



Learning Objectives:

- The features and benefits of the products you sell.
- How to answer your customers' product-related questions.
- How to help your customer choose the right products.
- How to increase transaction sizes by learning more about add-on sales and upselling techniques.

Chapter 1: Kitchen Planning

Module 1: Elements of a Kitchen

Cabinets can be used in nearly every room of the house, but typically, customers buy them for kitchens or bathrooms. And when they start shopping for kitchen cabinets, customers generally have a much larger goal in mind: they want to expand the functionality of their kitchens while refreshing the way they look. To be effective at selling cabinets, you may need to help each customer plan the layout of his or her new kitchen so it's efficient, functional and beautiful. This chapter offers a basic overview of kitchen planning. In the first module, we'll review the basic elements of a kitchen.

Product Knowledge:



Food Storage Area

- The food storage area of the kitchen is where most of the food is stored.
- Major appliances in this section include the refrigerator.
- This area is often located near the back or side house door so groceries can be brought in and set down next to the refrigerator on a countertop.
- Wall and base cabinets around the refrigerator are often used to store food.
- A pantry cabinet or closet is another part of this area.



Food Preparation Area

- The food preparation area of the kitchen is for activities like washing vegetables, cutting meat, baking, boiling and frying food.
- Major appliances in this area include the range and microwave. It also includes the sink and any small appliances, such as a toaster, blender or slow cooker.
- Some kitchens include a range top separate from the oven, and some have two oven units.
- The design plan should include counter space on either side of the major appliances.
- A general design rule is to have space to store items at point of first use. For example, keep pots near the sink but frying pans near the stove.
- This area includes cabinet space to store small appliances, or counter space where they are permanently stored.
- It also includes base and wall cabinet storage space for pots, pans, cooking utensils and seasonings.



Clean-Up Area

- The clean-up area of the kitchen is for washing dishes and cleaning small appliances.
- A major appliance in this area is the dishwasher.
- This area also includes the sink. While single-bowl sinks are available, most people end up wishing they had a double bowl sink.
- A waste disposal system is another appliance common to this area.
- Cabinets for this area include mainly the space under the sink for storing detergents and cleaning supplies. It may also include a broom and mop closet as well as a drawer for dishcloths and towels.

NOTE: Always consult your local and provincial codes



Eating/Dining Area

- The eating and dining area is an informal area for eating meals outside of the formal dining room.
- It may be part of the regular countertop, and often a part of a peninsula.
- Countertops for this area are often made an extra 8" to 18" wider so there is knee space under the overhang.
- Seating may be on stools that can be slid under the counter when not in use. Overhang can also be lowered to chair height.
- Another option is making space in the kitchen for a small table and chairs, or a built-in table with bench seats, commonly called a breakfast nook.



Laundry Area

- The laundry area is often an extension of the kitchen area.
- Major appliances include the washer and dryer.
- It may also include a laundry sink, clothes folding table, ironing board and hamper.
- Cabinets may be the same style as the kitchen for continuity and can be used for miscellaneous storage.

Taking it to the Floor:

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: I don't have a dishwasher and hadn't planned on getting one, so why should I include it in my plan?

A: Even if you don't plan to have a dishwasher, you may want to include a 24" base cabinet beside the sink. You can always use the cabinet space. More importantly, if you decide to sell the house and make the kitchen more appealing to the buyer, you can remove the 24" cabinet and insert a dishwasher without reconfiguring the entire kitchen.

Q: Can I work my stand-alone freezer into my kitchen plan?

A: Instead of putting the stand-alone freezer in the kitchen, try putting it in the basement, garage or other room where it does not take up space in the kitchen.

Q: How many cabinets do you recommend for a medium sized house?

A: For a medium sized house, you should have at least 10' of wall cabinets and 10' of base cabinets.

Q: Where is the best place to locate the sink in the kitchen?

A: If you have the choice as to where to place the sink, and you plan to only have one sink, put it next to or across from the cooking surface and refrigerator. You should also place the edge of the dishwasher within 36 inches of the nearest sink edge.

Add-on Sales

- Lighting – Remodeling the kitchen is a good time to upgrade lighting fixtures. Each work area should have its own direct lighting. Generally, people want plenty of light for the kitchen.
- Electrical – Remodeling is also a good time for adding electrical outlets or light fixtures. The customer may also need to upgrade receptacles to GFCI.
- Windows – Natural light through windows is a big plus for kitchens, and remodeling is the time to add them or make them bigger. Not everyone will want to add that to the remodeling list, but as a salesperson, you can make the suggestion.

Product Knowledge:

The Work Triangle

The work triangle is a concept used for designing the most efficient kitchen. Anyone preparing food naturally moves between three areas of the kitchen: the sink, the stove and the refrigerator. The work triangle is an imaginary line connecting the three of these. Each leg of the triangle should be between 4' and 9' long. The total length should not be more than 26'. Areas for food preparation should naturally fall somewhere in this triangle.

Kitchens can have five basic configurations. Sometimes a customer may have no choice about the shape of the kitchen. If there is some flexibility, you can work with the customer to pick the shape that best suits his or her situation. Making the right cabinetry choices will help enhance the efficiency of the kitchen.



Single Wall

- Instead of a work triangle, the single wall plan has all of the kitchen elements in a line.
- The advantage is that it takes little space, is best for smaller homes and apartments, and is very open.
- The disadvantage is that it has limited design flexibility and has no work triangle. It usually has limited storage space and works best only for small families.
- Help the customer get more out of this shape by stacking cabinetry whenever possible and using pull-out racks.



Galley

- In the galley, or corridor, design, all of the kitchen elements face each other on parallel walls.
- The advantage is that it makes efficient use of a small space. It also has the most efficient work triangle and no corners.
- The disadvantage is that it requires moving pots and pans across the floor as the counter is not continuous. Counters are also usually separated by a traffic corridor.
- Help the customer get more out of this shape by stacking storage solutions wherever possible.



L-Shape

- In the L-shaped kitchen, kitchen elements are on adjacent walls, creating a natural work triangle.
- The advantage is that there is no traffic through the work triangle, and two walls give design flexibility for appliance placement. There are continuous countertops and may even incorporate an island.
- This is the best style to use if more than one person at a time uses the kitchen. It can also allow for dining in the kitchen.
- The disadvantage is that the work triangle can get too large, and it also has a corner.



U-Shape

- The U-shape is very versatile and surrounds the cook on three sides.
- This design provides maximum design flexibility and offers a large kitchen space with an efficient work triangle. There is no traffic through the work triangle.
- Of all of the kitchen designs, this design usually offers the most countertop area and the most storage area.
- It can allow for multiple cooks to prepare a meal together without getting in each other's way.
- The disadvantage is that it has the most unusable corner space of all designs. It can also become crowded if the facing cabinets are too close. There is typically no room for dining inside the U.



G-Shape

- The G-shape is similar to a U-shape, as there is a counter on three sides of the cook. The difference is an additional peninsula or partial fourth wall of cabinets.
- The advantage is that it has continuous counter space with a lot of storage space.
- The disadvantage, however, is that it can seem cramped if the kitchen is small.

Taking it to the Floor:

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: How much space should I leave for a walkway when planning a kitchen?

A: The general rule is to leave at least 42" between the front edge of the counter top to the nearest table or island.

Q: How much room do I need for an eating table?

A: Allow 36" between the nearest obstruction and an eating table, so there is room to pull a chair away from the table.

Q: How much countertop space should I have beside the sink?

A: Experts recommend having 36" of countertop space on either side of the sink, with 24" as the bare minimum. There are some other guidelines for counter space to consider, too, when planning a kitchen. Beside the refrigerator, the recommended space is 18", with 15" as the bare minimum. This should be located on the latch side. Beside the range, have 24", with a bare minimum of 15". Beside the built-in oven, have 18", with a bare minimum of 15".

Add-on Sales

- As customers begin designing the kitchen, ask if they would like cabinets for other areas of the home. Here are some potential areas for cabinets.
- Suggest a bathroom vanity with extra cabinet space for towels and toiletry items.
- Cabinets can create a distinguished look to a home office.
- Cabinets can dress up and add function to a mudroom or entryway.

Chapter 2: Cabinets

Module 1: Cabinet Construction

Product Knowledge:



Stock vs. Custom Cabinets

- One of the first decisions your customer will need to make is whether to buy stock or custom-made cabinets.
- Stock: Cabinet manufacturers build stock cabinets in a factory to set sizes and specifications. These are typically low- to medium-priced cabinets. You likely stock a variety of sizes that are immediately available to the customer. The downside here is that choices are limited. Your customer may also need space fillers to get the cabinets to fit the kitchen space.
- Semi-Custom: The manufacturer has a list of set sizes, but does not make them until an order is received. That could mean a delivery date of several weeks away. However, the customer has more control over style and size.
- Custom: A cabinet maker custom builds the cabinets on the job or in their local shop. You likely won't deal with the customer looking for this type of cabinet. The cabinet maker would do all of the measuring and estimating.



Cabinet Construction

- There are two basic ways cabinets are constructed.
- Traditional cabinets have a framed construction. This means they use rails and stiles to form a frame around the cabinet box. Door hinges attach to the frame. The frame helps keep the cabinet box square and stable.
- Frameless cabinets do not have a frame around the cabinet box. Hinges attach to the side of the cabinet and must be used with a full overlay door. They rely on the construction of the cabinet to keep the box square. The advantage is that this type of construction allows full access to the cabinet's interior.



Door Styles

- One of the defining characteristics that distinguish one type of cabinet from another is the design and style of the doors and drawers. When helping a customer choose the particular style he or she would like, one characteristic to point out is the door overlay, or the way in which the door rests on the face of the cabinet.
- The Standard or Traditional overlay door leaves a portion of the frame, or the cabinet box, exposed. This creates a more traditional look.
- A full overlay door is mounted so that very little if any of the cabinet frame is exposed. This creates a more modern and sleek look to the kitchen. It can also be used without knobs or pulls.
- These types are the most typical, but there are also two other types available:
- An inset cabinet door is mounted flush to the cabinet frame so that the entire frame is exposed. These doors make for a smooth-looking kitchen. However, if the frame shifts, the distance between the door edge and face frame will open up and become noticeable.
- A lipped overlay cabinet door has a 3/8" lip around the inside edge of the door that lays on the cabinet frame. This leaves most of the cabinet face exposed.



Interior Cabinet Materials

- The type of material used in a cabinet's construction will determine its quality. Oftentimes, cabinets are constructed of a combination of materials.
- The interior portions of the cabinet are usually made with plywood, MDF or particleboard. See the Engineered Wood department for more information on these types of wood. Generally, plywood is used for higher-end cabinetry. MDF, or medium density fibreboard, is often the best choice, as it is strong but less expensive than plywood. Particleboard is the least expensive, but not as strong as the other two choices.

Exterior Cabinet Materials

- The biggest choices customers will make when it comes to cabinet construction will be the types of materials they choose for the exterior areas of the cabinet.
- Many customers will prefer solid wood cabinet doors and facings. Oak, maple, birch, hickory and cherry woods are common woods used. Refer to the Lumber department of this course for more information on the characteristics of these types of wood.
- Wood veneer consists of a thin layer of wood glued to the cabinet material. This type can be less expensive than solid wood while offering the appearance of solid wood.
- Thermofoil consists of thin layer of PVC pressed onto a MDF core. This results in a uniform appearance with a surface that is easy to clean. However, they are more susceptible to damage from excessive heat (from ovens) and may yellow over time.
- Laminate cabinets have a thin layer of plastic adhered to the cabinet material underneath. They are typically available in a variety of designs, but may peel or chip.
- Melamine is another plastic veneer covering the cabinet material. It is durable, easy to maintain and resists staining, chipping and fading. It can also be painted.

Cabinet Finishes

- Finally, your customer will choose the type of cabinet he or she wants based on a variety of styles and finishes.
- Cabinet facings made of solid wood can be stained or painted. Some manufacturers offer a variety of finishing techniques, such as glazing, antiquing or burnishing.
- Doors can have a solid panel, a raised panel or a recessed panel.
- The doors and drawers can also reflect a variety of styles, such as arches, the Shaker styles, contemporary or classical.



Taking it to the Floor:

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: What is glazing on a cabinet?

A: This is a technique where a glaze paint is applied to the cabinet, usually after a stain has been applied, then wiped off. It adds a rustic style and aged effect desirable by some homeowners.

Q: Why doesn't the cabinet door have a knob?

A: Many cabinets come without the pull or knob hardware installed. If you want to install hardware, there is a wide selection of styles and finishes available. You may also want to install backplates, which are round or rectangular plates that sit behind the knobs and pulls and protect the cabinet surface area that is frequently scratched when grabbing the pull.

Q: I don't want to completely replace all of my cabinets, but would like to give them a facelift. What are my options?

A: You can try refacing the cabinets by replacing the front of the cabinet with new doors and facings. Or, you can apply a new finish or paint to the existing doors and facings.

Add-on Sales

- Anyone buying a cabinet will need to purchase Knobs or Pulls, as most cabinets do not come with them. If your store offers a special order service, remind the customer of the wide variety available beyond what you offer in stock.
- Suggest the customer use a Backplate with knobs and pulls, as this protects the cabinet surface.
- To install knobs, pulls and backplates, the customer will need a Screwdriver, a Drill and the proper size Drill Bits

Upselling Skills

- Drawer quality—Better quality drawers have sides and a back made of solid wood or furniture-grade plywood. The box should also be constructed using a dovetail joint.
- Hinges—Most manufacturers include hinges with the cabinet. A variety of styles and finishes may be available. Better hinges include self-closing types.
- Drawer Guides—These are installed at the factory. If the cabinets are custom, the customer can choose a better guide. Better guides have a double track drawer glide where the guide is attached to each drawer side. Some have a no-slam option that quietly closes the drawer and eliminates slamming. A self-closing feature is also available on some drawers, and better drawers also have a full extension.

Module 2: Base Cabinets

Product Knowledge:



Base Cabinet

- The base cabinet sits under the countertop and comes in a variety of dimensions.
- Several different base cabinet units of varying widths may be combined for a run of cabinets.
- This type of cabinet may have a full shelf, half shelf or pullout shelves or trays. Different manufacturers may have different options.
- It may also have drawers or a combination of a top drawer with a shelf on the bottom portion.
- It has a 4" recessed area at the bottom called the toe kick.

Common Base Cabinet Sizes



- The height of a base cabinet is a constant 34-1/2", although some manufacturers may offer a line of taller cabinets. When a 1-1/2" thick countertop is added, the total height is 36".

Cabinet widths vary with manufacturer. Usually, the standard base cabinets are made in 3" increments from 9" to 48", but not every manufacturer makes each 3" increment.

Common sizes:

- A 9" Base Cabinet usually has no drawer or shelves. It may be called a tray storage cabinet.
- A 12" to 18" Base Cabinet has a single door and drawer. The customer may need to specify if the door is "hinged right" or "hinged left."
- A 27" to 48" Base Cabinet includes a double drawer and door. The doors usually open in opposite directions and have a "style piece" in the middle. Some 27" cabinets may have a single drawer.
- A 12" to 24" Base Drawer Cabinet has a stack of three to four drawers. Common sizes are 15", 18" and 24".



Base Cabinet Naming Conventions

- Widths of a base cabinet are usually part of the name of the cabinet. For example, a B24 means a Base unit that is 24" wide.
- The name also indicates if a drawer is included. For example, a DB24 means a Drawer Base unit that is 24" wide.

Sink Base Cabinet



- A sink base cabinet sits under the portion of the countertop that holds the sink.
- Instead of drawers, it has a false drawer front, and no shelves but a door or set of doors.
- The 24" Sink Base Cabinet is a standard size for a single sink. It is often used as a cooktop cabinet.
- The 27" to 48" Sink Base Cabinet is a standard size for supporting a double sink. The 36" size is the most popular, followed by 30" and 33". Not all manufacturers offer all increments of size.

Peninsula Base



- A peninsula base is a row of cabinets that can be accessed from both sides.
- It is often used where one side of the peninsula opens into the kitchen and the other is in the dining area.
- It has a toe kick on both sides.
- The doors may open in both directions, but the drawer will only open to one side.

Common sizes:

- The 24"/27" peninsula base starter can be adjusted to occupy a wall space that is between 24" and 27". This starter would normally go in the corner where the peninsula meets the standard cabinets. It only opens from the dining room side.
- An 18" and 24" peninsula base is a single door and drawer base cabinet with doors opening from both sides.
- A 30" to 48" peninsula base has a double door and drawer cabinet.



Blind Corner Base

- Cabinets sitting near a corner must solve the problem caused by doors or drawers opening to a drawer or door at an immediate right angle. The problem is that it may not have room to clear the hardware of the opposing drawer or door.
- The blind corner base also has a cabinet box that is larger than the door, as this allows some of the corner space to be used.
- It has a wide stile (panel) on one side so that it may be slid forward up to 3" to accommodate odd lengths in runs of cabinets.
- The 36" Lazy Susan Base is another way of solving the corner cabinet problem. It includes a spinning rack or shelf that allows the entire corner to be accessed. The problem is that it does not allow for adjusting for odd dimensions in a run of base cabinets.



Vanity Sink Base Cabinet

- A vanity sink base cabinet is also known as a bathroom cabinet and holds the bathroom sink.
- It is similar to kitchen base cabinets, but the depth is 21" instead of 24".
- Smaller cabinets will not have drawers, only a false drawer front with operating doors with no shelves.
- The letter V is used in naming this type, along with the size. For example, 24V means a 24" vanity.
- The 24", 30" and 36" sink bases are the standard sizes and the smallest sizes available.

Vanity Drawer Base Cabinet

- Similar to a vanity sink base cabinet, but instead of holding a sink, it holds drawers.
- Use it with a sink base for more drawer and shelf space.
- Most common width is 15", while 12" and 18" are also common.

Taking it to the Floor:

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: What do I do about the space between the wall and the last cabinet?

A: You can buy a narrow filler to fill in that gap. The wood is stained and finished to match the other cabinets you will be buying.

Q: How do I check if my walls are square?

A: Use the 3-4-5 method. Measure along one wall for three feet (or a multiple of three—the bigger the better). Mark this point. Next, measure along the other wall from the same corner four feet (or the same multiple) and mark the spot. Then measure diagonally from mark to mark. If the diagonal is five feet (or the same multiple), the corner is square. If not, it is out of square.

Q: Can I just purchase the sink front to save money?

A: Some manufacturers offer the sink front that can be ordered separately. This consists of only the front portion of the sink base cabinet; does not include the sides, back or bottom. This makes it less expensive than the entire base unit, but by the time the other pieces are bought and attached, it is just as expensive. A sink front may also be used to reface old cabinets. While there are standard sizes, it is made so some of the face can be cut down to a smaller size.

Q: Do you have a sink base that will fit in a corner?

A: There are two basic types of sink bases that fit into a corner. The 36" to 42" diagonal sink front can use a standard sink, even though it sits in the corner. The base is cut diagonally across a corner with "wings" on either side. The 40" square sink front is an L-shaped cabinet. This type requires an L-shaped sink. Remember that while the idea of a corner sink may seem like a novelty, having a sink in the corner will make that area congested and this should be used as a last resort.

Upselling Skills

- There are many accessories available for cabinets, many of which are added on when the customer is making the cabinet order. Check the literature of the cabinet manufacturer that supplies your store. Here are some common accessories.
- A Lazy Susan makes the best use of space in a corner cabinet.
- Suggest a silverware tray for adding to a drawer.
- Pull-out shelves allow the customer to have full access to the items in the shelf. If these are not offered by the manufacturer, there are units the customer can install. Some of these units can hold waste baskets.
- A tilt-out tray is often installed at the top of the sink base, which allows for storage of small items like dish scrubbers.
- You may also be able to suggest additional design pieces to enhance the appearance of the cabinet. For base cabinets, you might suggest a Corbel for countertop overhangs. Columns and feet can add a handcrafted look to the cabinet.

Add-on Sales

- Replacing a bath vanity sink base is a project your do-it-yourselfer customers may want to tackle. If they do, here are some items they will need for the installation.
- Recommend a carpenter's level for leveling the vanity.
- Use shims for making adjustments on an uneven floor.
- Suggest a carpenter's pencil for marking lines.
- The customer will need a saber saw for making the plumbing cutout in the back of the vanity.
- Suggest a stud finder for locating a sturdy place to install the vanity.
- Ask if the customer has a drill, drill bits, and screws for attaching the vanity to the wall.
- Recommend the customer use safety glasses when using power tools.

Module 3: Wall Cabinets



Wall Cabinet

- A wall cabinet is available in a variety of heights, widths and depths.
- The standard depth is 12", although 24" is also available.
- Generally, cabinets through 24" wide are single door. Cabinets 27" and wider have a double door.
- Customer may need to specify hinged right or hinged left for some cabinets.



Common Wall Cabinet Sizes

- Here are some of the common dimensions of wall cabinets.
- Cabinets 18" high are not too common, but could be used over a utility cabinet or as part of a peninsula. If their width is 27" to 48", they may be used above a range or cooktop.
- Cabinets 15" high do not have a shelf and are often used over a refrigerator or range when they are 30" to 36" wide.
- Cabinets 12" high and 30" to 36" wide are used over a refrigerator or range, or in place of the soffit above regular wall cabinets.
- Cabinets 24" high generally have one shelf. The double door, 27" to 48" widths are most common.
- Cabinets 30" high have two shelves. They are available in single door 9" to 24" widths and double door 27" to 148" widths.

Wall Cabinet Naming Conventions

- When referring to wall cabinets during the ordering process, you will typically use four numbers plus one or more letters. The numbers list the width first, then the height, in inches.
- For example, WC2730 would be a wall corner cabinet that is 27" wide and 30" high.
- Common letter names include W for wall, SW for diagonal wall and WC for wall corner. Each manufacturer has its own code you'll need to understand.



Peninsula Wall Cabinet

- A peninsula wall cabinet is mounted over a peninsula and has doors that open from both sides.
- One popular option is to have a decorative glass in the doors facing the dining area.
- These cabinets are often shorter to allow for a better view into the other room.
- Two-door cabinets that are 24" high x 24" wide is the standard.



Corner Wall Cabinet

- Turning a corner with a wall cabinet is not as difficult as with a base unit, as there are no drawers. But the hinges may clash if they are back to back on the opposing doors.
- The blind corner wall cabinets are made with an extra-large stile so they can be adjusted up to 3". Sizes are made to cover every measurement from 24" to 39" (single door) and 42" to 51" (double door). Usually available in 24" and 30" heights.
- The diagonal wall cabinet has two shelves and is 24" wide. It makes good use of the corner, but takes away the flexibility of making adjustments in a run of wall cabinets. Also available with a Lazy Susan.
- The peninsula diagonal wall cabinet turns the corner and helps get the peninsula started. It is 24" wide and has two shelves or a Lazy Susan.



Tall Cabinets

- Also called utility cabinets, or pantry, tall cabinets are usually 84" (or 7') tall. Some may be available in a 66" height. In standard installations, the top of the highest run of cabinets is 84" from the floor.
- Standard size cabinets often have cabinet ends stained to match cabinet facings since they will be exposed. You should specify which ends need to be finished during the ordering process, as the factory may only finish the specified ends.
- Tall cabinets can also be used in the garage or other storage areas.

Taking it to the Floor:

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: How can I cover the space between the top of the cabinet and the ceiling?

A: One option is to block in the area by building a framework of 2x2 lumber and covering it with drywall. This is called a soffit. You can make this soffit extend past the cabinet depth for an overhang that is a good place for installing lighting. A second option is to leave the area open and add crown moulding along the top for a decorative effect.

Q: What should I do about the ends of the cabinet that will be exposed?

A: Most manufacturers offer a plywood backer or veneer stained to match the cabinet facing, which you can use for ends of cabinets that do not butt up against a wall. When ordering, you'll need to specify which end will be exposed, as the factory may only finish specified ends.

Q: How do I clean my wood cabinets?

A: Check the manufacturer material for cleaning recommendations. Generally, do not use oily polishes, detergents or glass cleaners on wood finishes. For high gloss finishes, never use a wax finish. Use a good furniture brand polish, and if there is a soiled area, use a damp cloth and mild dish soap. Rinse the area with a damp cloth and dry with a clean cloth.

Q: Do you have a cabinet to accommodate a stand-alone oven?

A: The oven cabinet is used to house an oven that is separate from a range. They are 27" or 33" wide. They can

Upselling Skills

Each manufacturer will have its own set of accessories available to enhance the functionality of wall cabinets, but here are a few of the typical ones.

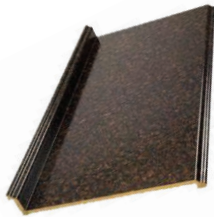
- Use plate racks display plates while making them easy to access.
- Suggest wine racks, which are handy for storing bottles.
- Suggest a flour bin or a potato bin for bulky food items.
- You can also suggest the customer install a ventilation system to properly exhaust cooking odours and excess moisture. A kitchen remodel may be the time to add or upgrade a range hood or other kitchen ventilation system.

Add-on Sales

- If you stock unfinished stock cabinets, be ready to offer the customer all of the items needed to finish wood. Refer to the Paint and Decorating portion of the Basic Training Course in Hardware Retailing for a complete overview of how to sell this project, but here are a few of the items to suggest.
- If your customer is buying a softwood cabinet, recommend paint as a finish. If he or she is buying a hardwood cabinet, suggest a stain.
- For those buying stain, suggest a polyurethane finish as a durable topcoat.
- Offer the appropriate brushes and stain pads.
- Recommend sandpaper and tack cloths for use between coats of polyurethane.
- Suggest drop cloths to protect the floor.
- Finally, always recommend rubber gloves for protecting hands from stain and polyurethane.

Chapter 3: Countertops

Product Knowledge:



Laminate

- Laminate consists of layers of paper soaked and stacked in plastic. This plastic is then glued onto an 1-1/2" particleboard base.
- A laminate countertop is durable, easy to clean and water resistant. It is also easy to install and economical.
- However, it is difficult to repair once marred and may show wear faster than other materials.
- It is available in a wide variety of colours, textures and patterns.
- Standard edge is rounded, but a beveled edge is available as a custom option. Some manufacturers may offer a no-drip edge, also known as a marine edge.
- They may include an integrated backsplash, which is a part of the countertop that extends up the wall a few inches.
- The post-form type is prefabricated and less expensive than custom laminate tops. It may be sold by the foot.



Synthetic Marble

- Synthetic marble is usually sold for use in the bathroom.
- It represents a variety of products known as cast polymers.
- Easy to clean and usually includes an integrated sink.
- Tends to look cheap and not as durable as other countertop types.
- It may also scratch and are difficult to repair.
- Types include cultured marble, cultured onyx and cultured granite.



Ceramic Tile

- Ceramic tile is an economical option for countertops since it is scratch and heat resistant.
- However, it is high maintenance as the grout lines need to be sealed regularly.
- Some tiles may react to acids of cleaning chemicals, and some may be prone to chipping.
- Ceramic tile is available in a variety of styles, sizes and colours.



Stone

- Stone countertops are usually granite, which is expensive but considered upscale. However, many other types are available, such as marble, slate, soapstone, limestone and travertine.
- Granite is available in a variety of colours and each slab tends to be unique in its grain pattern.
- Most stone needs to be sealed and sealed against stains.
- It's big advantage is that it is heatproof, water-resistant and easy to clean.
- However, it is easily stained by oil, alcohol and acids.
- It needs a strong support underneath and professional installation is recommended.



Solid Surface

- A solid surface countertop consists of a cast acrylic or polyester plastic with mineral fillers.
- It is homogenous, meaning the colour and pattern is consistent throughout the material. This means there is no veneer to chip or wear out and that blemishes and scratches are easily sanded out.
- It is also durable, nonporous, heat- and stain-resistant, and easy to clean.
- It has seamless face with seams only visible from the underside.
- It usually includes an integrated sink.
- Professional installation is recommended and is more expensive than other countertop types.
- Available in a wide variety of colours and textures.



Wood

- The most popular type of wood countertop is butcher block, which consists of wood strips glued together and planed smooth.
- It requires maintenance with mineral oil treatments.
- May scorch from heat and blacken when near a moisture source, and it is not scratch resistant.
- However, it is considered one of the more sanitary surfaces available to the kitchen, as wood has inherent properties to protect from bacteria build-up.
- Popular wood types include oak, maple, cherry, red beech, walnut, teak and mahogany.

Taking it to the Floor:

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: How often do I need to reseal my granite countertop?

A: Check the product you use to seal it. You'll need to reseal the countertop every five years, but some products may need to be reapplied every two years.

Q: How do I care for a solid surface countertop?

A: You can make a solid surface countertop last longer by not placing hot dishes directly on the surface. A strong, localized heat source can scorch or crack a solid surface countertop. Use trivets or mats under hot pans or dishes. Cleaning this type of countertop is easy; just use soap and water.

Q: Do you recommend having a backsplash?

A: Having a backsplash is a good idea. It can add a decorative feature to your kitchen but it is also very practical. A backsplash will protect the wall from splashes of water, grease and food. It also makes that surface easier to clean and more sanitary.

Upselling

- Most manufacturers offer a variety of options for profiles along the edge of the countertop. Bevels, Ogees and Bullnose are common profiles.
- Customers purchasing a solid surface countertop can purchase an integrated sink that is seamlessly fused to the countertop material.

Add-on Sales

- If a customer is replacing a countertop, ask if they have considered replacing their sink as well. Depending on the type of countertop material they are purchasing, you can show them some a higher-end sink, such as an under-counter mount type.
- Suggest it may also be time to replace the faucet to complete the new and fresh look of the kitchen.
- Ask the customer if he or she has considered adding a backsplash to the wall behind the new countertop. Tile is one of the most popular items used for a backsplash. You can encourage the customer that this is a project accessible to most do it yourselves.
- A customer purchasing a laminate countertop may want to install it. Here are some of the items needed for installation.
- Recommend a saber saw for cutting the opening for the sink. The customer will also need a drill and drill bit for cutting a starter hole for the saber saw.
- Suggest a compass for drawing the lines needed to fit the countertop against an irregular wall.
- Suggest belt sander for sanding down any areas needed to fit the countertop against the wall.
- If the countertop will have a miter joint, recommend water-resistant glue for joining the two pieces.
- Recommend silicone caulk for sealing the joint between the wall and the countertop.
- For customers who must cut their own countertop to fit, suggest an end-cap kit to cover any exposed end.