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## REAL ESTATE NEWS

Published Sunday February 26, 2012

### No more cooking chaos

By Jeff Schnauer  
CTW FEATURES



KRAFTMAID

In-drawer butcher blocks provide flexible counter space.

storage should accommodate all the big and little things found in the kitchen — from tiny teaspoons to a jumbo-sized wok. It should adapt to the ever-changing needs of the family that uses it.

KraftMaid, a custom cabinet company based in Ann Arbor, Mich., recently commissioned a study focused on generational differences in kitchen use that found some common themes.

"We found that homeowners want more storage in a clean design style," said Sarah Reep, the company's director of design relation and education.

Consumers are also affected by the economy.

"Families have been cutting back budgets for dining out, which makes the kitchen more important than it has ever been," Reep said. "And because I think consumers will be staying in their homes, they're actually going to be looking at remodeling so they can stay comfortable."

Increasingly, people are looking for pragmatic storage solutions that are accessible, safe and aesthetically pleasing.

#### Pulling off pull-outs

Across the board, experts recommend pull-out cabinets for spaces big and small, high and low. Sember recommends slim pull-out cabinets that save space but can hold kitchen

Kitchens are the family's hub of activity. Get yours organized to keep life from grinding to a halt.

If the kitchen is the most-used room in the house, doesn't it make sense that it should be the most organized? Yet many kitchens exist in an organizational no man's land, where a mish-mash of storage functions often create more questions than answers: such as, "Hey, where's the can opener?"

If there's a key to making kitchens more organized, it might come in one word: versatility.

In the book "The Organized Kitchen" (Adams Media, 2012), Clarence, N.Y.-based author Brette Sember writes that organizing a kitchen can save time, money and sanity.

"I like storage that can be versatile," she said. That means storage should accommodate all the big and little things found in the kitchen — from tiny teaspoons to a jumbo-sized wok. It should adapt to the ever-changing needs of the family that uses it.



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## No more cooking chaos - Omaha.com

Small pull-out cabinets that save space but can hold kitchen necessities.

"This kind of storage space works for spices, medications, cooking oils, vinegars, flavored salts and much more," she said.

Alison Victoria, interior designer and host of DIY Network's "Kitchen Crashers," agrees. The pull-out construction makes it easier to reach items stored at the back of the cabinet.

"Pull-out spice drawers are essential for any kitchen," Victoria said. "I was so sick of trying to dig and find things in my upper cabinets and this was a quick fix."

Reep said KraftMaid's tiered pan-and-lid storage pullout is popular for keeping the bulky items organized and easy to retrieve.

"It's very tidy," Reep said. "Sometimes kitchens aren't really large and using your space vertically is a way to use more of the cabinet effectively."

#### Get attached

It helps to condense a kitchen by choosing storage products that attach and fit easily together. Sember suggests using in-drawer butcher blocks or butcher blocks that attach to the side of a cabinet to keep parts of the counter space stashed away.

She also recommends baskets/containers that clip onto the front of pantry shelf and glass food storage containers designed to fit together or stack.

Another smart solution is to use food storage containers designed to hold specific items, Sember said. Customized food storage has become steadily more popular in recent years, both for its usefulness and typically colorful presentation.

#### All in the family

If the kitchen is the hub of family activity, then it must accommodate the needs of everyone, including the young and the old.

"When it comes to elderly clients, I make sure that everything is at arm's length," Victoria said. "Locating all essential appliances in a seamless layout is what matters most. Center islands for prep with the sink and fridge on the left and right with the stove behind is ideal."

As for appliances, Victoria recommends side-by-side refrigerators with water and ice dispensers, "so (the clients) aren't bending over to find the things they need."

For children, Sember said, "the first consideration is safety. The second consideration is making a kitchen child-friendly with the addition of a box of children's cookware, stepstool and child-appropriate cooking activities."

Safety-proofing all cabinets and making sure cutlery and any other dangerous utensils are out of reach is essential, Victoria said.

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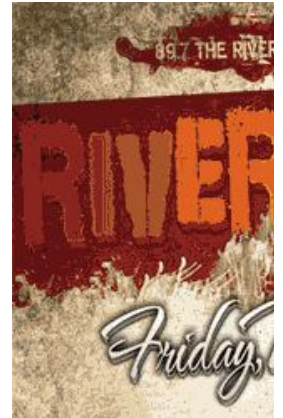


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