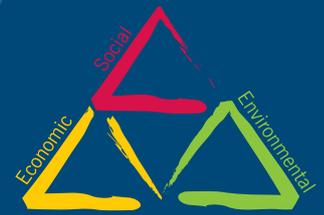


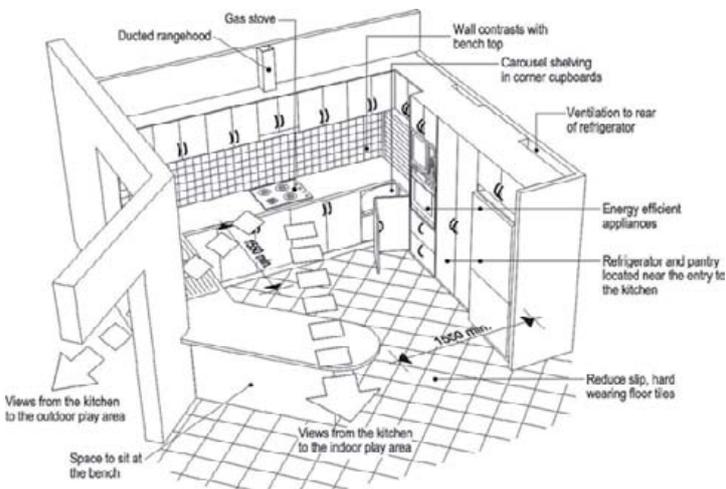
## FACT SHEET: Kitchens



# smart&sustainable HOMES



The kitchen is generally the functional and social centre of the home. Most of us would agree on the importance of good design to optimise serviceability within the kitchen. There are also considerable benefits of a well-planned design and fit-out as they not only reduce the negative impact your home has on the environment but also return significant economic and social benefits.



Kitchen design and fit-out

### Design

The following tips in kitchen design will help to make your kitchen safe, easy to access, environmentally friendly and cost-efficient.

**Good use of space is an important feature of kitchen layout**, particularly when considering safety and functionality. A 1550mm minimum distance between kitchen work surfaces and cupboards will provide sufficient space to allow safe and efficient movement for people working in the kitchen.

A well-designed kitchen **should not double as a passageway** to access other rooms in the house. This reduces the likelihood of accidents with hot food and sharp implements.

**Position the fridge and pantry** at the entrance to the kitchen will allow people to access food and drinks without having to pass the stove or move in the path of the cook. This will reduce the potential for accidents. The kitchen entrance should be wide enough to ensure it isn't blocked by the open door of the fridge or pantry.



**Position the fridge** in a cool, well ventilated position, away from the oven to ensure it is not expending unnecessary energy to remain cool. If possible, add a vent to the wall behind the fridge and fairly close to the floor or select a fridge with a vent in the front.

**Stove tops** ideally need to be positioned away from cupboard ends, drawers, doors and windows with adequate space to turn pot handles away from the front to reduce the risk of burns or scalds.

**Inclusion of continuous benchtops** with set-down space beside the sink, stove and oven are recommended to reduce the handling time of hot items.

Provide a section of bench with enough leg room beneath to allow a person to sit and work. Alternatively, allow for a section of under-bench cupboards to be removable. Ensure the floor finish extends beneath these benches.

**All benches should have rounded edges** to minimise the risk of an injury.

The kitchen should ideally be **located close to other 'wet areas'** of the house (ie laundry, bathroom, toilet). In this way, the hot water system can be located centrally to these areas and will save on energy and water consumption by minimising the length of the hot water pipes and reduce the amount of water wasted waiting for hot water to come through.

**A clear view** from the kitchen to outdoor and indoor play areas will assist supervision of children.

**Three separate bins** for recycling, compost and general waste, positioned in a convenient location, will encourage people to dispose of waste more efficiently.



» **Finishes**

Some recommended kitchen finishes are listed below:

**Reduced-slip, hard wearing floor.** If you choose a tiled finish that is likely to outlast your kitchen cupboards, consider installing the cupboards over the tiles. This will provide more options for redesign when the kitchen is replaced in the future.

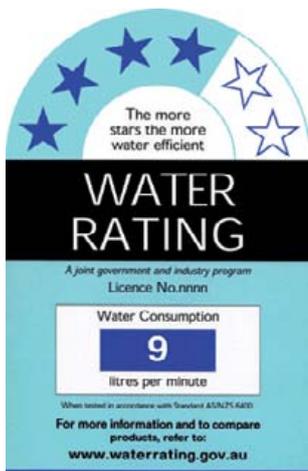
**Durable bench surfaces** that are **heat and stain resistant** will last longer and look better for longer.

**Easy to clean** surfaces will help maintain high hygiene standards, and reduce the need for chemicals.

**D-shape or bow-shape handles** are easier for people of all abilities to use and easier to see than small or concealed handles. Handles below bench height should be mounted vertically to discourage small children using them as a step.

» **Appliances**

The following tips for kitchen appliances will help to make your kitchen safe, environmentally friendly and cost-efficient.



**Energy and water-efficient dishwashers** with higher Water Efficiency Labelling and Standards (WELS) rating, use less water and are preferable to hand washing dishes several times a day. Connect the dishwasher to the hot water tap to save on energy. However, dishwashers should only be used when they are full. If you are likely to regularly wash small loads, then installing a small dishwasher would save electricity, water and money.

**Energy-efficient fridge**—look for the energy-efficiency sticker showing the star rating. The higher the star rating, the higher the level of energy-efficiency.

**Compost vegetable scraps** instead of using an in-sink garbage disposal unit which requires large volumes of water to operate and places additional burdens on the sewerage system.

A **wall oven** rather than an underbench oven is easiest to access and see into without having to bend down or open the door, which wastes energy.

If you do have an upright stove, be sure to attach an **anti-tilt bracket** to prevent children tipping the stove forward onto themselves.

**Energy efficient ovens** such as gas or fan-forced electric use significantly less energy than a conventional electric oven.

When providing space for a **microwave oven**, ensure that the base is no higher than 1330mm from the floor.

» **Fittings**

The following fittings will bring your kitchen into line with Smart Housing principles.

Install taps with at least four star WELS rating (ie six litres per minute for vanity basins and nine litres per minute for kitchen sinks).

At the kitchen sink, install **separate hot and cold taps** or a mixer tap that has been designed to conserve hot water. Standard single-lever mixer taps may draw hot water each time the tap is turned on, regardless of whether you are using hot or cold water.



If you are renovating, install a **thermostatic mixer tap** or **tempering valve** as a safety feature to control the water temperature. These are mandatory in new homes.

**Double bowl sink:** Use the plug when rinsing dishes and vegetables rather than constantly running the tap.

Items in a corner cupboard are easier to access if a **carousel shelving unit** (lazy susan) is installed.

A **child-proof, lockable cupboard** will provide safe storage of poisons or medicines, keeping them out of children’s reach.

More information is available from:  
[www.smarthousing.qld.gov.au](http://www.smarthousing.qld.gov.au)  
[www.sustainable-homes.org.au](http://www.sustainable-homes.org.au)  
 Smart and Sustainable Homes  
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