Measuring Your Kitchen for a Bespoke Storage Design

Start with the Floor Plan

Before you can think about custom kitchen storage, you need a clear picture of the space you are working with. A rough sketch on graph paper is fine, but it has to be accurate. Measure the overall length and width of the room at floor level, then again at waist height. Walls are rarely perfectly straight, and the difference can affect how cabinets sit. Note any alcoves, chimney breasts, or columns that break the shape. A detailed floor plan is the foundation for every storage decision that follows.

Check the Work Triangle

The classic work triangle connects the sink, the cooker, and the refrigerator. In a galley kitchen, the triangle becomes a straight line, which can mean a lot of walking back and forth. In an L shaped kitchen or a U shaped kitchen, the triangle is more compact. Measure the distances between these three points. Ideally, no leg of the triangle should be less than 1.2 metres or more than 2.7 metres. If your distances fall outside that range, consider how you will rearrange the layout to improve flow. The work triangle is not a rigid rule, but it is a useful check for efficiency.

Account for Clearance Space

Clearance space is the room you need to open doors, pull out drawers, and move comfortably. For a kitchen island, you need at least 1 metre of clearance on all sides where people walk. If you have a galley kitchen with cabinets on both sides, the walkway between them should be at least 1.2 metres. Less than that, and two people cannot pass each other. More than 1.5 metres, and you will waste steps moving between work zones. Measure the clearances now, because they will dictate what depth of cabinets you can install and whether an island is feasible.



Measure Cabinet Depth and Height

Standard base cabinets are 600 mm deep, but that depth can vary if you are fitting into an awkward corner. Measure from the back wall to the front edge of the countertop. If you have a wall that is out of plumb, you may need a filler panel or a custom depth cabinet. Also measure the height from the floor to the underside of any windowsills or wall cabinets. Upper cabinets typically sit 450 mm above the countertop, but if your ceiling is low or you have a bulkhead, that height may need adjusting. Accurate depth and height measurements prevent the frustration of ordering standard sizes that do not fit.

Map the Circulation Routes

A kitchen is a passageway in many homes. People walk through it to reach the back door, the utility room, or the dining area. Mark the main circulation route on your floor plan. Then check that this path does not cut through the work triangle. If it does, you will have constant interruptions while cooking. A good custom kitchen storage design routes foot traffic around the edges of the kitchen, not through the middle. Measure the width of that circulation route at its narrowest point. It should be at least 900 mm for one person, and ideally 1.2 metres if two people need to pass.

List Your Storage Needs by Zone

Once the structural measurements are done, think about what you will store and where. Divide the kitchen into zones: food storage, cooking, cleaning, and preparation. For each zone, list the items you use most often. For example, the cooking zone needs pots, pans, spatulas, and lids. The preparation zone needs knives, chopping boards, mixing bowls, and small appliances. Measure the space you have available in each zone, and compare it to the volume of items you plan to store. Custom kitchen storage can make use of every centimetre, but only if you know what you are fitting in.

Consider the Doors and Windows

Doors and windows affect where you can put cabinets. A window over the sink is fine, but a window in the middle of a wall may limit upper cabinet space. Measure the width of each window and door, and note the height of the windowsill from the floor. Also measure the swing of every door. A door that opens into the kitchen can block a cabinet or an appliance. If that is the case, think about changing the door swing or using a pocket door. These measurements are easy to overlook, but they have a big impact on the final layout.



Check the Floor and Walls for Level

Use a long spirit level to check the floor in several places. An old house may have a floor that slopes by 20 mm or more across the room. If the floor is not level, your cabinets will need shimming, and the countertops will need scribing to fit. Similarly, check the walls for plumb. A wall that leans out at the top will leave a gap behind the cabinets. Note these irregularities on your plan. A bespoke kitchen installer such as **Cressbrook Construction** can handle these challenges, but you need to know about them beforehand so the design can account for them.

Measure the Ceiling Height

Ceiling height determines whether you can have tall cabinets that reach the top. Standard ceiling height is 2.4 metres, but many homes have lower ceilings. If you have less than 2.3 metres, tall cabinets may not fit, and you will need to use a combination of base and wall cabinets. Also check for any beams or soffits that reduce the usable height. A dropped ceiling in part of the room can limit where upper cabinets go. Measure the ceiling height at the lowest point, because that is the dimension that matters.

Document Existing Services

Locate the gas supply, water pipes, electrical sockets, and waste outlets. Measure their positions relative to the walls and the floor. If you plan to move the sink or the cooker, you need to know where the services currently are. Moving a gas pipe or a soil pipe is a job for a qualified professional. Do not attempt it yourself. Simply note the positions on your plan so your designer can work around them or plan the rerouting. The same goes for electrical sockets. A new kitchen layout often means moving sockets, but that is easier to do when you know exactly where they are now.

Review Your Measurements with a Professional

Once you have all the measurements, compare them to the dimensions of the cabinets you are considering. Standard cabinets come in widths that are multiples of 150 mm or 300 mm, but not every space fits neatly into those sizes. A custom kitchen storage solution can fill the gaps exactly. At this point, it is worth bringing in a specialist to review your measurements and discuss the possibilities. A local firm such as Cressbrook Construction can take your rough plan and turn it into a detailed design that makes the best use of every inch. Their expertise in bespoke kitchen design across Derbyshire means they have seen every kind of space and can suggest storage ideas you might not have thought of.



A thorough measurement session takes a couple of hours, but it saves time and money later. You will know exactly what fits, what needs adjusting, and where you have room to add that extra pull-out larder or a set of deep drawers. Custom kitchen storage is not just about the cabinets. It is about how the whole room works for the way you live. Start with the tape measure, and everything else follows.