

Use your kitchen space wisely



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THE DESIGN FEED

We'd all like more storage space but sometimes getting a decluttered kitchen really means getting creative.

After all, it's not just about how much space you have, but how you use it. Here's five of my favourite tips for getting more from any kitchen large or small, so you can keep your counters free and your mind at ease.

Rail systems

When every inch of storage counts (or for the passionate chef with plenty of tools and gadgets to stash), make your backsplash serve double duty.

A hanging rail system provides places to perch your salt and pepper, hang a ladle or whisk, or mount a paper towel roll up (or even tv!) off the counter but still in easy reach.

Look for customizable lego-like components that become part of a sleek and beautiful design.

For more discreet storage, turn your backsplash into a slim nook for spices or other small containers, by adding a wall niche at counter height during construction.

Hidden outlets

For a beautifully unbroken backsplash, outsource your outlets! In a recent condo kitchen project, I had the electrical rerouted to the base of the upper cabinets (and to a simple stainless steel shelf opposite) so the outlets were still easily accessible but practically invisible.

If you can't move them, switch out the coverplates to a colour that matches your tile, or try a mirrored finish to turn them into a sleek, subtle accent.

While you're adding a box for the outlets, include an LED light strip to gently and evenly brighten the counters, which illuminates prep work but also visually expands the space for a larger look.

Open shelving

Avoiding trends is important in kitchen construction —

nobody wants to replace cabinets every few years like a pillowcase. To try out the open shelving concept without going all in, simply remove the doors from a cabinet or two, and keep them tucked away for later.

Use this space for frequently grabbed dishes or tools, or, if it's hard to reach, display beautiful special-occasion china the European way.

To make that cabinet over the fridge more useable, install an extra deep cabinet that extends to the front of the appliance — the look will be more finished too.

Library ladder

In a large kitchen, the ample storage can easily go underused if cabinets are too out of the way to easily access. This is where a library ladder comes to the rescue.

For an apothecary vibe, a full height ladder mounted to a rail adds plenty of personality while opening up your storage options.

I recently had a custom step-ladder designed for a client (with handrails for extra ease) for reaching her tall upper cabinets without interrupting the look.

Turn to antique shops for ladders with charming vintage details (or salvage an old one with a little paint) — it's a real step up from the typical plastic big-box store variety.

Compact appliances

If you have a little extra storage space, dedicate one cabinet as your "appliance garage", to keep the hardware off the counter.

Pick an area that's reachable (so you actually keep using it), and try a folding or roll-up garage-style door for easy access.

If hiding them isn't an option, go for slim appliances that save space while looking and functioning beautifully, eliminating the gadgets and add-ons you don't use.

I recently fell in love with Saeco's compact coffee and espresso makers, which trade in unneces-



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sary options or features for the ability to make your perfect beverage in one touch.

— *Got a cool kitchen idea to share? Find me on Instagram and Twitter at @yanicsimard. Also, visit tidg.ca for Yanic Simard Selected accessories and plenty of interior inspiration.*

QUICK BITES

1. Turn your backsplash into backup storage with a rail system or a simple niche.
2. Hide your outlets under your cabinets instead of breaking up your wall.
3. Remove some cupboard doors for instant open shelving (especially over the fridge).
4. Let a library ladder help you fully utilize your upper cabinets.
5. Try an appliance garage, or compact appliances like Saeco.



Look for customizable, lego-like components that become part of a sleek design.