

KITCHEN, LIVING & BEYOND

DESIGNING THE MODERN HEART OF THE HOME

LAYOUT / CABINETRY / MATERIALS / LIGHTING / RENOVATION

DAVID DELAVEGA

KITCHEN, LIVING & BEYOND

How to plan, design and renovate a kitchen that performs beautifully and belongs naturally to the living space.

DAVID DELAVEGA

PROPERTY DESIGN, RENOVATION AND PRACTICAL LUXURY

A practical design book

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This book explains how to design and renovate a modern residential kitchen as part of the living environment. It combines planning, cabinetry, hardware, materials, lighting, services, installation and snagging. Dimensions shown are useful design starting points, not substitutes for site measurement, manufacturer instructions, structural design, Building Regulations or competent trade advice.

- All kitchen photographs in this edition are original and used once.
- Matched before-and-after views show the design decisions clearly.
- Confirm live regulations, appliance data and product tolerances before ordering.

DAVID'S TECHNIQUE

A beautiful kitchen is not a collection of products. It is a coordinated system of space, movement, light and detail.

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The kitchen becomes living

Today the kitchen is furniture, architecture and social space.

The old model isolated cooking behind a door. The modern kitchen often shares one volume with dining and relaxation, so its visual language must work from the sofa as well as from the hob. Tall units should read as calm wall panelling, islands as crafted furniture and open shelves as part of the room composition. Practical functions remain essential, but bins, small appliances, cleaning products and food packaging should disappear behind a disciplined elevation.

- Design the view from the principal living seat.
- Repeat timber, metal or colour beyond the kitchen boundary.
- Keep one calm elevation visible when the kitchen is not in use.
- Use dimmable lighting so the room changes character after dinner.

DAVID'S TECHNIQUE

Make the kitchen look complete when nobody is cooking. That is the test of an open-plan design.



From closed room to open plan

Opening the wall changes behaviour before it changes style.

Before demolition, record what the separating wall contains: structure, heating, sockets, pipework, ventilation routes and sometimes chimney fabric. Decide whether a completely open room is right for the household. A wide framed opening, pocket doors or internal glazing may preserve acoustic and smell control while creating connection. The finished opening should align with cabinetry, ceiling lines and furniture rather than appearing as a leftover hole.

- Ask a structural professional to establish whether the wall is load-bearing.
- Check listed-building or leasehold consent where relevant.
- Plan temporary support and beam concealment before ordering cabinetry.
- Retain a closable option if intensive cooking is common.

DAVID'S TECHNIQUE

The best opening is sized around the final room composition, not simply the largest opening possible.



Before: a kitchen without breathing space

Clutter is often evidence of missing design, not careless living.

This narrow room has too many loose appliances, weak worktop continuity and no dedicated place for food, recycling or laundry. The refrigerator dominates the entrance while the task lighting is poor. A useful survey records appliance sizes, door swings, window and service positions, then identifies what can move. The design brief must account for every visible object in the photograph, because it will return after completion.

- Count daily appliances and decide which remain accessible.
- Measure opened appliance doors, not only closed dimensions.
- Record the quantity of food, cookware and recycling actually stored.
- Photograph every wall before strip-out.

DAVID'S TECHNIQUE

If an object has no planned home, it will live on the new worktop.



After: calm through integration

The same room becomes generous when the elevation is controlled.

Tall storage is consolidated, the main run gains continuous preparation space and warm timber adds depth without making the room dark. Integrated appliances reduce visual interruption. Wide drawers replace hard-to-reach base cupboards, while under-cabinet light creates an even working plane. The luxury is not only the finish; it is the absence of conflict between doors, users and tasks.

- Run the worktop through the longest practical preparation zone.
- Place the dishwasher beside the sink and waste near preparation.
- Use full-extension drawers for heavy everyday items.
- Keep filler panels deliberate and symmetrical where possible.

DAVID'S TECHNIQUE

A quieter elevation makes a narrow room feel wider than adding more decorative features.



Before: the blocked rear room

An awkward peninsula can shorten the entire home.

The original kitchen blocks movement toward the garden, leaves freestanding bins in view and pushes dining into circulation. Removing a peninsula is not automatically the answer; the important question is whether each metre of cabinetry earns its footprint. Map the route from entrance to garden, the path between refrigerator, sink and hob, and the space required around occupied chairs.

- Draw circulation arrows over the measured plan.
- Test the table and chairs at full use.
- Keep the main garden route clear of open appliance doors.
- Identify the darkest point and plan how daylight can travel.

DAVID'S TECHNIQUE

Protect the longest sightline through the room; it creates the feeling of space.



After: a living kitchen with destination

The island organises movement without becoming a barrier.

The redesigned room places tall functions on one wall, uses a slim island for preparation and maintains a clear route to the garden. Dining sits in its own light zone. Timber repeats across kitchen and table, making the two functions related rather than matched. A concealed bin sits beside the prep area and the island end remains visually clean from the living space.

- Keep the island proportional to the room, not the catalogue.
- Align pendants to the island centreline after final dimensions are fixed.
- Hide practical outlets on a side panel or under the overhang.
- Use one flooring direction to connect kitchen and living zones.

DAVID'S TECHNIQUE

An island is successful when circulation feels easier with it than without it.



Cabinetry that behaves like furniture

The living-room view deserves a composed elevation.

A pocket-door breakfast station hides the visual noise of coffee, toaster, jars and cables. When open, it needs task light, heat clearance, sockets and a durable internal work surface. When closed, it returns the room to a calm wall of joinery. Similar thinking can conceal a bar, home-office shelf or charging station. The outer cabinet finish may repeat living-room timber while the hard-working interior uses a robust, easy-clean material.

- Specify pocket-door hardware before cabinet manufacture.
- Confirm appliance ventilation and clearances.
- Provide sockets where plugs remain accessible.
- Use a pull-out shelf only with adequate runner capacity.

DAVID'S TECHNIQUE

Hide clutter with one generous, well-planned cabinet instead of many small compromises.



The evening kitchen

Shadow light changes a workroom into a living room.

After cooking, bright task lighting should reduce and the architectural layers should remain: a concealed ceiling cove, gentle shelf illumination, a soft line below cabinetry and one or two pools of warm light. Separate circuits are essential. If every fitting switches together, the kitchen never gains an evening character. The source should be concealed from normal eye level and reflected from a surface rather than seen as a line of dots.

- Separate task, ambient, decorative and night lighting.
- Use continuous diffusers in aluminium profiles.
- Test reflected colour against the actual stone and paint.
- Provide accessible drivers with compatible dimming.

DAVID'S TECHNIQUE

Light the surfaces and edges; do not decorate the room with visible LED tape.

Choose the layout before the style

A beautiful door cannot rescue a poor plan.

Begin with the shell, openings and fixed services. Place refrigerator, dry storage, sink, waste, dishwasher, preparation zone, hob and ovens in the order the household naturally uses them. Then test two-person movement and open every door on the drawing. Layout names are useful, but the best solution can be a hybrid. Prioritise uninterrupted worktop and comfortable circulation over the maximum cabinet count.

- Draw existing and proposed plans at a consistent scale.
- Add door and drawer swing arcs.
- Test grocery arrival, breakfast, cooking and clearing-up routes.
- Do not choose finishes until the layout survives these tests.

DAVID'S TECHNIQUE

Plan the sequence of use, not a fashionable triangle drawn without context.



The one-wall kitchen

Make the front elevation precise and complete.

A one-wall kitchen is ideal when the room must remain visually open. Group tall units at one or both ends and protect a central working section. Full-height splashback and under-cabinet light can turn the recess into a single elegant niche. Storage is limited, so use wide drawers, an integrated waste unit and tall internal fittings. Avoid scattering appliances across the elevation.

- Keep at least one useful preparation zone between sink and hob.
- Use fewer, wider cabinet fronts for calmness.
- Consider pocket doors for small appliances.
- Coordinate extractor ducting before closing tall units.

DAVID'S TECHNIQUE

Treat one wall as a single piece of fitted furniture, not a row of unrelated boxes.



The galley kitchen

Parallel runs provide excellent efficiency when clearance is respected.

A galley can be the most practical layout in a narrow London home. Put tall or visually heavy elements together and avoid opposing appliance doors that collide. One run can handle wet tasks while the other handles cooking and preparation. Light upper cabinets, reflective splashbacks and continuous floor lines prevent the space feeling like a corridor. If one end opens to a garden, keep that view unobstructed.

- Check passage with drawers and dishwasher open.
- Avoid placing sink and hob directly opposite in a very narrow aisle.
- Use wall cabinets selectively to preserve light.
- Place frequently paired items on the same side.

DAVID'S TECHNIQUE

A galley feels luxurious when its two elevations are disciplined and the end view remains clear.



The L-shaped kitchen

Use the corner for dining and flexible movement

An L-shape works well when kitchen and dining share a compact room. Use the long leg visually lighter and decide whether the triangular corner needs specialist storage or should simply become a flexible dining area. A round table can soften the geometry and improve circulation. Place the refrigerator near the room entrance where possible, but not where its open door blocks the main route.

- Do not let the short leg end in an unusable sliver.
- Use a corner solution only if access justifies the cost.
- Protect a generous central floor area.
- Keep the dining chair pull-back zone clear.

DAVID'S TECHNIQUE

The empty centre of an L-shaped room is a design asset, not wasted space.



The U-shaped kitchen

Maximum work surface requires controlled enclosure.

Three connected sides create excellent storage and short task routes, but too many wall cabinets can make the room heavy. Concentrate tall units on one side, use the window wall for sink and preparation, and allow a peninsula to transition toward living. Corner cabinets must be resolved on the plan and section. In a compact U, drawers near corners need careful handle and opening clearance.

- Keep at least one side visually open.
- Check opposing drawer and door conflicts.
- Use the peninsula as a social edge, not a storage wall.
- Align the window, sink and principal sightline where practical.

DAVID'S TECHNIQUE

Storage is only useful when doors can open and the cook can turn comfortably.

Island or peninsula?

Choose the element that improves movement.

An island requires circulation on all sides and usually costs more because services, worktop finishing and lighting are exposed. A peninsula gains support from the main run, can carry services more simply and often provides the same preparation and seating value in less space. Draw both options with real stools, opened appliances and routes. A movable table can be the most flexible answer in a small room.

- Use an island only when all sides remain comfortable.
- Prefer a peninsula where one circulation edge adds no value.
- Consider a furniture table when the room must change function.
- Do not force seating onto a shallow overhang.

DAVID'S TECHNIQUE

The room does not owe you an island. It owes you effortless movement.

Work zones, not rigid triangles

Modern kitchens contain more than three points.

The classic refrigerator-sink-hob triangle is a starting idea, not a complete method. Add a grocery landing point, dry pantry, waste and recycling, dishwasher unloading, breakfast station, baking zone and serving route. Keep knives, boards and waste close to the main preparation surface. Store plates where the dishwasher can be emptied without crossing the cooking zone. Design around the number of simultaneous users.

- Create a 600-1200 mm primary prep zone where the room allows.
- Keep waste beside prep and dishwasher beside sink.
- Provide landing space near ovens and refrigerator.
- Store breakfast items together.

DAVID'S TECHNIQUE

Every daily task should have a short route and a clear landing surface.

Clearances that feel comfortable

Use dimensions as tests, then adjust for people and products.

Comfort depends on the exact door, handle, appliance and body using the space. A circulation aisle may feel acceptable until a dishwasher opens or two people pass. Island seating needs knee space and room behind occupied stools. Wall units must be reachable without creating head impact. Measure the household and obtain manufacturer drawings; do not rely on one generic number.

- Test 900 mm as a starting aisle, then increase where appliances or two cooks require it.
- Around 1000-1200 mm often works better between working runs.
- Allow roughly 600 mm width per island seat.
- Mock up critical edges with tape or cardboard.

DAVID'S TECHNIQUE

A full-size floor mock-up costs almost nothing and can prevent a permanent circulation mistake.

Cabinet construction

The box behind the door determines long-term performance.

Compare carcass thickness, back construction, shelf support, edge sealing, moisture resistance and how cabinets are fixed to walls and one another. Sink units need protection from minor leaks and access to valves. Tall appliance housings must follow ventilation requirements. A premium door on a weak cabinet is false economy; spend first on structure, accurate installation and hardware that can be adjusted or replaced.

- Ask for a full cabinet specification, not only a door sample.
- Confirm wall-unit hanging system and load limits.
- Protect exposed board edges around sinks and dishwashers.
- Use service voids deliberately, not as lost space.

DAVID'S TECHNIQUE

Judge a kitchen by the inside corner, back panel and hinge plate - not only the showroom door.

Doors and finishes

Choose appearance together with repairability and use.

Painted timber or fibreboard can offer depth and may be refinished, but profiles collect more dirt than flat fronts. Veneer provides real grain with controlled construction; confirm matching, direction and edge treatment. Laminates and lacquers vary enormously in resistance to scratching, heat and fingerprints. Request a production-sized sample and test it with oil, coffee, cleaning products and strong side light.

- Specify sheen level and edge treatment.
- Approve veneer direction and sequence.
- Check colour under daylight and planned LEDs.
- Keep a spare touch-up or replacement strategy.

DAVID'S TECHNIQUE

A finish should survive the household, not merely the showroom opening night.



Soft-close concealed hinges

Small hardware controls the feel of every door.

A quality concealed hinge should suit the door thickness, weight, opening angle and cabinet position. Soft close must be smooth rather than slow or forceful. Wide or heavy doors may need additional hinges. Corner, refrigerator and pocket-door situations use different hardware. Hinges should allow three-way adjustment so door gaps can be aligned after installation and again after the kitchen settles.

- Specify the hinge model or performance level.
- Confirm soft close is integrated or correctly added.
- Use the required hinge quantity for door height and weight.
- Keep adjustment screws accessible.

DAVID'S TECHNIQUE

Consistent 2-3 mm door gaps make ordinary cabinetry look bespoke; adjustment is part of installation.



Drawer runners

Full extension and load capacity matter more than decoration.

Use full-extension runners so the rear of the drawer is reachable. Deep pan drawers need higher load capacity and a rigid base. Soft-close action should remain controlled when the drawer is loaded, and push-to-open systems must be compatible with the handleless design. Internal drawers behind one outer front can create a calm elevation, but they add an opening step and require careful height planning.

- Check rated load with the intended contents.
- Use anti-tilt or synchronised systems where appropriate.
- Provide dividers that can be reconfigured.
- Test the heaviest drawer before sign-off.

DAVID'S TECHNIQUE

Load a sample drawer with pans before approval; an empty showroom drawer proves very little.

Handles, rails and push-to-open

The opening method changes ergonomics and the entire elevation.

Handles are reliable, easy to understand and can add warmth. Recessed rails create a precise shadow line but consume internal height and require clean detailing at corners. Push-to-open gives a flat face, yet fingerprints and accidental opening may frustrate busy households. Mix systems only with a clear reason, such as handles for heavy integrated appliances and rails for drawers.

- Test the handle with wet hands.
- Check projection against corners and walkways.
- Coordinate rail finish with taps and appliances.
- Use edge pulls only where fingers have comfortable access.

DAVID'S TECHNIQUE

Choose opening hardware with your hands, not only your eyes.



The tall pantry

Use height while keeping everyday food visible.

A pull-out larder provides access from both sides but becomes heavy and expensive at large widths. Internal drawers behind hinged doors often provide stronger, more flexible storage. Shallow door racks suit light packets; deep shelves suit appliances and bulk goods. Group breakfast, cooking and baking ingredients by task. Do not place the only pantry where an open door blocks the working aisle.

- Match the mechanism load rating to real food storage.
- Keep heavy items between knee and shoulder height.
- Use adjustable shelves for changing needs.
- Light deep cupboards with door-triggered LEDs.

DAVID'S TECHNIQUE

Visibility prevents duplicate buying; a pantry should reveal its contents in one movement.



Corner storage

Do not pay for complicated hardware that solves the wrong problem.

Magic corners, kidney shelves and swing-out trays improve access, but each sacrifices some volume to the mechanism and needs exact door geometry. A wide drawer bank beside a blanked corner can store more useful items with less hardware. Compare usable capacity, opening sequence and replacement access. Keep plumbing or electrical services out of moving mechanisms.

- Draw the full movement arc.
- Check adjacent handles and appliance doors.
- Store medium-weight items on moving trays.
- Choose simple shelves for rarely used large objects.

DAVID'S TECHNIQUE

A deliberately blank corner can be more intelligent than an expensive mechanism.



The appliance garage

Hide small appliances without making them inconvenient.

An appliance garage works when the coffee machine, toaster and mixer can be used in place. It needs a heat-resistant surface, ventilation, sockets, task lighting and a door system that does not obstruct the worktop. Roller doors are compact; pocket doors disappear; lift-up doors need head and hinge clearance. Confirm whether appliances may remain plugged in behind a closed door.

- Provide an isolating switch where required.
- Keep steam away from cabinet edges and lights.
- Use a wipeable internal splashback.
- Include cable management and a removable crumb tray.

DAVID'S TECHNIQUE

The best appliance garage is open during breakfast and invisible for the rest of the day.

Integrated rubbish and recycling

Place waste where food is prepared, not wherever space remains.

A pull-out bin beside the primary preparation surface allows peelings and packaging to be cleared in one movement. Divide capacity according to local household recycling, general waste and food waste. Sink-base systems can work, but pipework often reduces capacity and leaks create hygiene problems. Use removable, washable containers and specify a runner strong enough for the full load.

- Measure the household weekly waste volume.
- Provide separate food-waste containment.
- Keep bin lids clear of worktop fixings and pipes.
- Allow ventilation and easy cleaning around containers.

DAVID'S TECHNIQUE

Integrated waste is a core workstation, not an accessory to add after the cabinet order.

The cabinetry schedule

Write every unit before the quotation becomes the order.

Number each cabinet on the plan and elevation. Record width, height, depth, door style, opening direction, internal fitting, hinge or runner, handle, end panel, filler, lighting and purpose. Add appliance model numbers and service requirements. The schedule turns a visual concept into something that can be priced, checked and installed. It also exposes useless narrow units and unresolved corners before manufacture.

- Issue coordinated plan, elevations and schedule.
- Mark finished end panels and scribes.
- Record fillers at walls and beside appliances.
- Approve one final revision before production.

DAVID'S TECHNIQUE

If the unit is not described in the schedule, it is not fully designed.

Designing the island

Begin with purpose, then size.

Decide whether the island is primarily for preparation, cooking, washing, storage, serving or social seating. Combining every function can create a cluttered, oversized object. A slim preparation island may be more elegant than a deep island full of compromises. Resolve aisle widths, door conflicts, worktop slab size, supports, floor services and pendant positions before manufacture.

- Tape the full footprint and stools on the floor.
- Protect clear routes to garden and dining.
- Choose one dominant function.
- Check worktop slab and access limits before final size.

DAVID'S TECHNIQUE

An island is furniture in the middle of the room; every visible face must be intentional.



Cooking on the island

Control heat, extraction, splashes and social distance.

An induction hob preserves a flat surface and reduces visual bulk, but electrical load and pan compatibility must be confirmed. Downdraft extraction can avoid an overhead canopy yet requires cabinet space and a suitable duct or recirculation strategy. Provide pan drawers below where the appliance permits, safe landing space and enough distance from seated guests. Do not place the hob at the extreme edge.

- Coordinate hob cut-out and worktop support.
- Reserve cabinet volume for downdraft equipment.
- Keep combustible and vulnerable finishes away from heat.
- Provide accessible isolation and maintenance routes.

DAVID'S TECHNIQUE

A clean photograph depends on invisible technical coordination below the worktop.

Sink, dishwasher and waste

Build a complete wet workstation.

An island sink works best when dishwasher, integrated waste and frequently used utensils are within one step. Plan hot, cold and waste routes with accessible isolation. Long horizontal waste runs may constrain the location and floor construction. Protect cabinets from leaks and include ventilation where appliances require it. Keep the social overhang on the opposite face so dirty dishes do not dominate seated views.

- Place dishwasher beside the sink, not across an aisle.
- Put food waste beside the prep side.
- Allow tap height beneath pendants or shelves.
- Record pipes and cables before the floor closes.

DAVID'S TECHNIQUE

The island wet zone succeeds when clearing up is shorter than carrying dishes to it.

Island seating

Comfort needs width, knee room and a route behind the stool.

Allow approximately 600 mm per person as a useful starting point, then adjust for stool width and the desired atmosphere. Worktop overhang requires suitable support and depends on material, thickness and span. Consider footrests and the difference between occasional perch and daily dining. Protect the passage behind occupied stools and avoid trapping a seat between refrigerator and cooking routes.

- Mock up seat height and overhang.
- Confirm hidden steel or bracket support.
- Use easy-clean upholstery and stable stools.
- Provide power nearby without exposed trailing cables.

DAVID'S TECHNIQUE

Three comfortable seats look more luxurious than four compressed seats.

How to choose a worktop

Performance, appearance and fabrication must agree.

Shortlist materials by heat, stain, scratch, impact, UV and maintenance needs, then consider slab size, thickness, weight, joints, cut-outs and edge profiles. Natural stone is unique; engineered and sintered materials are more controlled but still have fabrication limits. View a whole slab where pattern matters. Ask who templates, fabricates, transports and installs, and what happens if walls are not square.

- Take cabinet-door and floor samples to the slab.
- Ask for a seam drawing before approval.
- Confirm sink and hob cut-out details.
- Keep final payment linked to finished joints and polishing.

DAVID'S TECHNIQUE

Choose the slab as part of a four-piece palette: cabinet, worktop, floor and metal.



Quartz and engineered stone

Consistent colour and low routine maintenance.

Quartz surfaces offer predictable pattern, broad colours and generally low porosity, but resin content means very hot cookware should not be placed directly on the surface. Strong veining must be planned through corners and upstands. Pale plain colours can reveal marks and dark colours can show fingerprints. Confirm current manufacturer care instructions, warranty conditions and outdoor suitability.

- Use trivets for hot pans.
- Approve seam location and vein direction.
- Avoid harsh chemicals outside care guidance.
- Check that the selected finish is available in required slab size.

DAVID'S TECHNIQUE

Quiet quartz often lets timber and lighting carry the design more gracefully than dramatic imitation veining.



Porcelain and sintered surfaces

Thin profiles, heat resistance and large-format continuity.

Sintered and porcelain slabs can create slim worktops and matching splashbacks. They are hard and resistant to heat, but edges can chip if poorly handled and fabrication needs specialist tools. Printed patterns may not continue through the slab depth, so exposed edges and mitres require approval. Very thin material still needs a correctly designed substrate and support.

- Inspect a fabricated edge sample.
- Confirm support around cut-outs and overhangs.
- Use an experienced fabricator.
- Check pattern orientation before cutting.

DAVID'S TECHNIQUE

Thin is only luxurious when the edge, support and mitre are perfectly resolved.



Natural stone

Beauty comes with variation and responsibility.

Granite, quartzite, marble, limestone and soapstone each behave differently. The trade name alone does not describe porosity, mineral composition or care. Inspect and reserve the actual slab, note fissures and repairs, and obtain advice about sealing and cleaning. Marble may etch and develop patina; this can be beautiful for owners who accept change, but wrong for someone expecting a permanently uniform surface.

- View the slab upright and in strong side light.
- Photograph approved areas for cutting.
- Discuss sealing and future resealing.
- Keep spare stone for small repairs where practical.

DAVID'S TECHNIQUE

Luxury is knowing how a material will age and choosing it deliberately.

Timber, laminate and solid surface

Different budgets can still produce excellent design.

Timber is warm and repairable but needs protection around water and heat. High-pressure laminate offers enormous visual range and good value when edges and sink details are carefully selected. Solid-surface materials can create seamless joins and integrated forms, though heat and scratching behaviour varies. Use expensive material where touch and visibility matter, and a robust economical surface in utility or hidden zones.

- Do not use vulnerable timber where standing water is likely.
- Approve laminate edge and corner details.
- Ask how solid-surface scratches are repaired.
- Coordinate undermount sinks with material capability.

DAVID'S TECHNIQUE

Workmanship can make a modest material look refined; poor junctions can cheapen an expensive slab.

Stainless steel

A professional material with an honest changing surface.

Stainless steel is hygienic, heat tolerant and can integrate sinks and upstands. It will scratch, so choose it only if a developing patina is acceptable. Brushed direction, corner radii, substrate and sound deadening affect quality. A stainless preparation zone can pair beautifully with timber cabinetry and stone elsewhere, creating a practical contrast without making the whole room feel commercial.

- Specify grade and finish with the fabricator.
- Align brushing direction across pieces.
- Use rounded internal corners for cleaning.
- Expect fine scratching as part of the material character.

DAVID'S TECHNIQUE

Use stainless where work is intense, then soften it with timber, plaster and warm light.

Matching cabinet and worktop colour

Match undertones before matching colour names.

A successful palette begins by deciding whether the room is warm, cool or deliberately contrasting. Creamy stone supports walnut, warm white and olive. Cool pale grey can sharpen charcoal or smoked oak. Dark stone grounds pale oak and stainless steel. Avoid choosing cabinet and worktop separately under showroom lighting. Place full samples vertically and horizontally beside the actual floor, then view them in morning daylight and evening LEDs.

- Warm white + walnut + creamy stone = soft luxury.
- Charcoal + pale grey stone + light oak = controlled contrast.
- Olive + warm white worktop + aged brass = modern heritage.
- Pale oak + dark stone + stainless = architectural clarity.

DAVID'S TECHNIQUE

One dominant tone, one supporting material and one controlled contrast are usually enough.

Edges, seams and overhangs

The junctions reveal the quality of the whole kitchen.

A square eased edge feels contemporary; a small bevel protects a sharp corner; a built-up mitred edge creates thickness but needs precise matching. Waterfall ends are visually strong and should be used selectively. Seam positions must account for slab size, access, cut-outs and support. Avoid a seam through a sink where possible. Overhangs need material-specific support and should never rely on appearance alone.

- Approve edge profile at full size.
- Mark seams on the signed drawing.
- Provide support before templating.
- Check wall scribes, upstands and visible silicone colour.

DAVID'S TECHNIQUE

Design the seam; do not allow the seam to become an installation surprise.



Choosing the sink

Size the bowl around real cookware and cabinet width.

Undermount sinks create a clean stone edge and make wiping easy, but the cut-out must be polished and sealed correctly. Inset sinks suit more worktop types and can protect vulnerable edges. Apron-front ceramic sinks add character but need strong support, careful door alignment and tolerance for manufacturing variation. One large bowl often handles trays better than two small bowls; a half bowl can still help with rinsing.

- Check internal bowl size, not only overall size.
- Confirm minimum cabinet width and support.
- Choose waste kit and overflow before installation.
- Provide accessible isolation and leak protection.

DAVID'S TECHNIQUE

A large useful bowl is more luxurious than a complicated sink that cannot hold an oven tray.



Taps and water systems

A tap must fit the sink, window, pressure and daily use.

Check spout reach so water lands near the bowl centre without excessive splash. Tall pull-out taps need clearance beneath shelves and windows. Boiling, filtered or chilled systems require cabinet volume, power, ventilation, filter access and safe operation. Match pressure requirements to the property. A living finish such as unlacquered brass changes over time; coated finishes need manufacturer-approved cleaning.

- Set tap-hole position before templating.
- Keep filters and valves removable.
- Confirm hot-water safety features.
- Coordinate metal undertone with handles and lighting.

DAVID'S TECHNIQUE

The tap is touched more than almost any decorative object; test its reach and control physically.



Splashbacks

Protect the wall while completing the elevation.

A full-height slab creates calm continuity and few joints. Tile adds scale, craft and repairability, while toughened glass can be quiet and easy to clean. Behind a gas hob or range, verify clearances and material suitability. Socket positions should be drawn on the elevation so they do not interrupt key veins or tile modules. Avoid a thin decorative strip that bears no relation to cabinet lines.

- Choose grout colour with the tile sample.
- Align sockets to a deliberate datum.
- Confirm heat suitability behind cooking appliances.
- Seal worktop junctions with a controlled, compatible detail.

DAVID'S TECHNIQUE

A splashback is the background of the kitchen; let it support the cabinetry rather than fight it.



Flooring and transitions

The floor must connect kitchen performance to living comfort.

Porcelain tile tolerates water and wear but needs a flat, correctly prepared base and comfortable underfloor conditions. Engineered timber creates warmth and continuity into living space, yet leaks and grit require care. Luxury vinyl and other resilient surfaces can offer practicality when subfloor preparation and detailing are strong. If materials change, make the transition flush and align it with architecture, not the middle of a doorway by accident.

- Resolve finished floor levels before cabinet installation.
- Continue herringbone setting-out through visible axes.
- Use expansion details required by the product.
- Keep spare flooring from the same batch.

DAVID'S TECHNIQUE

A flush, straight transition can look more expensive than the materials on either side.



Quiet minimal

Warm white, pale oak and soft stone.

This palette depends on subtle difference rather than dramatic contrast. Use warm white rather than blue white, pale oak with low orange content and a lightly textured stone. Black may appear only in one appliance or picture frame. Because the colours are quiet, door alignment, shadow gaps and lighting quality become highly visible. Add softness with linen, ceramics and a single sculptural pendant.

- Keep three main finishes.
- Use texture to prevent blandness.
- Hide most small appliances.
- Choose warm-neutral light with excellent colour rendering.

DAVID'S TECHNIQUE

Minimal design is not empty; it is full of carefully controlled junctions.



Modern heritage

Burgundy, pale stone and aged brass.

A deep red-brown or oxblood cabinet can feel sophisticated in a period London room when paired with quiet stone and restrained moulding. Repeat the colour in a small textile or artwork rather than across every wall. Brass should share a warm undertone but does not need identical ageing. Keep appliances dark or integrated so the cabinet colour remains the focal element.

- Sample colour on a full door.
- View it in shadow as well as sunlight.
- Use pale worktop to maintain light.
- Limit ornate details to one coherent language.

DAVID'S TECHNIQUE

Strong cabinet colour needs calm architecture around it.



Italian-inspired warmth

Dark walnut, travertine and sculptural light.

Italian influence comes from proportion, material confidence and furniture-like composition rather than decorative clichés. Dark walnut provides depth, travertine brings warm mineral texture and a single sculptural light introduces fashion. Keep handles discreet and integrate appliances. Use the same timber or stone tone in a nearby console or dining piece so the kitchen belongs to the whole interior.

- Book-match or sequence veneer where visible.
- Balance dark timber with open light surfaces.
- Use one expressive light, not many competing forms.
- Keep styling sparse and tactile.

DAVID'S TECHNIQUE

Elegance comes from proportion and finish, not from adding more objects.



Soft industrial

Smoked oak, stainless steel and mineral plaster.

Industrial materials can feel domestic when scale and lighting are softened. Use brushed stainless at the most practical zone, dark timber for warmth and limewash or mineral plaster for a quiet background. Avoid exposing every service or using imitation factory decoration. Linen, art and warm light prevent the kitchen becoming clinical. The metal will develop marks; select finishes that age honestly.

- Use genuine materials with restrained detailing.
- Limit black frames and visible bolts.
- Provide warm ambient lighting.
- Repeat metal in only a few functional elements.

DAVID'S TECHNIQUE

Industrial luxury is precision softened by texture.

Layer the lighting

Task, ambient, accent and night light perform different jobs.

Task light makes preparation safe; ambient light fills the room; accent light reveals material and architecture; low-level night light supports movement. Draw each layer on a reflected ceiling and elevation plan, then place it on a separate circuit. Consider daylight and cabinet shadows. Too many ceiling spots flatten the room and create glare on stone. Fewer, carefully aimed sources usually produce greater depth.

- Switch task light independently.
- Dim ambient and decorative layers.
- Avoid a rigid spot grid unrelated to furniture.
- Coordinate fittings with joists, ducts and tall units.

DAVID'S TECHNIQUE

The kitchen should have a bright working scene and a quiet living scene.



Under-cabinet task light

Conceal the source and illuminate the full worktop.

Place LED tape in an aluminium profile with diffuser, ideally toward the front of the wall cabinet so the user does not cast a shadow over the work. Recess the profile or conceal it behind a small rail. Select a continuous system with no dark gaps at joins. Drivers must remain accessible and compatible with dimming. Protect lighting from steam and heat according to location and product rating.

- Use high colour rendering so food and stone look natural.
- Avoid visible dots in reflective splashbacks.
- Coordinate cable exits before cabinets arrive.
- Test a complete sample length, not a short strip.

DAVID'S TECHNIQUE

A diffuser improves the line, but correct position creates the useful light.



Shelf and shadow light

Use reflected light to reveal depth.

LED hidden at the rear or underside of a shelf can wash a textured splashback and make the shelf appear lighter. A shadow-gap detail above tall units or within a recess can separate volumes without exposing the source. Decide whether the light is functional or decorative, because brightness and switching differ. Dark stone absorbs more light, while polished surfaces reveal every dot and reflection.

- Prototype the profile against the chosen material.
- Keep colour temperature consistent.
- Hide wiring routes within joinery.
- Allow driver replacement without demolition.

DAVID'S TECHNIQUE

The most modern light is often the one whose fitting cannot be seen.



Island, plinth and low-level light

Low light can make heavy cabinetry float, but use restraint.

A recessed line beneath an island or selected base units creates a soft evening effect and can guide circulation. Continuous plinth lighting around every cabinet may feel commercial, so concentrate it on one architectural element. Keep the source set back from the face, use a diffuser and avoid glare from a seated position. Coordinate access panels so maintenance remains possible.

- Light one island or furniture run, not every toe-kick.
- Keep strips away from cleaning water and impact.
- Set brightness below task lighting.
- Test from the sofa and dining chair.

DAVID'S TECHNIQUE

A small amount of low light makes the island feel intentional after dark.



Lighting the living connection

One ceiling can support different zones without fragmenting them.

Use ceiling coves, wall washers, pendants and joinery light to create overlapping pools rather than separate grids for kitchen and sofa. The kitchen needs precision; the living area needs comfort. A shared colour temperature and coordinated dimming make the room coherent. Keep TV views, artwork, curtains and reflective glazing in mind. Night-time reflections can make poorly placed fittings visible from every seat.

- Create cooking, dining, evening and cleaning scenes.
- Avoid downlights directly above the sofa eye line.
- Wash one wall or artwork for depth.
- Use simple labelled controls.

DAVID'S TECHNIQUE

The open-plan room should feel like one atmosphere with several intensities.

Pendants, downlights and colour temperature

Decorative light must still respect the work surface.

Pendants can anchor an island but should not block sightlines or conflict with ceiling extraction. Downlights should illuminate the front edge of worktops, not the user's back. Warm white around 2700K creates a relaxed evening mood; 3000K often balances modern interiors and task clarity. More important than the number is consistency, colour rendering and dimming behaviour with the chosen driver.

- Hang pendants after confirming island and ceiling centre lines.
- Use beam angles appropriate to the surface.
- Keep one colour-temperature family.
- Check dimming at the lowest setting for flicker.

DAVID'S TECHNIQUE

Select lighting by the effect on faces, food and materials, not only by the fitting shape.



Integrating appliances

Choose models before final cabinetry and services.

Integrated appliances create calm elevations, but each model has exact ventilation, hinge, door-weight, power, water and access requirements. Obtain installation drawings before manufacturing. Align oven centres, door gaps and handle lines. Decide which appliances should disappear and which deserve to be visible. A freestanding range can be the room focus; a random mix of stainless rectangles usually is not.

- Create an appliance schedule with model numbers.
- Record electrical load, water and waste.
- Confirm door-on-door or sliding integration.
- Allow replacement access without damaging worktops.

DAVID'S TECHNIQUE

The cabinet maker cannot design accurately around "standard appliances".

Ovens and hobs

Place heat where landing space and extraction work together.

Eye-level ovens reduce bending but tall stacks can dominate a small room. Side-by-side appliances need aligned dimensions and opening clearance. Induction hobs require suitable electrical provision; gas work requires the appropriate registered professional. Provide worktop landing space and keep tall combustible or vulnerable surfaces away from the cooking zone. Check child safety, controls and accessibility for the household.

- Open oven doors on the plan.
- Provide heat-safe landing space.
- Coordinate hob with extractor width and position.
- Confirm circuit or gas requirements before first fix.

DAVID'S TECHNIQUE

Position the appliance around the hot tray in your hands, not only the elevation symmetry.

Refrigeration

Food storage needs ventilation, opening space and a landing point.

Choose capacity from household habits rather than external width alone. Integrated models may offer less internal volume than freestanding equivalents. Check door opening angle for drawer removal, ventilation grilles, ice-maker water supply and adjacent wall clearance. Place a durable landing surface close by and create a logical route from entrance to refrigerator and pantry for unloading groceries.

- Check internal dimensions and shelf flexibility.
- Allow full door opening beside walls.
- Keep ventilation paths unobstructed.
- Provide accessible isolation for water-connected models.

DAVID'S TECHNIQUE

A refrigerator should open fully without asking the whole room to move.



Dishwashing and internal organisation

Design unloading before choosing cabinet positions.

Place the dishwasher directly beside the sink unless site constraints demand otherwise. Cutlery, plates and glasses should be stored within a short reach so unloading does not cross the cooking route. A cutlery drawer improves visibility, while deep drawers can hold plates with adjustable pegs. Confirm dishwasher door clearance against plinths, handles and island circulation.

- Store daily plates near the dishwasher.
- Provide detergent storage out of children's reach.
- Protect adjacent cabinet edges from steam.
- Check integrated door weight and hinge system.

DAVID'S TECHNIQUE

The best storage location is revealed by where the item comes from and where it goes next.

Extraction and ventilation

Control moisture, odour and heat at the source.

Ducted extraction generally removes cooking pollutants more effectively than recirculation, but route, diameter, bends, noise and external termination must be designed early. A recirculating hood does not by itself provide the outside ventilation required where regulations demand extract. The 2026 Approved Document F guidance for England shows 30 litres per second for a cooker hood extracting outside, or 60 litres per second where kitchen extract is elsewhere. Confirm which edition and project rules apply.

- Keep duct runs short, smooth and correctly sized.
- Provide make-up air and whole-room ventilation as required.
- Choose noise performance at realistic operating speed.
- Keep filters accessible for cleaning.

DAVID'S TECHNIQUE

A beautiful open-plan room needs quiet, effective extraction more than a dramatic hood.

Sockets, charging and small power

Put power where appliances work, while keeping the elevation calm.

List every fixed and portable appliance, then add charging, cleaning and future capacity. Place worktop sockets away from sinks and heat in accordance with the electrical design. Hide outlets inside an appliance garage only when ventilation, access and safe use are resolved. Island outlets can sit on a side panel or under an overhang where permitted and practical. Avoid pop-up fittings where spills and crumbs create problems.

- Create a socket schedule with intended use.
- Provide accessible isolation for integrated appliances.
- Keep USB or charging away from wet preparation.
- Coordinate faceplate colour with the palette.

DAVID'S TECHNIQUE

A socket without an assigned purpose often lands in the wrong place.

Plumbing and drainage

Move water only after proving the route.

Relocating the kitchen may require new hot, cold and waste routes, sufficient fall, ventilation and access. Long waste runs through joists or solid floors can control the entire plan. Confirm pipe sizes, structural constraints and how blockages will be cleared. Keep joints accessible where possible, isolate each appliance and protect cabinetry from leaks. Consider water pressure and hot-water delivery time at the new location.

- Survey existing stack and floor construction.
- Design rodding and maintenance access.
- Pressure-test supplies before closing walls.
- Photograph pipe routes and valve locations.

DAVID'S TECHNIQUE

The ideal island position is irrelevant if the waste cannot reach it safely and maintainably.

Electrical design

Load, circuits, controls and certification belong in the design stage.

Induction cooking, ovens, boiling-water systems, dishwashers, refrigeration and lighting may require dedicated or carefully designed circuits. Part P covers electrical safety in dwellings in England, and fixed work must be designed, installed, inspected and tested appropriately. Use a competent electrician, coordinate consumer-unit capacity and obtain the required certification. Do not hide inaccessible fused spurs behind integrated appliances.

- Prepare an appliance load schedule.
- Coordinate lighting drivers and dimmers.
- Provide accessible isolation.
- Retain test results, certificates and circuit labels.

DAVID'S TECHNIQUE

The electrical schedule should be complete before the cabinet drawings are signed.

Structure, gas and approvals

Opening walls and moving kitchens can trigger more than decoration.

A simple refit of units may not generally require Building Regulations approval, but associated drainage, electrical, ventilation and structural works may. Removing or altering a load-bearing wall normally requires structural design and Building Regulations consideration. Gas work in homes must be carried out by a Gas Safe registered engineer. Listed buildings, leasehold properties and shared services may need additional consent. Confirm the project route before work begins.

- Appoint structural advice before demolition.
- Check freeholder or landlord consent.
- Agree the Building Control route where required.
- Keep approvals and certificates in the handover file.

DAVID'S TECHNIQUE

Design certainty is luxurious; unresolved approvals are expensive.

Survey before design

Measure the room, construction and services - then measure again.

Record wall lengths at several heights because old rooms are rarely square. Measure ceiling, beams, windows, doors, reveals, radiators, boilers, meters, soil stacks, stopcocks, sockets, switches and extract routes. Note floor build-up and changes in level. Photograph behind removable panels where safe. A laser survey is useful but does not replace checking critical dimensions with physical points and understanding what lies inside the construction.

- Create dimensioned plan and four elevations.
- Record diagonals and ceiling variation.
- Mark all fixed services and access panels.
- Complete a pre-production check after strip-out.

DAVID'S TECHNIQUE

Cabinetry is manufactured in millimetres; the building must be understood in the same detail.



Brief, drawings and specification

A beautiful render is not an installation document.

The information pack should include existing and proposed plans, elevations, sections through island and tall units, reflected ceiling and lighting plans, electrical and plumbing layouts, cabinet schedule, appliance schedule, finishes schedule and junction details. Record who supplies and installs every item. A signed sample board and revision register prevent verbal changes from becoming expensive disagreement.

- Dimension from fixed datums.
- Show fillers, end panels and scribes.
- Mark socket, light and service heights.
- Freeze the coordinated design before production.

DAVID'S TECHNIQUE

Every visible line in the finished kitchen should exist first on a coordinated elevation.



Strip-out and discovery

Protect the budget for what old cabinets may be hiding.

After isolation and controlled removal, inspect walls, floors, plumbing, electrics, damp, ventilation and structure. Do not rush directly into plastering. Compare discovered conditions with the design and update service routes or cabinet fillers before manufacture is irreversibly committed. Separate reusable appliances and materials from waste, and protect retained floors, doors and common areas throughout the works.

- Confirm safe isolation before removal.
- Photograph concealed conditions.
- Resolve damp or leaks at source.
- Issue changes in writing before proceeding.

DAVID'S TECHNIQUE

The most valuable site meeting often happens when the old kitchen is gone and the walls are still open.

First fix

Place invisible services from the final cabinet drawings.

Set plumbing, wastes, ducts, cables, sockets, lighting feeds and appliance supplies against the signed elevations. Check island floor penetrations and keep them within cabinet voids. Build structural openings and partitions, then verify dimensions. Test drainage, water and electrical containment before covering. Drivers, valves and isolation points must remain accessible after every appliance and drawer is fitted.

- Mark finished floor and worktop datums on site.
- Photograph all concealed routes with a scale.
- Test extract route and drainage.
- Complete a cabinet-maker site check before plastering closes.

DAVID'S TECHNIQUE

First fix should follow the kitchen, not ask the kitchen to hide random services.



Cabinet installation

Level, fix and align before the worktop is templated.

Begin from the agreed datum and highest floor point. Cabinets must be level, plumb, securely fixed and connected with controlled joints. Scribe to uneven walls rather than forcing units out of alignment. Set consistent door gaps, verify appliance openings and confirm island position against ceiling lights and floor services. Protect finished fronts immediately and keep adjustment until after the worktop load is applied.

- Approve the first tall and base run.
- Check every finished end panel.
- Verify appliance niches with model drawings.
- Do not template over unstable or incomplete units.

DAVID'S TECHNIQUE

A perfect stone worktop cannot correct cabinets that were installed out of level.

Worktop templating

All supporting decisions must be final.

Before templating, sinks, taps, hobs, sockets and relevant appliances should be confirmed or available. Cabinets must be fixed and panels complete. Agree seam positions, edge profiles, overhangs, upstands, drainer grooves, cut-out tolerances and wall irregularities with the fabricator. For patterned slabs, approve the cutting layout and vein direction. Avoid other work that could move the cabinetry after the template is taken.

- Sign the template drawing.
- Confirm tap and accessory holes.
- Review support at overhangs and cut-outs.
- Protect cabinet edges during stone installation.

DAVID'S TECHNIQUE

Templating is the point where design becomes irreversible stone cutting.

Second fix and commissioning

Connect, test and teach the home how to work.

Fit appliances, sinks, taps, lighting, handles, shelves and internal accessories after dusty operations are controlled. Test every circuit, light scene, appliance, valve, waste and extractor function. Run water while inspecting cabinets for leaks. Check appliance ventilation and door alignment. Programme controls, label isolation points and give the owner manuals and demonstrations rather than leaving a box of unexplained documents.

- Test dishwasher and washing machine cycles.
- Check extraction at all speeds.
- Balance and dim lighting scenes.
- Record serial numbers and warranty registration.

DAVID'S TECHNIQUE

Commissioning turns installed products into a functioning kitchen.



Snagging and handover

Inspect in daylight, at night and under use.

Open every door and drawer, including together where conflicts may occur. Inspect finish, gaps, hinges, runners, silicone, stone joints, splashback alignment, sockets, lights, extraction, water pressure and drainage. Load heavy drawers and check soft close. View the kitchen from the living area after dark. A final matched transformation should look calm, but the handover file must also prove that hidden systems were tested and certified.

- Use a numbered snag list with photographs.
- Agree completion dates and responsibility.
- Retain care products and spare components.
- Provide as-built drawings, certificates, manuals and warranties.

DAVID'S TECHNIQUE

Practical completion means the kitchen works, not merely that the protective film has been removed.

Model budget structure

Allocate money to the whole system, not only visible cabinets.

ELEMENT	TYPICAL SHARE	DO NOT FORGET
Design, survey and approvals	6-12%	Measured drawings, structural input, Building Control, samples
Cabinetry and hardware	25-40%	End panels, fillers, internals, handles, delivery and fitting
Worktops and splashbacks	10-18%	Templating, seams, sink cut-outs, upstands and supports
Appliances and extraction	15-25%	Ducting, delivery, installation, filters and warranties
Services and building work	15-30%	Strip-out, structure, plumbing, electrics, plastering and floor
Lighting and decoration	5-10%	Drivers, dimmers, profiles, pendants, paint and making good
Contingency	10-15%	Existing-condition risk and approved changes

DESIGN NOTE

Illustrative allocation only, not a quotation. London project costs vary materially with scope, access, structure, specification and market conditions. Price from coordinated drawings and retain contingency separately.

A controlled programme

The sequence matters more than an optimistic completion date.

STAGE	TYPICAL ACTIVITY	HOLD POINT
1. Define	Brief, measured survey, layout options, budget	Signed brief and preferred plan
2. Coordinate	Structure, services, appliances, lighting, finishes	Coordinated design freeze
3. Order	Cabinet manufacture, appliances, stone reservation	Confirmed lead times
4. Prepare	Strip-out, discovery, structural work, first fix	Open-wall inspection and test
5. Form room	Plaster, floor preparation, decoration base coats	Dimensions rechecked
6. Install	Cabinets, template, worktop, splashback	Alignment and template approval
7. Complete	Appliances, second fix, lighting, decoration	Commissioning tests
8. Handover	Snagging, clean, manuals, certificates	Signed completion record

DESIGN NOTE

Cabinet and stone lead times often run alongside site work. Never demolish a working kitchen solely because an unconfirmed delivery date appears on an early programme.

The final do-not-forget list

Use this page before signing the cabinet order.

CHECK	QUESTION	EVIDENCE
Layout	Do routes, stools and every open door work together?	Scaled plan or floor mock-up
Storage	Does every daily object have a reachable home?	Cabinet schedule
Waste	Are recycling and food waste beside preparation?	Bin model and capacity
Hardware	Are hinge angles and runner loads specified?	Hardware schedule
Worktop	Are slab, seams, edges and supports approved?	Signed template drawing
Lighting	Are task and evening scenes independently controlled?	Lighting and switching plan
Services	Are loads, wastes, ducts and isolation coordinated?	First-fix drawings
Handover	Are tests, manuals, warranties and certificates included?	Handover index

DESIGN NOTE

Do not approve the order from a perspective image alone. The signed package should include dimensions, elevations, schedules, appliance data, services, finishes and revision date.

Official guidance and further checks

Use current project-specific advice before construction.

England guidance consulted for this edition includes: GOV.UK Approved Document F, Ventilation (2026 edition); GOV.UK Approved Document P, Electrical Safety in Dwellings; Planning Portal guidance for kitchens and bathrooms; Planning Portal guidance for internal walls and structural support; and Health and Safety Executive guidance confirming domestic gas work must be completed by a Gas Safe registered engineer. Requirements and transitional arrangements can change, so confirm the edition applying to the project.

- gov.uk/government/publications/ventilation-approved-document-f
- gov.uk/government/publications/electrical-safety-approved-document-p
- planningportal.co.uk/permission/common-projects/kitchens-and-bathrooms
- planningportal.co.uk/permission/common-projects/internal-walls
- hse.gov.uk/construction/healthrisks/hazardous-substances/carbon-monoxide.htm

DAVID'S TECHNIQUE

This design book informs the brief; competent professionals and current documents complete the technical design.

The final principle

Make the kitchen disappear into life - and appear exactly when needed.

The modern luxury kitchen is not defined by the loudest stone or the largest island. It is the ease of opening a loaded drawer, the bin beside the chopping board, the quiet extractor, the concealed breakfast clutter, the seam that aligns and the warm shadow light that remains after dinner. When planning, services, materials and installation are coordinated, the kitchen becomes part of the architecture and gives the living room more calm rather than more noise.

- Design from habits and sightlines.
- Spend on structure, hardware and workmanship.
- Use a restrained, tested material palette.
- Commission, snag and document every system.

DAVID'S TECHNIQUE

Real luxury is when beauty and usefulness become the same decision.

DAVID DELAVEGA

THE REAL LUXURY



A kitchen should improve the way home feels.

David Delavega brings more than 25 years of property design and renovation experience to this practical guide. His approach combines the discipline of construction with the atmosphere of interior design: every cabinet must work, every junction must be resolved and every light must support the room after dark. KITCHEN, LIVING & BEYOND treats the modern kitchen as architecture, furniture and daily life in one composition.

- Design from real habits, not a showroom display.
- Spend on movement, hardware and workmanship before decoration.
- Make the kitchen belong to the living room, then hide the practical clutter.

DAVID DELAVEGA

The best kitchen disappears into the rhythm of living, while every practical detail remains exactly where it is needed.