



PANTRY OPTIONS: *Walk-in vs. Cabinet*

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Addition with an Exterior Facelift



Nothing makes the T.W. Ellis team happier than when we can deliver a dream home transformation for our clients.

The owners of this Baltimore County home wanted to improve the look of their home, both inside and out. It's always a great idea to think about combining projects when you can—it's more efficient and will usually save you money in the long run.

The Hartka family had two major goals for this project: add a 24-by 12-foot addition to the home to make room for a new dining room, and to replace the siding on the entire house.

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PANTRY OPTIONS: *Walk-in vs. Cabinet*

When it comes time to remodel your kitchen, one of the most important items we're going to discuss during the planning process is your storage options.

A poorly designed pantry is one of the biggest pain points for homeowners. When considering your kitchen remodel, take into consideration how you use your pantry and how you'd like to use it. A walk-in pantry is just what it sounds like—a closet or room located in or near the kitchen. Essentially, it is a walk-in closet for the kitchen. A cabinet pantry is a tall cabinet with lots of storage space for food or whatever else you want to store in it.

When choosing between a walk-in pantry or a cabinet pantry there are several factors worth considering.

STORAGE NEEDS

Obviously, the biggest advantage of a walk-in pantry is more space. It offers multiple walls of shelving and customizable storage space. A walk-in pantry is also a great place to store smaller appliances that you may not use every day, such as blenders, slow cookers or air fryers, and help to declutter your countertops. There may even be space for a second refrigerator.

On the other hand, homeowners with a poorly designed walk-in pantry will often find they don't use all of its space. If shelves are too deep, or too high off the ground, it becomes inconvenient to store items on them. As items get stacked out of sight, they get forgotten or lost. The "walking" space for the walk-in pantry also is space that isn't being used for storage.

Cabinet pantries are smaller by definition, so you'll have to find somewhere else for small appliances and pots and pans. Still, smart design and customization can help fit a lot in a small space.

LOCATION

The largest negative for a walk-in pantry is finding the right place for it. They take up a lot of real estate, so adding them to an existing kitchen will mean sacrificing some amount of space from the kitchen or an adjacent room. That's space that could be used for more counter surface or a seating area.

Be prepared to give up some room, but most kitchens have wasted space due to poor design. There's a good chance we'll be able to help you find some extra room if a walk-in is the right option.

If the walk-in is located outside the kitchen, that could mean trekking back and forth to get what you need while cooking. A secondary, smaller pantry or cabinet in the kitchen for items like spices or other frequently used ingredients will make it easier to manage that concern.

A cabinet pantry located in the kitchen offers the benefits of centralization. It is more accessible than walking across (or outside



of) the kitchen every time you need an ingredient. For better or worse, it also confines the storage to a smaller space. When properly designed, it is quicker and easier to access, clean and manage your storage.

CUSTOMIZATION

Both walk-in pantries and cabinet pantries offer a great opportunity to make it your own. Walk-in pantries offer various sizes and heights for shelves. Custom-sized cubbies for baking sheets, pots and pans. Hooks, baskets and racks can help create the perfect storage solution.

Cabinet pantries can incorporate some of these customizations as well, such as spice drawers, pullouts and vertical dividers, to adapt to your family's everyday use.

In the end, both cabinet and walk-in pantries are good options. The right answer is different for every home, depending on the size of your home and how you cook, eat and use your kitchen. Be sure to work with a qualified, professional remodeler to explore all your options and find the best fit for your lifestyle.

Choosing the Right Range Hood



The range hood is an essential part of the kitchen, preserving indoor air quality by venting out fumes, heat and humidity..

When it's time to remodel your kitchen, we can help you find the right solution for your new range hood. Some information to keep in mind when making a hood choice.

Ducted vs. non-ducted

A ducted system offers the most efficient performance. If using a ducted system, installing the range and hood along an exterior wall will be the most cost efficient.

If a ducted system is not possible for budget or design reasons, a non-ducted system, which filters the air before returning it to the house will be your best solution. A non-ducted system typically requires more maintenance and cleaning.

CFM

Hoods all have a measure of airflow – cubic feet per minute or CFM. The higher the CFM, the more powerful the fan. If your CFM is too low, it won't adequately vent; too high, and you'll be paying for unnecessary power in your electric bill.

For electric ranges, a good rule of thumb is a minimum of 100 CFM per 12 inches of range width. For gas stoves, the recommended formula is to take the total stove BTU rating and divide it by 100.

Noise

Generally speaking, the more power, the more noise. Look for a hood fan with high and low settings for a quieter option. You can use sone ratings to compare the sound levels of various units.

The lower the sone rating, the quieter the fan. One sone is about the same as a running refrigerator.

Design

Wall-mounted range hoods are the most common type of hood. They are mounted directly on the wall, and are available in a variety of shapes and sizes. Range hood inserts and under-cabinet range hoods are great options for homes with cupboards or other storage over the range. Microwave range hoods offer space savings but are not as efficient in removing fumes and other gases from the kitchen. Island hoods are specially designed for island ranges.

There's no "right" design for a hood. The most important factor in the decision is finding one that complements your remodeled kitchen.



The Smart Bathroom

The bathroom probably doesn't instantly spring to mind when you think about integrating technology in the home, but manufacturers are making a lot of advances.

Smart fixtures, toilets and showers can create greater comfort, and make the bathroom more usable for those with disabilities or other restrictions. With the growth of voice control options like Amazon Alexa or Google Home, it's become even easier to integrate this tech in your home.

Luxury toilets

Today's smart toilets offer automatic toilet seats, automated flushing, bidet functions and other features. Want to avoid a cold seat on a winter morning? Program it to warm up when you get up. Night lights can make late night trips to the bathroom less hazardous.

High-tech faucets

Several faucet models have settings for certain functions, such as brushing your teeth, that allows you to program the faucets to automatically turn on and off, conserving water (and making sure the user brushes long enough!)



Touchless or one-touch features make it easier for users with physical limitations to use the faucets. Automatic temperature controls can help avoid scalds while also conserving energy.

Smart showers and baths

Personalized colors, temperatures, music/sound and lighting all help create the spa-like feeling for the bathroom. Through wall-mounted controls, smart phone apps or home assistants, you can create a truly customized bathroom experience. Program your shower to cycle through various programs that target different parts of the body. With an easy command, start that bubble bath filling or post-workout shower so it's ready when you are.



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Pantry Options

The Right Range Hood

The Smart Bathroom



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To replace the existing plywood siding, the homeowners opted for James Hardie Lap Siding in Country Lane Red. Fiber cement siding is a great choice for long life and low maintenance. It is crafted to look like wood and handles and installs similar to wood products. At the same time, fiber cement is very durable and is resistant to contraction, moisture, rot and fire.

We further spruced up the exterior of the home by replacing the existing double front door with a new contemporary style Simpson Door 5-lite with sidelight, in vertical grain fir finish. The new front entrance shines with a stone veneer around the door. We carried that stone veneer around to the side of the house as well. New Anderson 400 Series vinyl exterior/wood interior windows finish off the exterior facelift.

For the interior, we created a new 24- by 12-foot dining room and family area, with a spacious, 16-foot-tall, cathedral ceiling. It was important to the homeowners to incorporate a lot of wood into the room, from the furniture to the finishes. The new hardwood floor was Mirage Flooring in Maple with an Auburn Semi-Gloss. Finishing off the room was probably the most interesting feature of this



project: 2- by 12-foot beams for the ceiling. Getting each of the 600-lb. beams in place was the most challenging part of the project, but the finished project gives the room a unique look that sets it apart from other homes.

T.W. Ellis has been building and remodeling in the Baltimore area for nearly 20 years, designing and creating more than 1,000 projects. Our expert, certified team has experience with additions, kitchens, bathrooms, outdoor living projects and more. We'd love to have the chance to help you realize your remodeling dreams!