



AFTER

DOWN WITH THE FURDOWN



BEFORE

REMOVING A
CEILING OVERHANG AND
ADDING NEW CABINETS
AND APPLIANCES
TOTALLY TRANSFORMS
A 1960s KITCHEN

AFTER (ABOVE): A powerful Broan vent was added over the new gas cooktop. A new wall oven and built-in microwave add to the sleek look of the new kitchen. The cabinet-depth French door refrigerator takes up much less walkway space.

BEFORE (LEFT): Busy wallpaper, old cabinets, mismatched dated appliances, space-wasting furdowns and a too-long peninsula spoiled this kitchen.

CJ Yeoman was ready to remodel her 1960s-era kitchen.

"The kitchen floor was awful, the countertop was coming apart, the electric coil cooktop heated poorly, the microwave oven had died and the vent barely worked," she explains. Coupled with the fact the kitchen had not been touched since 1972, she had been waiting a long time for a big change.

Her husband, Lynn, really liked my ideas, and that was key. While he knew they had to do something about the kitchen, he was not thrilled with doing so much work and what it would cost.

"You always keep a smile on your face, even when you're telling clients things they don't really want to hear," CJ says. "This makes it bearable when we have to make difficult changes -- like turning our hall bathroom into a makeshift kitchen."

tip Kitchens and baths are like dominoes. You knock over one and that change makes the one next to it look tired. Suddenly, you have knocked down all the dominoes.

THE OPTIONS

I believe in giving clients options. In this kitchen, Option One was to remove furdowns where possible, resurface, install new window treatments, buy new appliances, and reface doors and hardware to their existing cabinet boxes. Option Two was to gut the kitchen and start over with new, taller cabinets with easy-glide drawers and pullouts—plus most of the above. After getting bids on putting a band-aid on their old cabinets, the couple decided to start over.

Since the existing kitchen had no pantry, I suggested she take an old built in glass-front china cabinet in the nearby hallway, add solid doors that match her new cabinets and create the much-needed pantry she desired.

tip Just because the builder gives you a built-in glass cabinet doesn't mean you cannot amend it to become a pantry you desperately need.

In their small breakfast room, they kept a huge dog crate for Cash, their large chocolate Labrador Retriever. I suggested moving the crate into the laundry room. To create space for the crate, the water heater was relocated to the garage. "We really liked that idea, which eliminated the danger of the water heater ever leaking into the house and the slobbery dog crate was out of our eating space," CJ explains.

I recommended they call contractor Tom Lammers of Houston Structural Inc. In addition to doing the remodeling, he suggested they line the lower walls of the laundry room around the dog crate with neutral plastic panels, a practical, good-looking solution for Cash's "dog slobber."

tip Contrast is the key to a beautiful kitchen—between cabinets, countertops, backsplash, walls and floor.

"You mentioned that we also needed contrast with the honey-colored paneling in the adjacent family room, which was staying as is," CJ says.

CABINETS & COUNTERTOPS

Because Cash is a large, dark-colored dog, and they wanted a rich look, they chose Integra cherry-finished cabinets by Kitchen Craft, which were an economical choice. CJ got stumped on the granite, so I met her at the granite yard to assist. "Because you knew the 'code word' for the price, we took a closer look at another granite we were considering, "Kashmir Gold," which cost us far less."

tip A granite yard will only give a granite installer the price. However, you can get around that by asking if this is a "popular" granite (an A or B price) or if it is a "rarified" granite (a D or E price).

Once that decision was made, the couple went to the tile store and checked out some selections. Frustrated, she asked me to meet her at DalTile on Richmond to select tile. "I know people who can turn over an entire

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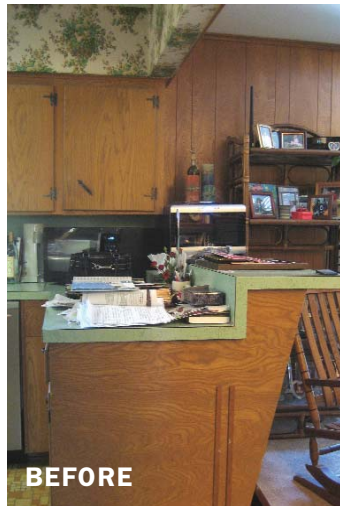
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AFTER



BEFORE



AFTER

BEFORE (ABOVE): The dated, angled bar counter, green laminate counters, busy wallpaper, vinyl flooring and clutter really aged this kitchen.

AFTER (ABOVE): A one-level granite counter tile backsplash, new diagonal tile floor and new cabinets modernized this bar counter. The saddle barstool is from Target.

AFTER (LEFT): The furdown was not load bearing, so it was removed, and the peninsula was cut back. A cabinet-depth French door refrigerator and taller new cabinets were added to expand space. New white plantation shutters were purchased on sale from JC Penney.

trade secrets

- **Think outside the box.** The perfect pantry may be disguised as a seldom-used, built-in china cupboard.
- **Know the proper lingo when shopping for granite** so if you're on a budget you don't fall in love with a "rarified" expensive granite.
- Sometimes the most effective strategy is to not add on to your house but first **rethink the footprint** under roof that is already paid for.

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project to a decorator, but that just isn't our style," CJ says. But, she adds, she knew they needed professional help on this project.

The couple decided on an 18- by 18-inch porcelain floor tile, "Gold Rush," in "Wheatland" and a 6- by 6-inch ceramic backsplash tile, "Salerno." Both were grouted in TexRite "Canvas" grout and sealed with a matte sealer.

RESEARCH APPLIANCES

CJ likes to gather and work with a lot of information before starting a project, so my lists of resources allowed her to start her search with companies that already had good reputations. The budget-saving ideas really came into play when they began making selections.

tip Appliances can be an amazingly expensive part of your budget and they don't last as long as they used to.

"We did our research in *Consumer Reports*, and picked the best appliances we could for the best price," CJ says. They bought the KitchenAid refrigerator at the Sears Appliance Outlet and the other KitchenAid appliances at The Great Indoors (12 months, no interest, same as cash). They agreed on a Blanco sink and faucet from Kiva Kitchen & Bath and Colonial Bronze 4" pulls from Ferguson Enterprises. Walls were painted Sherwin Williams "Ivory Lace."

"While we didn't knock down any walls, we really did have to gut the kitchen because we had functional obsolescence in too many areas," CJ explains. "We are very pleased—because we took out the furdowns and installed recessed can lighting, we got all new insulation in the ceiling and walls and even installed hurricane clips in the attic to meet code."

And are they happy? "I have seen kitchens that I know cost a lot more than ours that are not this pretty," she says, smiling. "We love it."





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