FREE PLANNING GUIDE

# Kitchen Renovation Planning Guide (GTA)

What to decide first, a realistic timeline, budget bands, permits, 12 questions to ask any contractor and a planning checklist.

TGV
CONSTRUCTION GROUP INC

Most kitchen renovations go wrong before the first cabinet is unscrewed: a layout chosen in a hurry, a budget with no room to breathe, a contractor hired on price alone. This guide takes you through the decisions in the order they should be made - with a realistic timeline for the GTA, where a full kitchen renovation usually runs from around $40,000 to $85,000 - so your quote, your schedule and your result hold together.

## What is inside

- Decide these five things first
- A realistic timeline
- Budget bands
- Permits and approvals
- 12 questions to ask any contractor
- Your planning checklist

**Free quote:** www.tgvconstructiongroup.ca/get-a-quote · +1 (365) 363-6995 · info@tgvconstructiongroup.ca

# Decide these five things first

Everything else - the quote, the schedule, even which contractor fits - follows from these five decisions. Make them before you ask anyone for a price, and every quote you receive will describe the same kitchen.

- **Keep the layout, or change it?** If the sink, stove and fridge stay where they are, the job is mostly finishes: cabinets, counters, backsplash, flooring, lighting. Moving them means plumbing, wiring and often venting move too - a bigger job, and usually a permit.
- **What is wrong with the kitchen today?** Write down the three things that annoy you most: too little counter next to the stove, a fridge door that hits the island, no light over the sink. A good layout fixes those first; the finishes come after.
- **How do you cook and live in it?** Two cooks at once, a family that eats at the counter, lots of baking, a dog bowl, a coffee corner - these decide the island, the storage and the number of outlets more than any trend does.
- **Open the kitchen to the living room, or not?** A wall coming down is the most-requested change. If it carries load, a structural engineer designs the beam, the work is permitted and inspected - plan the time and the cost for that from the start, not at the end.
- **What stays?** Appliances, a floor you like, a window, a good door: keeping something sound saves money and shortens the job. Decide it now, so no quote prices its replacement.

# A realistic timeline

Most of the waiting in a kitchen renovation happens before anyone picks up a tool. Cabinets and stone counters are made to order; once they are ready, a full kitchen usually takes four to eight weeks on site, and a counter-and-backsplash update takes days. Plan backwards from the day you want to cook in it.

1. **Site visit and measurements**
   The kitchen is measured; plumbing, electrical and walls are checked; you talk through how you cook and what should change.
2. **Layout and written quote**
   A layout and a free written quote with the scope of work. Compare quotes on scope, not only on the total.
3. **Choices and ordering**
   Cabinets, counters, tile, flooring and appliances. Cabinets and stone are made to order, so they are chosen and ordered early - this is usually the longest wait in the whole project.

4. **Permit and drawings**
   If walls, plumbing or wiring change: the permit application and, for a load-bearing wall, the engineer's drawings.

5. **Demolition and rough-in**
   The old kitchen comes out; plumbing, electrical and venting are run to the new layout; inspections where a permit applies.

6. **Cabinets, counters, backsplash, fixtures**
   Cabinets go in first; the counter is templated on the installed cabinets and made; then the backsplash, sink, faucet, lighting and appliances.

7. **Final walkthrough**
   You check every door, drawer, tap and switch with the contractor before the job is signed off.

A tip that saves weeks: make every choice before demolition. A backsplash picked halfway through the job is the usual reason a kitchen sits unfinished.

# Budget bands

Treat every figure here as a rough range from typical GTA projects. Your price depends on what the site visit finds, the size of the kitchen, the materials you choose and the permits needed - and it is set only in a written quote.

### Refresh

**Lower end**

New cabinet doors or cabinets in the same layout, a new quartz or stone counter templated on site, a tiled backsplash, a new sink and faucet, better lighting. The layout stays, so the plumbing and wiring stay. Days to a couple of weeks on site.

### Full renovation

**Around $40,000 to $85,000 in the GTA**

Everything back to the walls and floor: new cabinets, counters, backsplash, flooring and lighting, plumbing and electrical where they need to change, appliances installed and connected. In Toronto, Oakville and Richmond Hill the same work tends to run higher - roughly $50,000 to $110,000.

### Layout change or open concept

#### Upper end

A full renovation plus a wall coming down, an engineered beam, an island with a sink or cooktop, plumbing and power run through the floor, permits and inspections. Custom cabinetry and large stone pieces move it further up.

What moves the price most, in order: the size of the kitchen; whether walls, plumbing or wiring move; stock or custom cabinets; the countertop material; the appliances.

Keep 10 to 15 percent of your budget unspent until the walls are open. Older homes hide surprises - old wiring, a soft subfloor, a pipe where the island was going - and a budget with room for them is a budget that holds.

> Every home is different. Prices in this guide are only rough ranges from typical GTA projects, not a quote: your price depends on what we find on site, the size and condition of the space, the materials you choose and the permits needed, and it is set only in your written quote after a site visit.

## Permits and approvals

In the GTA, replacing cabinets, counters and fixtures in the same place usually needs no permit. Removing or changing walls, or moving plumbing, gas or wiring, generally does - and the inspections that come with it protect you: a second pair of eyes on work that will be closed behind drywall.

- **Load-bearing wall** A structural engineer designs the beam, the permit is taken out, and the inspector checks the work before it is closed up.
- **New or moved plumbing, gas or electrical** Permit and inspection. Ask who applies and who meets the inspector - it should be the contractor, and it should be in the quote.
- **Condo kitchen** Approval from the building's management before work starts, booked elevators for deliveries and debris, set working hours and protection for the common areas.
- **Basement kitchen or second unit** Fire separation, exits and permits - the rules that make a separate unit legal, built in from the start.
- **Your insurer** Tell your home insurer about a major renovation before it starts; many policies ask for it.

## 12 questions to ask any contractor

Ask every contractor the same questions and write the answers down next to their quote. The cheapest quote is rarely the cheapest kitchen.

1. **Are you insured, and is your WSIB clearance current?**
   Ask for the liability insurance certificate and the WSIB clearance certificate. Without them, an accident on your property can become your problem.

2. **Who applies for the permit and meets the inspector?**
   The contractor should - and the quote should say so.

3. **Is the scope written down, line by line?**
   Demolition and disposal, plumbing, electrical, cabinets, counters, backsplash, flooring, lighting, appliance connection, painting, cleanup. What is not written is not included.

4. **What is excluded?**
   Appliances? An electrical panel upgrade? Repairing what is found behind the walls? Every quote excludes something - find out what, before you compare totals.

5. **Who runs the trades?**
   One contractor managing licensed electrical, plumbing and HVAC trades, or you hiring them separately? One contract means one person is responsible for the whole kitchen.

6. **Who is on site every day, and who do I call?**
   A named project manager or lead, one phone number, and how often you will hear from them.

7. **What is the schedule - start, finish, and what can move it?**
   Cabinet and stone lead times are the usual reason; a good answer names them.

8. **How are changes handled?**
   In writing, priced before the work is done, agreed by both sides. 'We will sort it out at the end' is where budgets go to die.

9. **How is payment scheduled?**
   Tied to progress you can see - not most of the money before the work starts.

10. **How will you protect the rest of my home?**
    Dust walls, floor protection, where the debris goes, how the site is left each evening.

11. **Can I see a kitchen like mine that you finished - and speak to the owner?**
    Photos of real jobs, and a client who will take your call.

12. **What happens if you find something unexpected?**
    Old wiring, a rotten subfloor, a leaking pipe: how is it priced, who decides, and how fast.

## Your planning checklist

Tick these off before the first site visit and your quote will be faster, more accurate and easier to compare.

- [ ] The three things I most want to change about this kitchen, written down
- [ ] Keep the layout / change the layout - decided
- [ ] Photos of the kitchen as it is, including inside the sink cabinet and the electrical panel
- [ ] Rough measurements: the length of each wall, ceiling height, window and door positions
- [ ] What stays: appliances, flooring, windows, doors
- [ ] A list of choices with a budget for each: cabinets, counters, backsplash, flooring, sink and faucet, hardware, lighting, appliances (model numbers once chosen)
- [ ] Total budget, with 10 to 15 percent held back for surprises
- [ ] Where we will cook and eat during the work (a temporary kitchen elsewhere in the home is usual for a full renovation)
- [ ] Dates that must not be disturbed: holidays, a family event, a baby due
- [ ] Condo: management rules, elevator booking, working hours
- [ ] Home insurer told about the renovation
- [ ] The 12 questions above, with each contractor's answers
- [ ] Written quotes from at least two contractors, compared line by line

## Ready to plan your kitchen with us?

Tell us about your kitchen and we will prepare a free written quote after a site visit.

**www.tgvconstructiongroup.ca/get-a-quote · +1 (365) 363-6995 · info@tgvconstructiongroup.ca**