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Update your Kitchen with Confidence

Updating Your Kitchen Cabinets

Read our kitchen remodeling guide and order everything you need online to customize your kitchen!

Kitchen Updating Pays Off

Updating a kitchen can return a staggering 75 – 130 percent of your invested capital. That's a great motive for working on your own kitchen, and you can save a bundle by doing it yourself. Half of all kitchen updates nationwide, in fact, are do-it-yourself jobs. It can be as simple as adding new hardware or up-to-date organizational products. So, the chore isn't out of reach for woodworkers and handy- men and women with basic carpentry or woodworking skills. Hiring a professional can be expensive. A do-it-yourself job can cut costs by 50 percent or more! So, aside from your family's ability to enjoy a newly refurbished kitchen and pleasing the cook in the family (a nice way to stay well fed and healthy!), a do-it-yourself kitchen update can save a lot of hard earned cash.

Navigational Overview of These Articles

Update or Replace Your Cabinets

Replacing Your Cabinets
- Making New Cabinets
- Buying New Cabinets

Updating Your Cabinets
- Painting
- Refinishing
- Refacing

Knobs and Pulls
Hinges
Accessories

This series of articles is meant as a decision-guide that will help you determine the best method to update your kitchen cabinets, then give you useful information on how to do it. You can navigate starting at the first article, making the appropriate choices as you go, or you can jump right to the article you want using the links above.

»»» Goto the first article:

Should I Update My Cabinets or Replace Them?

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Update your Kitchen with Confidence

Should I Update or Replace My Kitchen Cabinets?

First Step: Assessing Your Update Needs

Updating your kitchen can be easy, and Rockler wants to help make it a fun and pleasurable experience for you. The vast majority of today's homeowners can update their kitchens with a few simple procedures such as adding some hinges and hardware, new cabinet doors and drawer fronts, or by refacing existing cabinetry and casework. So, before you begin, it's a good idea to decide on the scope and magnitude of the update you want. There's no sense in doing a complete makeover when a few dollars and a couple of hours can accomplish what you want. We'll help you through all the steps, from adding new knobs and pulls, to adding new doors and drawers, to refacing your existing cabinetry.

Replace Your Cabinets or Update Them?

Functionality should dictate the form of your kitchen. If you want to make changes or improvements in the *functionality* of your kitchen space, or change the location of your cabinetry, then replacing it may be preferable. If you're happy with the existing layout and workability of your kitchen, updating your current cabinetry and adding some functional accessories is better. (Don't worry or fret, updating your current cabinetry can transform your kitchen into a showcase. You can reface your cabinets, for example, and everyone will believe that you've installed completely new ones!)

Making your own cabinetry is an alternative but it is a major undertaking. Although the project can be a rewarding experience for the intermediate or advanced woodworker or handy –man or woman (we don't recommend this project for the beginner), it can be disruptive to family lifestyle. Even the best-planned construction project can obstruct the normal use of your kitchen for 6 months or more. Testy and unfavorable conditions even for the tolerant and patient kitchen boss. Buying ready-made or prefabricated cabinetry can be just as challenging.

Here are some of the benefits to updating your cabinetry versus replacing it:

- Old cabinets are often of better quality construction than those made by today's standards. (That's unless you make them yourself, of course.)
- You can save a substantial amount by *Updating Your Cabinetry*.

- Your existing cabinetry is already installed, leveled, plumbed, and operational. These can be difficult conditions to duplicate in the labor-intensive chore of installing new cabinets.
- Installing new cabinetry will entail the dismantling of your existing kitchen. That will require that you set up a temporary kitchen facility in another part of your home. Utilities may need to be shut off completely.
- Dismantling existing cabinetry can cause serious damage to existing fixtures, walls, electrical systems, and plumbing.
- You can save the hidden costs of installation, delivery, taxes, et cetera by *Updating Your Cabinetry* versus installing new.

»»» Read on for more useful information on these topics:

Updating Your Cabinetry

(With information on *Painting*, *Refacing*, or *Refinishing Your Cabinetry*.)

New Cabinetry

(With information on *Buying Ready-Made* or *Making Your Own Cabinetry*.)

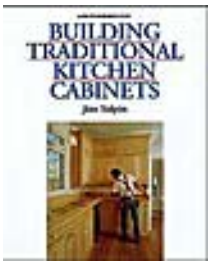
Your Safety

Rockler Woodworking and Hardware cares about you. Please plan and arrange for your safety. Adequate eye and ear protection, stable work areas, good lighting, and proper lifting equipment will keep you health and happy. Don't overload electrical outlets, and call a professional when you need one. It's better to be healthy, happy, and humble, than it is to spend your weekend in an emergency room. See a list of Safety Products available from Rockler.

Additional Resources

The Kitchen Idea Book -- Planning the kitchen of your new house or a remodel of your old kitchen?

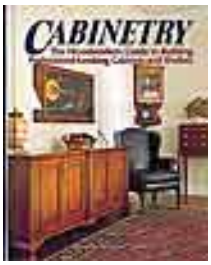
Refacing Cabinets -- Your only source for making an old kitchen into a stunning new one by refacing the cabinets with real wood or plastic laminate.



Building Traditional Kitchen Cabinets -- Learn how to build premium cabinetry of superior quality in your own shop..

Making Kitchen Cabinets -- Kitchen designer and cabinetmaker Paul Levine shows how to make Eurostyle kitchen cabinets that are better. Available in Book and Video!

Build Your Own Kitchen Cabinets -- Whether you are remodeling or starting from scratch, this book is an indispensable guide for planning, building and installing kitchen cabinets.



Cabinetry -- The Woodworkers Guide to Building Professional-Looking Cabinets and Shelves

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Update your Kitchen with Confidence

New Cabinetry

Making New Cabinets or Buying Ready Made

If installing new cabinetry is your choice, you must decide whether to buy ready-made or to make your own.

Making New Cabinets

If making new cabinetry is an option for you, Rockler has a full range of cabinetry building supplies from drawer building supplies to screws and fasteners to custom door and drawer programs to help you complete the project. Making new cabinetry is a rewarding and fruitful experience for woodworkers, but it can be a challenging and complicated project. It can

elevate the pride of home ownership to heavenly new levels, or end in nightmarish disaster. It is not a project for the beginning woodworker and is challenging enough to tax even the intermediate woodworker or handy- man or woman's skills and tool availability. See our article on *Making New Cabinets* for more information.

Buying Ready Made Cabinets

If you are not prepared for the challenges and expense of making your own cabinetry, you'll want to consider buying ready-made. Most manufacturers offer several quality grades and lines of cabinetry that are easy to maintain. Modern prefabricated cabinets are engineered to be storage-intensive and you can choose from dozens of storage options, including slide-out shelves, bins, and drawers to fit your specific needs. You can further embellish ready-made cabinetry by adding your own crown or dentil moldings or other decorative elements. (See Accessories below.) If purchasing ready-made cabinetry is your choice, there are some very important considerations you'll want to keep in mind. So that you can make your new cabinetry purchase with informed confidence, see our article on *Buying New Cabinets* .

New Hardware

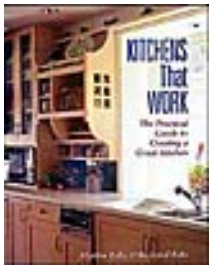
Whether you make your own new cabinetry or buy ready-made, it's the addition of unique hardware - knobs, pulls, hinges, and accessories - that is the secret to achieving a stunning appearance. Rockler has an almost unlimited number of styles available to fit your needs. The addition of sparkling new hardware adds the glow that will make your new kitchen cabinetry shimmer. You'll be amazed at the dramatic new presentation of your newly installed casework. See our *Knobs and Pulls* page for some sensational hardware options for your new cabinets. Or see our page on *Hinges* for the latest in hinge technology.

Accessories

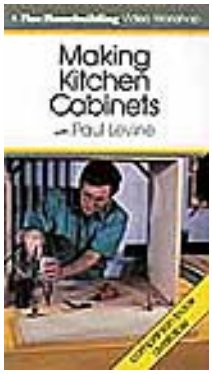
Significantly enhance the look of your new cabinetry by adding classy and easy to install accessories and architectural moldings from Rockler's wide selection of trimmings. Friends and family will be astonished at the sensational appearance that you can create on your new cabinetry with only a few feet of crown molding or dentil molding. If a more exciting presentation is your preference, consider split rope topper molding, fluted and beaded molding with rosettes, or other carvings. And there are lots of awesome accessories to choose from, including pantry slides, corner shelves, drawer organizers, pullout trash bins, and appliance garages. The proper accessories can add a touch of elegance. See our *Accessories* page for the latest trends.

Books and Resources

The Kitchen Idea Book -- Planning the kitchen of your new house or a remodel of your old kitchen?



Kitchens That Work -- From the publishers of Fine Woodworking magazine...



Making Kitchen Cabinets -- Watching Paul Levine will convince you that creating a beautiful kitchen is as easy as building one simple

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Update your Kitchen with Confidence

Updating Your Cabinetry

Updating Options

While updating your cabinetry can be as simple as adding new knobs, pulls, and hinges, or adding organizational accessories such as appliance garages and pullout storage bins, it usually involves resurfacing them as well. If you've decided to update your old cabinets instead of buying new ones or making your own, you have three options:

1. Painting your cabinets
2. Refinishing your cabinets
3. Refacing your cabinets

Additionally, you'll probably want to update your hardware--handles, hinges, knobs, pulls, etc., and consider adding some organizational and decorative accessories. If your existing cabinet finish is in good shape, new hardware may be all you need to give your kitchen a fresh new look!

»»» Option 1: Painting

It's easy to update a dreary and dim kitchen by merely painting your old cabinets and updating your hardware. Like all painting projects, good preparation work is the key to success. If you're keeping your existing doors, make sure that the new hinges you order will work properly with your cabinet doors. This is a swift and simple update, and requires no construction or other major undertaking. Patience is the key to success. If you're operating on a limited budget, this could be a good option for you. The money you save can be put to good use on new hardware, accessories, and other niceties. For step by step instruction, see our article on *Painting Your Cabinets* .

»»» Option 2: Refinishing Your Cabinets

If you want to maintain the natural wood appearance of your old kitchen cabinets with stain or finish, you will need to strip, restain and refinish them entirely. A wearisome process for sure. To save a lot of time and effort, consider replacing your door and drawer fronts and

then refinishing just your cabinet faces to match. See our article on *Refinishing Your Cabinets* for more advice and how-to instructions.

»»» Option 3: Refacing Your Cabinets

Refacing typically involves replacing your cabinet doors and drawer fronts, and refacing your cabinet faces with veneer, solid wood, or plastic laminate to match. It's easier than you may think and will produce a completely new look. Best of all, refacing doesn't entail any labor intensive or expensive changes to your plumbing, electricity, ceilings, or fans. The entire job can be completed in a few days or weekends, depending upon the size of your kitchen and the types of hardware and accessories you add. With the right combination, you can create a striking new kitchen that. s customized to your own needs and specifications. And, you can add thousands of dollars to the value of your home in the process. For more information, see our article on *Refacing Your Cabinets* .

Hardware

Adding new hardware, knobs, pulls, hinges, and accessories is the secret to achieving a stunning appearance to your updated cabinetry, regardless of the option you choose. An almost unlimited number of styles are available to fit your needs. The addition of sparkling new hardware adds the glow that will make your kitchen shine brightly. You'll be amazed at the dramatic new presentation of your newly refurbished kitchen. The style of hinge you choose, however, is dependent upon the style of cabinet you own, so you'll want to familiarize yourself with hinge options before proceeding .

»»Read About Choosing Your Hinges

»»Read About Knobs and Pulls

Accessories

Significantly enhance the look of your refinished (or current) cabinetry by adding classy and easy to install accessories and architectural moldings. Friends and family will be astonished at the sensational appearance that you can create in your kitchen with only a few feet of crown molding or dentil molding. If a more exciting presentation is your preference, consider split rope topper molding, fluted and beaded molding with rosettes, or other carvings. And there are lots of awesome accessories to choose from, including pantry slides, corner shelves, drawer organizers, pullout trash bins, and appliance garages. The proper accessories can add a touch of elegance to an otherwise plain and common kitchen space. See our *Accessories* page for the latest trends.

Remember: Refinishing your kitchen is not a time to be too frugal or thrifty. Pamper yourself, because you can't put a price on comfort.

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Update your Kitchen with Confidence

Making Your Own Cabinetry

Cabinetmaker Beware

Although making your own cabinetry can be rewarding and fruitful, it is an advanced project that is beyond the scope of this series of articles. It is a time consuming and challenging operation that can elevate the pride of home ownership to heavenly new levels, or end in nightmarish disaster. It is not a project for the beginning woodworker and is challenging enough to tax even the intermediate woodworker or handy- man or woman's skills and tool availability. Because of its complexity, Rockler recommends one of the *Updating Your Cabinetry* options that is listed in this series of articles as a time and money saving alternative. Nonetheless, in this article we'll take a quick look at the basic considerations for making your own cabinetry.

Make an Assessment

"Know yourself before deciding to install your own kitchen," recommends Kitchen Man of kitchenman.com. "Are you all thumbs? Do you lack visual acuity? Are you impatient?" they ask. Making an accurate assessment of your skills and tool availability is an important prerequisite to making your own cabinetry. If you're a dedicated Rockler woodworker and confidant in your skills, you may decide to move ahead with this formidable and ambitious project. You can make your own cabinets from scratch, including your doors, drawers and drawer fronts, or you could simplify the job with the help of Rockler's custom door, drawer and drawer front program . An affordable option that can save you lots of time, effort, and money. The option of painting, refinishing or refacing your cabinetry may also be a great alternative for rejuvenating your existing cabinetry and casework.

Hinges

Before starting your new cabinetry construction project, you'll want to make yourself "hinge wise" by reading our page on *Hinges*. Adding new hardware and hinges is the secret to spectacular new cabinetry. The style of hinge you choose, however, is dependent upon the type and style of cabinet you construct. To fit your exact need, Rockler Woodworking and Hardware has a large and dynamic selection of styles from which to choose. Rockler can help you add a dazzling and impressive touch to your newly built kitchen cabinetry. To make hinge installation easy, check out our exclusive Jig It Hinge Mortising System, self-centering drill bits, and drill guides .

Knobs & Pulls

New door and drawer opening hardware puts a stylish exclamation on your home crafted cabinetry. Rockler has an exciting array of knobs and pulls available to suite every style and whim, from traditional to Shaker to Euro-style, decorator or Restoration. For the distinguished look that can only come from custom crafted handiwork, consider adding carved hardwood pulls or antique finished pulls from Rockler's Premier Collection. Or perhaps some Ivy Green Leaf pulls and Knobs from Rockler's special designer collection. Now is the time to cut loose and have some fun. There are dozens of additional types and styles available including:

Wooden Knobs & Pulls

Ceramic Knobs & Pulls

Pewter Knobs & Pulls

Glass Knobs & Pulls

Bin Pulls

Bail Pulls

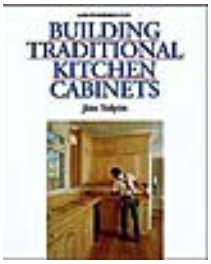
Designer Knobs & Pulls

See our page on *Knobs and Pulls* for complete information.

Accessories

You'll want to review our page on *Accessories* to check out Rockler's full line of innovative systems that can turn your kitchen into a designer showcase. Making your own cabinetry offers a perfect opportunity to customize your kitchen with interesting and up-to-date accessories. Whether it's shelving accessories, low-voltage under cabinet lighting systems, pantry organizers, tambour appliance garages, lazy susans, kitchen rail systems, or reverse-a-racks, all can be perfect solutions to old storage problems. Hanging racks, glass molding, or plate rack dowels can create storage from otherwise useless space. Whether it's the addition of split rope topper molding, lattice panels, brass grilles or glass etchings, you can make your custom kitchen a place of distinction and efficiency with simple and easy to install extras. Consider what can be accomplished with just a few feet of wineglass molding, fluted rosettes, or bun feet added to your custom made cabinetry. Over sink trays, shelf lift mechanisms, and pullout trash bins can add convenience and organization to please the most discriminating kitchen boss.

Books and Resources

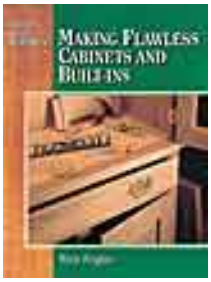


Building Traditional Kitchen Cabinets -- Learn how to build premium cabinetry of superior quality in your own shop..

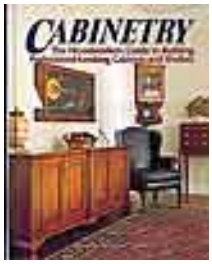
Making Kitchen Cabinets -- Kitchen designer and cabinetmaker Paul Levine shows how to make Eurostyle kitchen cabinets that are better

Build Your Own Kitchen Cabinets -- Whether you are remodeling or starting from scratch, this book is an indispensable guide for planning, building and installing kitchen cabinets.

Building Your Own Kitchen Cabinets -- " For those who want to build shier own kitchen cabinets or storage cabinets of any kind, this ...book is an excellent guide" —The New York Times



Making Flawless Cabinets and Built-Ins -- A truly user-friendly source of cabinet-making information.



Cabinetry -- The Woodworkers Guide to Building Professional-Looking Cabinets and Shelves

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Update your Kitchen with Confidence

Buying Ready Made Cabinetry

New Cabinetry Assessment

Before purchasing ready-made cabinets for your kitchen, make a thorough assessment of your replacement needs. Determine your preference for type and style and the quality of the cabinets you desire. Cabinets are heavily used storage spaces that are going to take a lot of abuse so they'll need to be durable. You'll pay much more for solid wood cabinets or for high-quality construction details like dovetailed drawers, adjustable hinges, or ball bearing drawer guides. The purchase of new cabinetry is a sizeable investment. To save money, we recommend that you consider *Updating Your Cabinetry* versus buying new. Rockler has many surprisingly affordable options available to reface, refinish, or paint your existing cabinetry for an all new look. We also have a fine assortment of affordable hinges,knobs and pulls, and otheraccessories for complimenting your ready-made cabinetry.

Available Material Choices

Sheet Products

Most newly constructed cabinets are made from particleboard or other engineered sheet products such as strawboard or medium density fiberboard (MDF). Surfaces may be covered with high-pressure laminates, melamine, or paint. Particleboard, strawboard, or MDF is more economical but is prone to water damage and structural weakness. When shopping for new cabinetry, make sure that laminates are of sufficient quality that they will remain well adhered to their surfaces. Cheaply constructed cabinets will deteriorate quickly in a kitchen application where there is lots of heat and moisture.

Plywood

Hardwood plywood is often used in the construction of higher quality cabinetry but will require more of an investment. Plywood surfaces are covered with high-pressure laminates, Rigid Thermo Foil (RTF), or wood veneers. Door frames and drawer fronts are usually matching solid wood. They are more durable than cabinets made from sheet products.

Solid Wood

Cabinets made of solid lumber—hardwoods such as cherry, maple, ash, oak, or elm, are durable and long lasting, but will require a significantly larger out-of-pocket expense.

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On the World Wide Web

www.homestore.com/Home_Improvement/remodeling/kitchens/4Guide/4aCabinets4.asp

www.homeproject.com (See How to Choose Kitchen Cabinets)

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Update your Kitchen with Confidence

Updating Your Cabinetry

Updating Options

While updating your cabinetry can be as simple as adding new knobs, pulls, and hinges, or adding organizational accessories such as appliance garages and pullout storage bins, it usually involves resurfacing them as well. If you've decided to update your old cabinets instead of buying new ones or making your own, you have three options:

1. Painting your cabinets
2. Refinishing your cabinets
3. Refacing your cabinets

Additionally, you'll probably want to update your hardware--handles, hinges, knobs, pulls, etc., and consider adding some organizational and decorative accessories. If your existing cabinet finish is in good shape, new hardware may be all you need to give your kitchen a fresh new look!

»»» Option 1: Painting

It's easy to update a dreary and dim kitchen by merely painting your old cabinets and updating your hardware. Like all painting projects, good preparation work is the key to success. If you're keeping your existing doors, make sure that the new hinges you order will work properly with your cabinet doors. This is a swift and simple update, and requires no construction or other major undertaking. Patience is the key to success. If you're operating on a limited budget, this could be a good option for you. The money you save can be put to good use on new hardware, accessories, and other niceties. For step by step instruction, see our article on *Painting Your Cabinets* .

»»» Option 2: Refinishing Your Cabinets

If you want to maintain the natural wood appearance of your old kitchen cabinets with stain or finish, you will need to strip, restain and refinish them entirely. A wearisome process for sure. To save a lot of time and effort, consider replacing your door and drawer fronts and

then refinishing just your cabinet faces to match. See our article on *Refinishing Your Cabinets* for more advice and how-to instructions.

»»» Option 3: Refacing Your Cabinets

Refacing typically involves replacing your cabinet doors and drawer fronts, and refacing your cabinet faces with veneer, solid wood, or plastic laminate to match. It's easier than you may think and will produce a completely new look. Best of all, refacing doesn't entail any labor intensive or expensive changes to your plumbing, electricity, ceilings, or fans. The entire job can be completed in a few days or weekends, depending upon the size of your kitchen and the types of hardware and accessories you add. With the right combination, you can create a striking new kitchen that. s customized to your own needs and specifications. And, you can add thousands of dollars to the value of your home in the process. For more information, see our article on *Refacing Your Cabinets* .

Hardware

Adding new hardware, knobs, pulls, hinges, and accessories is the secret to achieving a stunning appearance to your updated cabinetry, regardless of the option you choose. An almost unlimited number of styles are available to fit your needs. The addition of sparkling new hardware adds the glow that will make your kitchen shine brightly. You'll be amazed at the dramatic new presentation of your newly refurbished kitchen. The style of hinge you choose, however, is dependent upon the style of cabinet you own, so you'll want to familiarize yourself with hinge options before proceeding .

»»Read About Choosing Your Hinges

»»Read About Knobs and Pulls

Accessories

Significantly enhance the look of your refinished (or current) cabinetry by adding classy and easy to install accessories and architectural moldings. Friends and family will be astonished at the sensational appearance that you can create in your kitchen with only a few feet of crown molding or dentil molding. If a more exciting presentation is your preference, consider split rope topper molding, fluted and beaded molding with rosettes, or other carvings. And there are lots of awesome accessories to choose from, including pantry slides, corner shelves, drawer organizers, pullout trash bins, and appliance garages. The proper accessories can add a touch of elegance to an otherwise plain and common kitchen space. See our *Accessories* page for the latest trends.

Remember: Refinishing your kitchen is not a time to be too frugal or thrifty. Pamper yourself, because you can't put a price on comfort.

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Update your Kitchen with Confidence

Painting Your Cabinets

A Swift and Simple Update

Update a dreary and dim kitchen by giving it new color with a coat of paint. It's a swift and simple solution that requires no construction or other major undertaking. a wonderful alternative to buying new cabinetry.

Select Your Painting Alternative

You can paint your existing doors and drawer fronts in addition to your cabinet surfaces and casework, or buy them new through Rockler's door and drawer program. Replacing your cabinet doors and drawer fronts enables you to update the style of your cabinets, and save a significant amount of time in the process. You'll need to remove the old doors and drawers to paint them anyway. Rockler offers a wide variety of ready-to-paint styles to choose from. Or, you may want to consider Rigid Thermo Foil (RTF) doors and drawer fronts for a durable white matte finish without painting. Simply determine the size, style, and edge option of the door and drawer fronts you need for a striking new look. New hardware will add the polish of a professional kitchen update.

Choose Your Paint

You will need to consider three paint type alternatives. They are:

1. Epoxy paint
2. Oil-based paint
3. Acrylic water-based paint

Epoxy

Epoxy paints are the hardest form of paint finish, but are usually spayed on. Unless you're willing to spend a lot of time preparing adjacent areas from over spray, we recommend another alternative.

Acrylic Water-based

Acrylic water-based paints. latex paints, offer ease of use and clean up with soap and water, but take up to 7 days to cure. They do not adhere well to previously painted or

finished cabinetry so an oil-based primer must be used first. The final finish is not as hard as provided by an oil-based paint.

Oil-based Paint

Oil-based paints produce a beautiful luster and dry in a relatively short time. They require more intensive clean up (petroleum solvents), but reach final curing hardness within 48 hours.

The Painting Process

Preparation is the key to a successful paint job. It's easy when you observe the following 6 steps.

Step #1: Remove door and drawer hardware and take all doors off their hinges.

Step #2: Wash and degrease all surfaces to be painted with a trisodium phosphate (TSP) cleaner to remove dirt and grime from old surfaces. (Make sure to wear rubber gloves and safety glasses).

Step#3: Lightly sand all cabinets with 120-grit sandpaper to roughen their surfaces, and wipe with tack cloth . This will assure the adherence of a new paint covering to the old surfaces.

Step#4: Prime all exterior surfaces using a high quality paintbrush or roller and allow the primer to dry thoroughly. Use a second coat if necessary to cover original finish or stains.

Step#5: Apply two coats of a high-quality paint and allow it to dry for 24 hours before reassembling components. Be sure to sand between coats with 220-grit sandpaper to remove dust nibs and/or drip marks.

Step#6: Reassemble doors and drawers, and install new hardware . «««« Back to Updating Options

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Update your Kitchen with Confidence

Refinishing Your Cabinetry

A Labor Intensive Procedure

Although the results of a new finish can be quite dramatic, refinishing your cabinets is a time consuming, complicated and labor-intensive process. To do the job properly you must strip, bleach, sand or scrape, and restain your existing cabinet surfaces before adding a new top coat or varnish. You must also know the species of wood that you are refinishing before beginning. This can be further complicated by the fact that your kitchen cabinetry could be made of several differing types of wood species. Although it is possible to restain and refinish your cabinetry in a finish darker than its original hue, it is nearly impossible to refinish them in a lighter one. But, if you own high-quality natural wood cabinets that require updating, and you want to maintain their natural wood appearance, you may decide to refinish them with new stain and top coating.

Select Your Refinishing Alternative

You can refinish all your existing cabinet surfaces, including your doors and drawers, or buy new, ready-to-finish doors and drawers and stain them to match your restained casework. Rockler recommends buying new doors and drawer fronts for several reasons. The harsh chemical strippers used to remove old finish can deteriorate glue and cause panel doors and other glued pieces to come undone. Edge treatments and intricate surfaces can be extremely difficult to strip and prepare for new stain and finish. Finish coats can also take an inordinate amount of time to dry, further complicating the refinishing process. Investing in new doors and drawer fronts is a solution that can save lots of time, money, and aggravation. Rockler's custom door and drawer front programs offer a wide selection of affordable, ready-to-finish styles from which to choose. Simply determine the size, style, and edge option of the door and drawer fronts you need. You can either match the style of your existing doors and drawer fronts, or chose a new one for an exciting new look. New hardware will add the refinement of a professional kitchen update.

Choose Your New Finish

To begin your refinishing project, you will need to determine what type of stain and finish you will use to beautify and protect your cabinetry. There are many types of finishes available. Since the science of finish work is beyond the scope of this series of articles, Rockler recommends that you consult with a professional finish retailer or consultant.

The Refinishing Process

Thorough preparation is the key to a successful refinishing job. Be sure to work in an empty and well-ventilated room, and follow the refinishing guidelines below.

Step by Step Instructions

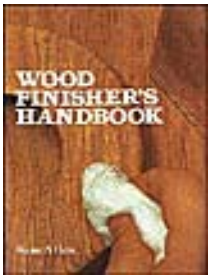
1. Remove door and drawer hardware, and take all doors off their hinges.
2. Remove existing finish and stain from all surfaces by sanding, scraping with a cabinet scraper, or using a chemical remover. When using chemical strippers, follow manufacturer. s directions carefully and use necessary safety precautions.
3. If necessary, bleach old stain from existing wood surfaces. When using bleaching agents, follow manufacturer's directions carefully and use necessary safety precautions.
4. Sand or scrape existing wood surfaces smooth to prepare them for new stain. A carbide scraper or cabinet scraper works well.
5. Remove all dust from cabinet surfaces to prepare for staining and finishing.
6. Stain the surfaces of your cabinetry and casework. When using stain, follow the manufacturer. s directions carefully.
7. Apply an oil, varnish, or polyurethane varnish finish according to the manufacturer's specifications.

«««« Back to Updating Options

Books and Resources

Furniture Restoration and Repair for Beginners -- " ...a thorough primer on restoration and refinishing techniques...a good learning ground for beginning woodworkers." --Woodshop News.

Finishing and Refinishing -- How can woodworkers control the shine of varnish on wood



Wood Finisher's Handbook -- Indispensable guide to the best techniques.

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Update your Kitchen with Confidence

Refacing Your Cabinetry

A Simple Job

Refacing your cabinetry typically involves the replacement of doors and drawer fronts and the resurfacing of your cabinet faces to match. It's a simple process that can breathe a fresh new life into tired, old and outdated kitchens. Rockler's cabinet refacing program makes refacing a quick and simple job with the following three-step method.

Before You Begin!

Choose your hinges before you order or make new doors for your cabinets. The style of hinge that you choose will determine the size of doors you will need. Please read our article on hinges before proceeding.

Step #1: Choose Your New Door, Drawer Fronts & End Panels

Update your cabinetry by adding doors and drawer fronts that match the fit and finish of your existing cabinetry. You can make your own doors and drawer fronts, or have them custom-made through Rockler's Door and Drawer program. Old, broken down drawers can also be replaced entirely. With plenty of styles to choose from, buying them ready-made from Rockler's custom door and drawer program is an affordable alternative that can save lots of time and energy. If new doors and drawer fronts alone won't complete the job to your satisfaction, the option of refacing your existing surfaces' end panels and face frames is a great way to coordinate existing casework with your new doors and drawer fronts.

Note: *Drawers that are in good condition may need only to have their drawer slides replaced. If the replacement of broken drawer slides is necessary, see Rockler's selection of Drawer Slides.*

Step #2: Choose Your Refacing Alternative

Once you've selected your new door and drawer front styles, you can decide on a refacing alternative to match. Veneer and wood surfaces or Rigid Thermo Foil (RTF) laminate are

Rockler's suggested refacing methods. For the look and feel of a wood surface, Rockler recommends Pressure Sensitive Adhesive (PSA) wood veneer and 3/16" plywood end panels. Door and drawer fronts of solid wood or matching PSA veneers are available in red oak, cherry, maple, ash, and hickory. Or, a matte white finish is also available in a durable RTF laminate on a solid MDF core. The advantages of each are listed below.

Advantages of Wood

Wood offers the beauty, elegance, depth and texture that can only come from a natural wooden surface. Wood covering can be easily installed with a Pressure Sensitive Adhesive (PSA) wood veneer that perfectly matches your doors and drawer fronts. PSA Veneers are self-adhering and offer "peel and stick" simplicity. Clean up goes fast because there are no messy glues or cements required. For extra durability around corners, solid wood sheets are available. However, solid wood will require more work and expense. Plywood panel doors are a select grade with solid wood frames for a durable and lasting emplacement.

Advantages of RTF

RTF technology is a flexible and durable vinyl foil laminate that is pressure molded over a lasting substrate. A state-of-the-art laminating process creates a surface that is many times more rugged and hardier than paint or finish. It can be molded into a wide range of styles such as raised panel or cathedral arches. This is an excellent alternative for a durable and washable matte finish.

Step #3: The Refacing Process

Once you've completed the most difficult part of the project - that is, choosing the style of replacement doors and drawers want, measuring them and placing an order, the installation process can begin. See our informative **guide to refacing** for complete installation instructions.

»»» Goto Rockler Refacing Guide

Books and Resources

Refacing Cabinets -- Your only source for making an old kitchen into a stunning new one by refacing the cabinets with real wood or plastic laminate.

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Update your Kitchen with Confidence

Knobs & Pulls

Knobs and Pulls Make the Difference

New door and drawer opening hardware can put a stylish emphasis on your updated kitchen cabinetry. It's astonishing what can be accomplished with the simplest knob or pull. Rockler has an outstanding selection of Knobs and Pulls in many different styles to polish off your updated cabinetry.

Choose a Style

Before you can add some hardware pizzazz to your kitchen, you'll need to choose the style of knobs or pulls you prefer. Rockler has an exciting array available to suit every style of cabinetry from traditional to Shaker to Euro-style to Restoration. For a distinguished look, consider adding carved hardwood pulls, or antique finished pulls from Rockler's Premier Collection. Or perhaps Ivy Leaf Green Pulls from Rockler's designer collection. Now is the time to have some real fun. There are plenty of other styles and types available. See a complete list .

Knobs, Pulls, or Both?

Although it's generally a good idea to stick to one theme or style - designer, restoration, decorator, etc., there are no hard and fast rules dictating the design and usage of kitchen hardware. Personal preference should dictate your choice. If mixing a selection of knobs and pulls is what pleases you, by all means go for it. You're going to use your cupboards, cabinets, and drawers a lot so you might as well be happy with what you see.

Make a List

Determine your hardware requirements. Make a list to get an accurate count of your needs. There's nothing more irritating than not having enough on hand to complete the job. Take an accurate count and double check it. It's all in the details, so don't forget other necessities such as cabinet legs, shelf pins, or drawer bumpers. Rockler has what you need.

Measuring

Knobs are installed with one screw and pulls usually have two. If you are replacing old pulls, you'll need to measure the distance between screw holes to determine the size of new pulls you'll need. This will prevent the necessity of drilling more holes and patching in the old ones. Or, you could consider adding new drawer fronts and doors with Rockler's custom door and drawer program. If you have frame and panel

doors and drawers, you'll also want to consider the width of the rails. As a general rule, knobs or pulls no wider than half the rail width look best. Knobs or pulls that are too large look awkward and heavy. Remember that doors and drawers will usually need two different screw lengths. Drawers with faces applied as a separate piece will require screws to pass through 1 ¼" - 1 ½ " of wood or substrate. Doors are usually made of ¾" lumber so 1" screws usually work. You'll want to order the appropriate screws for your kitchen fixtures.

Installation

While installing one door or drawer pull is relatively easy, installing several quickly gets cumbersome. Rockler's Drawer Pull Jig-It can save you lots of time, and give you perfect accuracy on each and every pull. At only $10.99, it's worth every penny!

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Update your Kitchen with Confidence

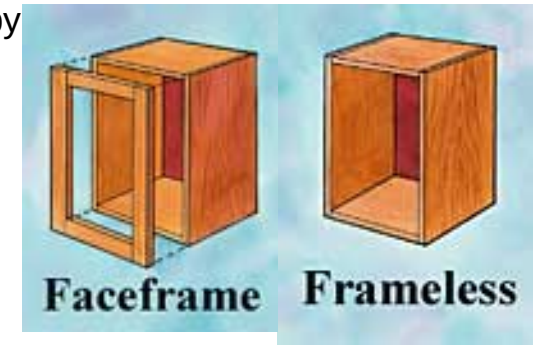
Hinges

Hinge Styles Depend on Cabinet Design

Adding new hardware and hinges is the secret to a spectacular kitchen update. The style of hinge you choose, however, is dependent upon the type and style of your cabinets. To fit your exact needs, Rockler has a large number of styles from which to choose. In this article we'll discuss the options and differences so that you can become "hinge wise", and add a dazzling new touch to your cabinetry design.

Step 1: Are your cabinets *Face Frame* or *Frameless*?

The style of hinge you choose will be largely determined by how your cabinets are made. First determine if your cabinet has a *face frame* or is *frameless* .



Step 2: Determine the overlay of your doors:

For Face Frame Cabinets:

Most traditional cabinetry will require face frame mounted hinges for doors that overlay their face frames. Overlay is the relationship of your cabinet doors to the cabinet faces. The *amount* of overlay will determine the type of hinge you will need. There are three kinds of face frame overlay:

- **Overlay -** If your doors *completely* overlay face frames (lie on top of the cabinet faces), and there is no rabbett on their back edge, you will need an *overlay hinge* .
- **3/8" Inset Hinge -** If your doors *partially* overlay their face frames and have a rabbett cut along their back edges, you need a *3/8" inset hinge* .
- **Full Inset Hinge -** If your door fronts are flush with their face frames—are inset within the frames, you will need a *full inset hinge* .

For Frameless Cabinets:

On European style cabinets, hinges are attached directly to the side of the cabinet. The *amount* of overlay (how far your doors overlap the cabinet sides) will determine the type of hinge you will need. European cabinets have three kinds of overlay:

- **Full Overlay -** If your doors *completely* overlay your cabinet sides (lie completely on top of the cabinet side edges), you will need a *frameless overlay hinge* .
- **Half Overlay -** If your doors *partially* overlay the side edges of your cabinets (usually about half way), you will need a *frameless half overlay hinge* .
- **Full Inset -** Frameless cabinets with door fronts that are flush with the side edges of cabinet faces and are fully inset within the side edges will require *frameless inset hinges* .

Other Styles and Functions

Rockler has a large selection of additional hinge types available including:

Flipper Door Systems (For sliding, hiding doors.)

Clip on Hinges (For wider opening doors.)

Cross Corner Hinges (For doors closing at a 45-degree angle.)

Invisible or Concealed Hinges

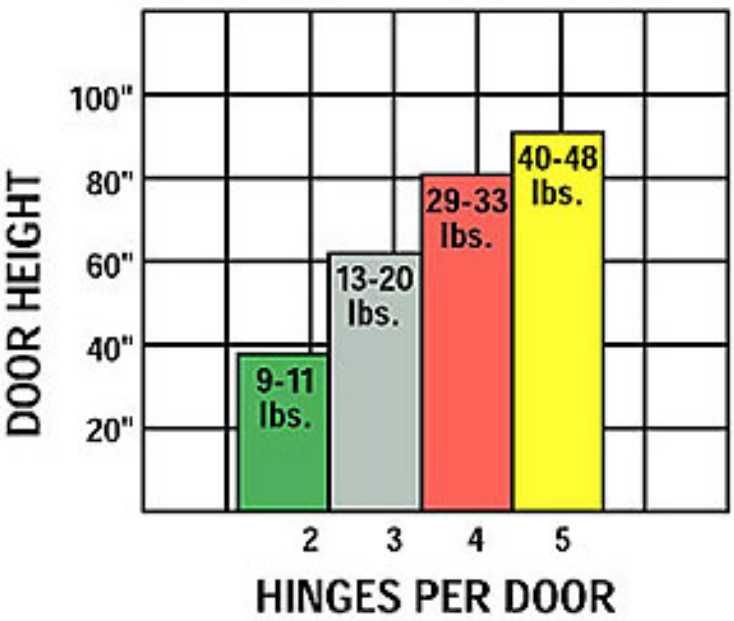
Surface Mount Hinges

Wraparound Hinges (No mortise for Euro-style applications.)

and many more...

How Many Hinges Per Door?

The number of hinges you require will be contingent upon the height and weight of your doors. Use this chart to determine how many hinges you will need. For instance, a 43" high door weighing 14 lbs would require 3 hinges.



Installing Your Hinges

Accuracy is crucial to the successful installation of hinges and to assure proper door alignment. Rockler recommends using the appropriate installation jig or the guide of your choice. See our line of installation Jig-It's, and self-centering drill bits for more information.

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Update your Kitchen with Confidence

Accessories

Update Your Kitchen with Accessories

Kitchen update time is the perfect opportunity to customize your kitchen. You can make your kitchen an entertainment center for family and guests and turn it into a spectacular success with some easy to install grand and elegant accessories. Rockler has a large selection of high-end functional accessories and organizational products designed to make your kitchen more efficient.

Determine Your Needs

Efficiency should be a top priority in the design of your updated kitchen. Think about any unique storage needs you may have and how you can accommodate them with custom installations. Pantry organizers , kitchen rail systems, lazy suzans, half moon swing outs, and reverse-a-racks can be perfect solutions to small quarters and other storage problems. Hanging racks, glass molding, and plate rack dowels can create storage from otherwise empty space.

Choose Your Updates

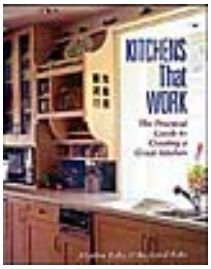
Whether it's shelving accessories, lighting systems, the addition of split rope topper moldings, lattice panels, brass grilles or glass etchings, you can make your kitchen a place of distinction and efficiency with simple and easy to install extras. You'll be amazed at what you can accomplish with just a few feet of wineglass molding, fluted rosettes, or bun feet, added to your favorite fixtures. Low-voltage lighting, pantry organizers, sink front tray sets, pullout trash bins, appliance garages, and shelf lift mechanisms add convenience and organization to please even the most discriminating kitchen boss. Rockler has a full line of innovative systems that can turn your kitchen into a showcase. Best of all; most are affordable, practical solutions that are quick and easy to install.

Custom Projects

Complete your own custom kitchen accessory projects. Built-in wine racks above refrigerators, moldings to disguise soffets, and matching

appliance garages are popular kitchen accessories that add quick-access storage. Or, a cabinetry display, plate rack, or bookshelf. These projects are not beyond the reach of the average woodworker or handy- man or woman and can be accomplished with basic skills and tools. The possibilities are endless with Rockler's line of hardware, woodworking, and project supplies.

Books and Resources



Kitchens That Work - From the publishers of Fine Woodworking magazine...

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