How to measure your kitchen

Every number we need, in the order we ask for it, and what each one decides.

You do not have to do this yourself. We measure every room before anything is ordered, and that measure is what the order is built from. But the site cannot price a room it has never been told the size of, and these are the numbers it asks for.

A tape measure, a pencil, twenty minutes. Write everything in inches. If you have a phone, the photographs are worth more than you would think - they are how somebody here catches a transposed digit before it becomes a delivery.

What you need

- **A 25-foot tape measure** - A 12-foot tape sags across a 12-foot wall and reads long. The number it gives you is the number the whole order rests on.
- **A pencil and one sheet of paper** - Not a phone note. You are going to draw a box and write numbers on it, and that is faster on paper than it is on glass.
- **A phone** - One photograph per wall, one from the doorway, and one of the sticker inside any appliance you are keeping.
- **A step stool, if the ceiling is high** - The ceiling reading has to be taken at the wall, not guessed from the middle of the room.

01 Photograph the room from the doorway first

Stand in the main doorway, back against the frame, and take one photograph of the whole room. Then one of each wall, square on, from as far back as you can get. Five photographs, thirty seconds.

Take these before you measure anything. A photograph taken afterwards is a photograph of a room you have already made decisions about; this one is the room as it is.

- Landscape, not portrait, except for a tall narrow wall.
- Lights on, blinds open. A dark photograph hides the thing that turns out to matter.
- Do not tidy up. We are looking at where the plumbing comes out of the wall, not at your counters.
- No people in the frame. If you use the AI preview, a photograph with somebody in it is refused rather than sent.

02 Draw the room as a box and name the walls

One rectangle. You are not drawing your kitchen, you are making somewhere to write numbers. If the room is an L, draw the L.

Now name the walls. Stand in the main doorway, and the wall to your left is A. Go clockwise: B, C, D. Write

the letter on the drawing and say it out loud once, because every number after this hangs off it.

Mark each doorway with a gap in the line and an arrow for the way the door swings.

- Wall A is the one on your left as you stand in the main doorway. Always.
- Nobody has ever been penalised here for bad drawing.
- If there is an island or a peninsula, draw it and say so - it is not one of the four shapes the shelf prices, and it is a different conversation.

03 Measure each wall three times, at three heights

Corner to corner, in inches, at the floor. Then again at 36 inches off the floor, which is counter height. Then again at the ceiling.

Write down all three even when they agree. If they differ by more than half an inch, circle them: that wall is out of plumb, and the difference is what decides how much filler goes in.

This is the step people skip and it is the one that costs money. A run is packed to the exact inch. A wall measured once at 144 inches that is really 142 and a half at the floor is a run that does not go in.

- Inches only. Not feet and inches.
- Measure to the finished surface. If tile or new drywall is going on after us, tell us the build-up - that is half an inch a wall we would not otherwise know about.
- Hook the tape on the corner rather than holding it there. A thumb is a quarter of an inch.
- Walls longer than 12 feet are priced from your measurements rather than from the published one-wall price. Measure them anyway.

04 Ceiling height, in four corners

Floor to ceiling, at each corner of the room. Four numbers, and they will not all be the same. Old houses settle: an inch and a half of difference across one room is not unusual.

The smallest of the four is the one that matters, because it is the one an upper cabinet has to clear.

- Under 92 inches rules out the 42-inch wall cabinets. Tell us early if you are close.
- If there is a bulkhead or a dropped section over part of the room, that is a soffit and it goes in the next step, not here.
- Measure to the ceiling surface, not to a light fitting.

05 Doors and windows, including the trim

For every door and every window, on which wall, four numbers: width including the casing, height including the casing, the distance from the finished floor to the bottom of the sill, and the distance from the nearest corner of the wall to the edge of the trim.

That last number is the one people forget, and it is the one that decides whether a cabinet fits beside the window. Take it from the corner to the outside edge of the trim, not to the glass.

- Including the casing. The rough opening is not what a cabinet has to miss.
- Sill height is floor to the bottom of the sill, and it is what says whether a counter runs under the window or into it.
- Note which way each door swings. A door that opens into the room takes a cabinet's worth of wall with it.

06 Everything you cannot move

Soffits, dropped bulkheads, beams, columns, chases, radiators, floor and wall vents. For each one: which wall, how far from the left corner, how wide, how tall, and how far it stands off the wall.

That last measurement is the one that changes a cabinet. A radiator standing four inches proud of the wall is a base cabinet that does not close, and it is invisible in a photograph taken square on.

- A soffit is measured down from the ceiling. A radiator is measured up from the floor. Say which.
- If there is nothing on a wall, say so rather than leaving it blank. An empty list and an unanswered question look the same on our side.
- Take a photograph of anything you are not sure how to describe. A photograph of an odd corner is worth a paragraph.

07 Plumbing, gas, vents and electrical

Measure from the left corner of the wall to the centre of each one: the sink drain, the water supplies, the gas line, the range hood duct, the electrical panel, and any outlet that sits where a cabinet will go.

Plumbing and gas are the two that most often force a layout change, so take those to the nearest quarter inch. The drain fixes the sink, and the sink fixes everything else.

- Height off the floor as well as distance from the corner, for anything on the wall rather than in the floor.
- If your range is gas, we need the gas line. If it is electric or induction, we need the circuit.
- An electrical panel in a kitchen has clearance rules of its own. Tell us it is there even if you think it is out of the way.

08 The appliance list

For everything you are keeping: brand, model number, width, height and depth. The model number is on a sticker - inside the refrigerator door, behind the range, on the frame of the dishwasher opening. Photograph it.

A 30-inch range and a 30-inch range are not the same 30 inches once you count the handle, and the depth on the spec sheet is not the depth with the door hinge. The model number is how we look up the real one.

For anything you are buying new: the model you are leaning toward, or the width if you have not chosen. Say which of the two it is.

- Refrigerator, range or cooktop, sink and dishwasher, every time. "No dishwasher" is an answer and we need it given.
- Range hood and over-range microwave decide the upper cabinets above them. If there is one, it counts.
- If you are keeping an appliance, we also need where it stands - the distance from the corner to its centre.

09 Before you send it

Read this list against your sheet of paper. It takes a minute and it is the difference between one visit and two.

- ☐ The room is drawn and the walls are lettered A, B, C from the main doorway.
- ☐ Every wall has three numbers: floor, counter line, ceiling.
- ☐ Every number is in inches. No feet, no fractions written as decimals of a foot.
- ☐ The ceiling is measured in four corners and the smallest is marked.
- ☐ Every door and window has a width, a height, a sill height and a distance from the corner.
- ☐ Each door has an arrow for the way it swings.
- ☐ Soffits, beams, columns, radiators and vents are listed - or the list is marked "none".
- ☐ The sink drain has a measurement. Gas or the range circuit has a measurement.
- ☐ Every appliance is answered, including the ones you do not have.
- ☐ Anything being kept has its model number, photographed off the sticker.
- ☐ One photograph from the doorway, one of each wall.
- ☐ Your ZIP code, for the delivery zone.

The six we see most

Measuring in feet and inches

not: 12' 3"
but: 147

Conversion is the single most common source of a wrong order. Every number on this site is in inches, and a number written in feet has to be converted by somebody - which is one more place for it to go wrong.

One measurement per wall

not: Wall A: 144
but: Wall A: 142.5 floor / 144 counter / 143.75 ceiling

A run is packed to the exact inch against the smallest of the three. One number hides the out-of-square, and the out-of-square is what the filler is for.

Measuring to the wall instead of to the finished surface

not: 144 to the bare studs
but: 144 to the bare studs, plus half an inch of drywall each end going on after

Half an inch a wall we did not know about. Tell us what is going on the wall after us.

Measuring the window to the glass

not: Window: 36 wide, 20 from the corner to the glass
but: Window: 40 wide including the casing, 16 from the corner to the trim

A cabinet has to miss the trim, not the glass. This is the most common reason a wall cabinet comes back.

Forgetting the baseboard

not: Nothing noted
but: Baseboard 4 inches, staying

A base cabinet sits proud of the baseboard or the baseboard gets cut. Either way we need to know which before anything is ordered.

Measuring before the floor goes in

not: Ceiling 96, measured on the subfloor
but: Ceiling 96 on the subfloor, three-quarter-inch floor going down

Floor thickness changes the toe kick and the appliance openings. If the floor is not down yet, tell us the build-up.

What happens to it after you send it

Your numbers go into a project record on this site. It is what a cart line for a kitchen attaches to, and it is what a person here reads before anything is ordered.

Photographs sent to the design preview are forwarded to an external image model and are not written to disk or to storage, by us, at either end of that request. Location and camera data are removed from the file before it goes. Nothing is kept, because there is nowhere for it to be kept.

Photographs and drawings you upload through the project form are stored so somebody can look at them. They are not publicly readable and there is no URL that reaches them without going through us.

Your numbers are a starting point, not the order. We measure the room ourselves before anything is ordered, and that measure is what the order is built from. If ours and yours disagree, ours is the one we work to and we will tell you what changed.