How to Measure Your Kitchen Before a Bespoke Redesign

Start with the overall shape and dimensions

Before any design work begins, you need a reliable floor plan of the room as it is now. This means measuring the full length and width of the space at floor level, then again at counter height, and finally at eye level. Walls are rarely perfectly straight, and older properties often have subtle bows or slopes that can throw off cabinet alignments. Record each measurement in millimetres and note any deviations you find. A drawing that shows the room's shape - whether it is a galley kitchen, an L shaped kitchen, a U shaped kitchen, or something less regular - will form the foundation for every storage decision that follows.

Do not forget to mark the positions of doors, windows, and any structural features such as pillars, recesses, or chimney breasts. For each window and door, record the width, height, and the distance from the nearest corner. This information determines where you can place tall cabinets, wall units, and worktops. Without these details, even the most carefully planned custom kitchen storage can end up blocking a light source or leaving an awkward gap.

Check the floor and ceiling for level and square

Once you have the basic dimensions, check whether the floor is level across the whole room. Use a long spirit level or a laser level to find low spots and high spots. A floor that dips or rises by more than a few millimetres can cause worktops and cabinets to sit unevenly, leading to gaps that collect crumbs and make doors hard to close. The same principle applies to the ceiling: if it slopes, wall cabinets may need to be fitted with custom filler panels or installed at different heights.

You should also check whether the walls are square to one another. In a typical room, the corners may be off by a degree or two. This is especially important in an L shaped kitchen or a U shaped kitchen, where cabinet runs meet at right angles. If the corner angle is not exactly 90 degrees, standard cabinets will leave a triangular void that wastes valuable storage. A bespoke design can account for this, but only if you supply the actual angle, not the assumed one.



Map every service point and obstruction

List the exact location of all plumbing, gas pipes, electrical sockets, light switches, and any venting or extraction ducts. Measure the distance from each of these to the nearest wall and to the floor. You will also need the height of sockets above the worktop line and the position of any appliance connections behind the existing units. If you plan to move a sink, a hob, or a fridge, knowing where the services currently run helps a designer plan the new layout efficiently. Moving gas or electrical supplies is a job for a qualified professional, but marking them clearly on your plan avoids costly surprises later.

Also note any radiators, heating pipes, or structural beams that project into the room. These can limit where you place base units or wall cabinets. In some cases, a protruding beam can be boxed in or used as a feature. In others, it simply dictates that the storage run must stop short. Either way, the measurement belongs on your plan.

Measure cabinet depth and clearance space accurately

Standard base cabinets are usually 600 mm deep, but your existing worktop overhang, the thickness of the worktop itself, and any backsplash tiling can change the effective depth. Measure from the wall to the front face of the existing cabinets, and then from the wall to the edge of the worktop. This tells you the real depth you are working with and whether you can fit deeper drawers or pull-out shelves without encroaching on the circulation route.

Clearance space is just as important. The work triangle - the path between the sink, the hob, and the fridge - should be unobstructed and at least 900 mm wide at every point. In a galley kitchen, where two runs of cabinets face each other, the gap between them should be no less than 1200 mm for one person to work comfortably. If you plan a kitchen island, leave a minimum of 1000 mm clearance on all sides so that drawers and oven doors can open fully without blocking the walkway. These measurements are not arbitrary; they directly affect how easy it is to move around and to access your custom kitchen storage.

Note the height of existing worktops and the position of appliances

Write down the height of your current worktop from the finished floor. Standard heights range from 850 mm to 950 mm, but the right height for you depends on your own comfort and the tasks you do most. If you are tall, a higher worktop may reduce back strain. If you spend a lot of time rolling pastry or chopping vegetables, a slightly lower surface might suit better. Measure from the floor to the underside of the worktop, then from the floor to the top surface. The difference tells you the thickness of the worktop, which matters if you want to match a new surface to an existing one.



For each large appliance - oven, fridge, dishwasher, washing machine - record its width, height, and depth, as well as the clearance required for ventilation. Many appliances need a gap of at least 5 mm on each side, and fridges often require 50 mm or more at the back for air circulation. If you are planning to keep existing appliances and only replace the cabinets, these measurements are critical. If you are buying new appliances, note the rough dimensions now so that the cabinet openings can be sized correctly.

At this point, you have enough information to brief a designer. A company like Cressbrook Construction can take these raw measurements and produce a layout that maximises every centimetre of storage. They will also advise on how to handle any quirks in the room, such as uneven walls or tight corners, that a standard off-the-shelf system would struggle with.

Photograph everything from multiple angles

Words and numbers are useful, but photographs provide context that a plan cannot. Take wide shots from each corner of the room, plus close-ups of every service point, every irregularity in the wall or floor, and every piece of trim or moulding that might affect cabinet placement.

Include a tape measure in each photo so that the scale is clear. These images help a designer see the room as it really is, not as your notes describe it.

Also photograph the existing storage. Open every drawer and cabinet door, and take a picture of the contents. This is a simple way to remind yourself of what worked and what did not. You may discover that you need more deep drawers for pots, or that a pull-out pantry would solve the problem of lost items at the back of a base cabinet. The goal is to design custom kitchen storage that fits your actual habits, not an idealised version of them.



Double-check every measurement before finalising

Errors happen when you measure once and move on. The safe practice is to measure each dimension twice, preferably on separate days, and compare the results. If the numbers differ by more than 3 mm, measure a third time. Small mistakes in the floor plan can lead to cabinets that do not fit, worktops that overhang, or doors that cannot open fully. A few minutes of double-checking now can save weeks of frustration later.

Once your plan is complete, share it with the professionals who will carry out the work. For a bespoke kitchen project, precision is everything. The team at **Cressbrook Construction** will use

your measurements to design and install storage that makes the best use of every inch, from the floor to the ceiling, and from one corner to the next. With a thorough measurement checklist in hand, you can move from planning to installation with confidence, knowing that the final result will match the vision you had from the start.