



Mosaic Kitchen



A dazzling backsplash crowns a kitchen that got better by getting smaller

It's not intuitive, but at times the best way to make a kitchen more usable is to make it smaller. That's the approach Alexandra and Thomas Immel took when they recast the kitchen in their 100-year-old colonial revival in Seattle.

The kitchen they inherited from the previous owners was an amusement park for the

kids, who ran circles around the little island in the middle of the kitchen and played hide-and-seek in the base cabinets.

For the parents, though, the island hub that so entertained the children was an obstacle in the kitchen traffic pattern. Also, the in-swinging doors and extradeep breakfast counter encroached on the dining area.

Alexandra's new plan for the kitchen gives the dining area some breathing room by

replacing the breakfast counter with a smaller one on the south wall. At 42 in. tall, this counter doubles as a screen to conceal the cleanup zone from the dining table. The sink is now in a counter on the south wall, overlooking a deck and the backyard garden. To the left of the sink, a splendid mosaic splash ascends from the counter like a tropical sunrise. For more on how Alexandra made the backsplash, see the back cover.



Problem: Oppressively low ceiling

Solution: A coffered ceiling raises its height over the kitchen and dining area, and creates soffits for uplighting and recessed cans.

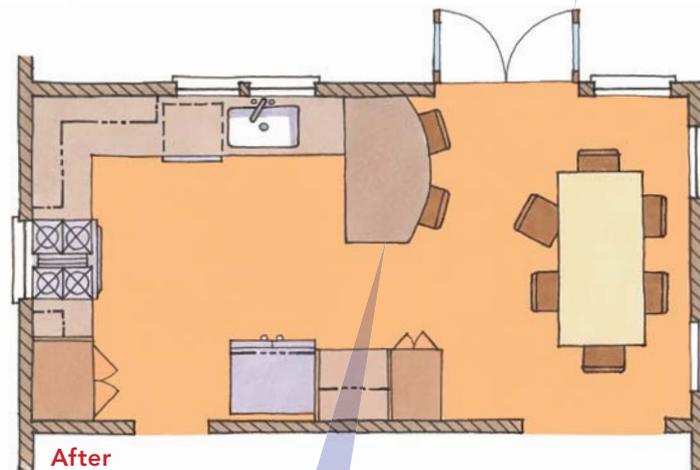
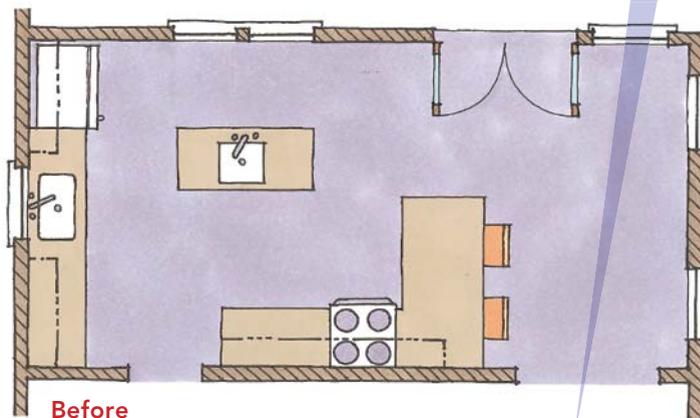


Problem: Dining area too cramped

Solution: Shrink the breakfast-bar peninsula and move it 3 ft. away from the dining table. Rehinge the double doors to swing out.

"aha!" moment

The plan came together when the Immels realized that removing the island, adding tall storage for the pantry, and reconfiguring the counters would result in more workspace and storage as well as allow the dining area to expand to a comfortable size.



0 2 4 8 ft.

Problem: Poor traffic flow from the kitchen to the adjacent living area

Solution: Move the breakfast-bar peninsula to the opposite wall.

Designer: Alexandra Immel

Construction: Mark Holmberg



Notable elements

Coffered ceiling sconces: Justice Design Group, small silver

Peninsula three-light pendant: Kichler 6463

Countertop material: Cambria, Sussex

Flooring: Marmoleum, African desert

Cabinet resin panels: Lumicor, Kenya