. We either could knock down the wall to the adjacent dining room and lose our formal dining area, or we could seek approval for a 44-sq.-ft. addition (floor plan, p. 76). The first option would have been less expensive and would not have required the special permit necessary for additions in our National Historic District. At the same time, we really enjoy eating dinner as a family every night in the tranquility of our dining room. With a plan for a small addition that

eventually won unanimous approval from the local historic-preservation board, we took the latter path (top photos, p. 76).

The right details, materials, and hardware maintain the old charm

Steve and I agreed that our new kitchen must reflect the character of the rest of our home. Even with new appliances, the kitchen had to look as original as possible, which meant the scale and proportions had to be right. And the details had to be historically accurate.

Kitchen



Beyond storage

Breakfast booth at the ready. A low ceiling of beaded-wood paneling creates an intimate nook for the built-in benches (photo facing page and below). Deep drawers make it easy to use the space under the bench seats for storing bulky items. Photo taken at A on floor plan.

Baking center has deep drawers and a low countertop. A cool granite counter at 32 in. high is perfect for rolling out pie crusts and pizzas. Mixers, bowls, utensils, and ingredients all have dedicated space in the drawers below. Photo left taken at B on floor plan.



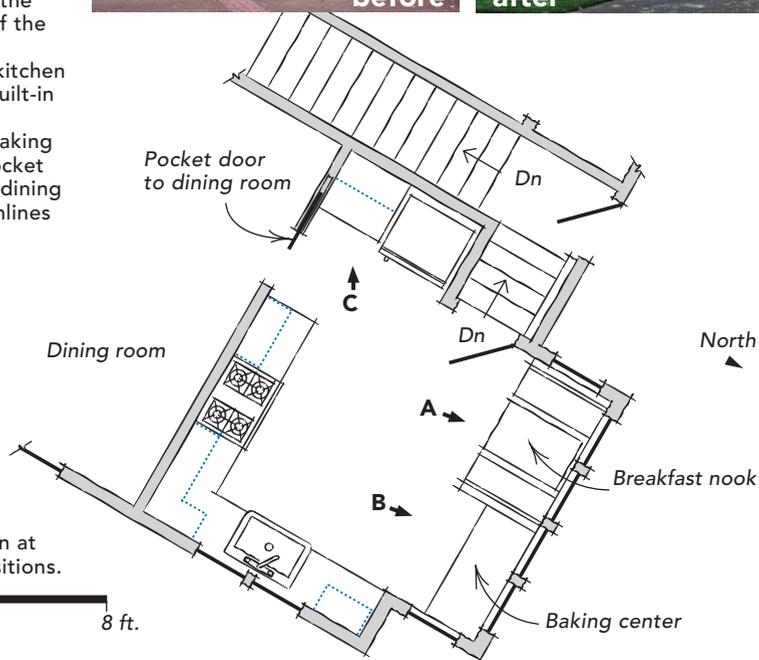
a modest addition

Central to the period-style design was the custom cabinetry. Historic detailing meant the door and drawer fronts had to be flush-mounted and that the panels had to be recessed. We chose nickel bin pulls, cupboard latches, and ball-tipped hinges for their authenticity (“Sources,” p. 77).

Other important period-style details included beaded wainscot and ceilings, double-hung windows, a farmhouse sink, a porcelain-handle faucet, and schoolhouse light fixtures. We even salvaged the original

Breathing room for a small kitchen

The original kitchen had a pair of inconvenient swinging doors and little room for a table. In a small addition on the north side of the house, the remodeled kitchen now has a built-in booth and a dedicated baking center. A pocket door to the dining room streamlines traffic flow.



Photos taken at lettered positions.

0 2 4 8 ft.

doors, stripping them back to bare wood and replating the hardware.

We knew we wanted a natural material for the countertops. My husband lobbied for wood counters (they are historically correct), but I was concerned about maintenance. Eventually, I found some granite that looked like marble. (Marble is also historically correct, but too porous for a kitchen counter.) To make sure we made the right choice, we decided to test-drive three samples—oiled cherry, varnished cherry, and granite—for a few days. Several fruit smoothies, wet bread bags, and red-wine glasses later, our decision was easy: Granite ruled.

Our other big dilemma was flooring. The original floors, including the kitchen, are fir. Based on past experience, we knew that a fir floor in the kitchen wouldn't hold up to our family ("Feedback," facing page). Oak would be more durable, but it wouldn't match the

other rooms. Ceramic tile seemed too unforgiving and too cold. So we found ourselves leaning toward linoleum. We placed a sample on the floor, spilled things on it, and even fed the dog on it. It passed the test. We had 20-in. squares installed in a diagonal checkerboard pattern to give the illusion of space and to be forgiving to a not-so-square room.

Layers of light improve work areas and let the details shine

Historic-district regulations required that we match our eight new windows to the existing ones on the house. We chose Marvin wood-frame double-hung windows because we love how easy they are to operate and to clean. If I had to do it over again, though, I would not go to the unnecessary expense of installing operable windows on the driveway side of the kitchen. We never open those windows, preferring instead to open the windows that are

Adjusting depth improves accessibility. At 31 in., the refrigerator alcove's depth can accommodate a standard refrigerator and a drawer big enough for a kitchen office. A false wall is used above the countertop, where this depth isn't needed. Photo taken at C on floor plan.

on the ends of the bump-out and the ones over the sink.

Our original kitchen had one lonely light in the middle of the room, plus a bare bulb over the sink. We turned up the overhead light with two pendant-style fixtures, then added two more lights in the bump-out. We thought undercabinet lights were an unnecessary luxury, but our electrician convinced us otherwise. Not only are they terrific task lighting, but also we find ourselves using them as the main light source early in the morning and late in the evening, when we do not want bright overhead lights.

Three spaces deliver big utility

Our custom, built-in breakfast nook was an idea borrowed from bungalow-home designs of the early 1900s. This nook comfortably seats the four of us in a 4-ft. by 6-ft. space (photo p. 74), and a fifth if we put a chair on the end. We improved the old idea of having the seats lift up by installing drawers on 30-in. full-extension slides. This move gives us convenient storage for bulky items like lunch boxes, water bottles, and breadbaskets.

The baking center's counter height is 4 in. lower and 6 in. deeper than standard counters, providing lots of comfortable workspace (top photo, p. 75). From the mixer and bread





FEEDBACK

How does a linoleum floor hold up with a dog in the house?

After our dog scratched the refinished fir floors in the other rooms of our house, I was concerned about scratches on our new Forbo linoleum floor. After almost a year of use, here's what I've learned.

First, although the literature says that waxing is optional, I wouldn't recommend leaving the floor unwaxed. We left our floor unwaxed the first week, and I had to use a scrub brush to get even minor dirt stains off. Fortunately, Forbo's liquid wax is easy to apply. Just pour and mop. No rinsing and buffing as our grandmas did.

But what about scratches from dog feet? They accumulate, but they are on the surface, in the wax layer. I re wax every couple of months, and the floor looks like new.

One caveat: Next time, I would pick a linoleum with more pattern to help conceal the dirt.

machine to the mixing bowls and flour canisters, I measured every baking tool and designed custom, full-extension drawers and shelves to take advantage of every cubic inch. The entire family gravitates to this work area. The end result: We all bake a lot more often because everything is so convenient.

Limited space meant the phone/message center needed to team up with the microwave zone (bottom photo, facing page). The space is 30 in. deep, allowing the base cabinet to be extra-deep and a standard-depth refrigerator to look built in. Moving the microwave into an upper cabinet gave us full use of the

counter space. A pullout cutting board provides even more counter space when unloading groceries or microwaving a snack. An open shelf above the microwave has a false back to keep books from getting lost in the deep recesses. Finally, an extradeep drawer keeps this mini-command center tidy. □

Deborah Kadas is a designer in Corvallis, Ore., specializing in historic-home remodels, and couldn't have done this kitchen without the help of her builder, Jerry DelBozque. Photos by Charles Miller, except where noted.

SOURCES

Cabinet and window hardware
Crown City Hardware
626-794-0234
www.restoration.com

Rejuvenation
888-401-1900
www.rejuvenation.com

Light fixtures
Schoolhouse Electric
800-630-7113
www.schoolhouseelectric.com

Linoleum
Forbo Linoleum Inc.
866-627-6653
www.themarmoleumstore.com

Sink
Rohl
714-557-1933
www.rohlhome.com