

Have It All,
Keep It Small!
SPECIAL SECTION



PRESTO CHANGE-O!

As if by magic, a couple's tired, tight-fit kitchen is transformed.

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Arches in Shirley and Ken Dreyer's 1920s home inspired a kitchen redo that incorporates curves. Buttery cabinets create a warm look.

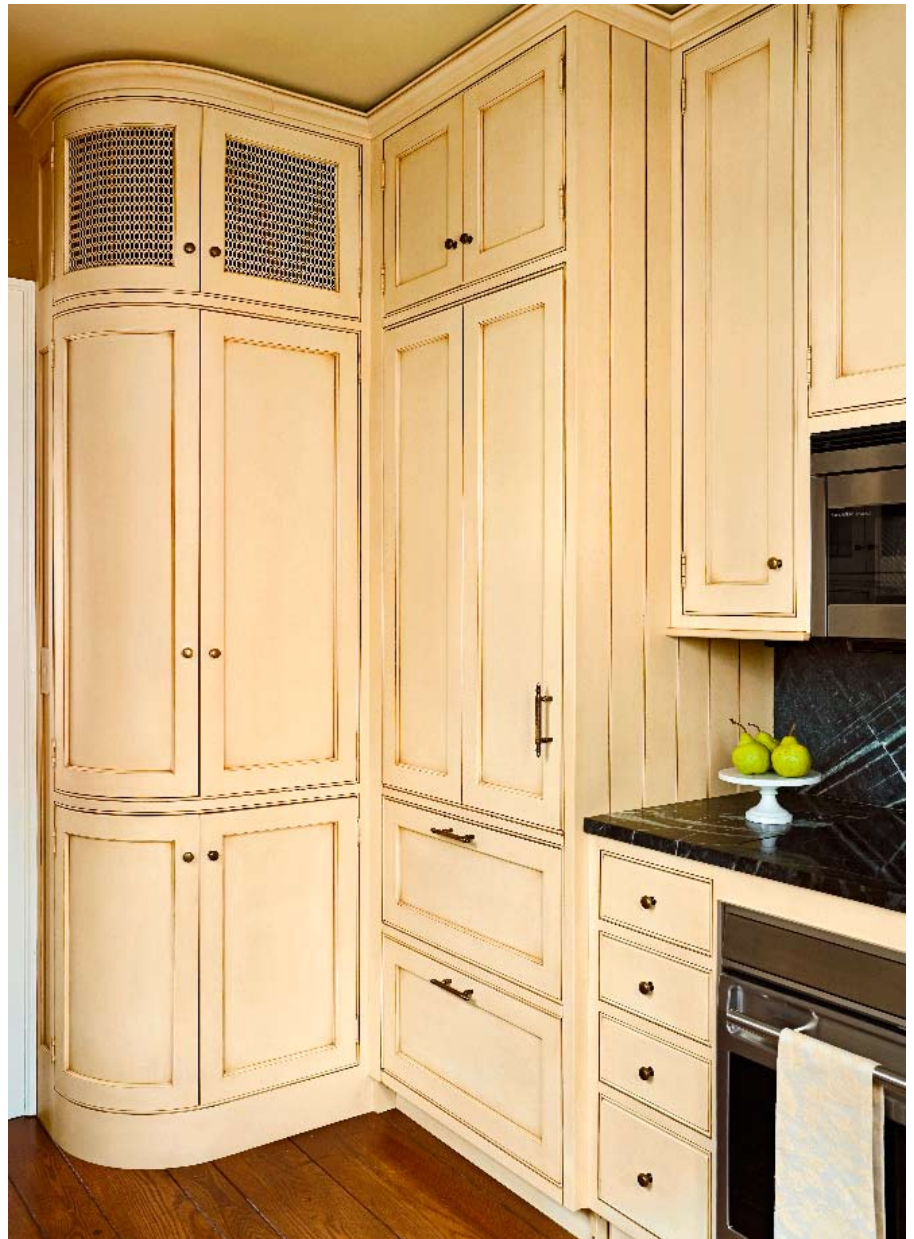


FAR LEFT: Delightful details include this display shelf to the right of the sink—it's a perfect spot for coffee mugs. Beaded-board backing and curvy brackets convey vintage style. LEFT: The glass cooktop disappears into the black countertop. An oven and over-the-counter microwave complete the compact cooking area. BELOW: The refrigerator and freezer drawers blend into the maple cabinetry, as do a flue and laundry chute in the curved units to the left. OPPOSITE: Curves ease movement between the kitchen and dining room. An old swinging door was reinstalled, adding 1920s character.

Like a good magician, kitchen designer Cherie Brown, a member of the National Kitchen & Bath Association (NKBA), used a bag of tricks to update Shirley and Ken Dreyer's kitchen without changing its footprint. It was like pulling a rabbit out of a hat, for the small space—remodeled in the '50s—had pink metal cabinets, poorly placed appliances, and obstacles such as a radiator, flue, and laundry chute. The couple had made it work, though, through two kids and 30 years. "Our house is like an old friend—we had really grown with it," Shirley says. "We wanted to keep it as it was, but make our old kitchen new."

The radiator, flue, and laundry chute stayed—they're now better disguised—but the cabinets, appliances, and some sharp corners did a disappearing act. Inspired by arches

Take-Home Tip
Curved cabinets improve the flow in a small kitchen by turning sharp, tight corners into smooth segues.







in the 1920s Tudor-style home, Brown incorporated curves in the new cabinetry to boost openness and improve flow. “Anytime you extend a line with a curve or angle, it draws your eye and appears bigger,” Brown says.

Another trick was using 15-inch-deep upper cabinets instead of standard 12-inch units, which increased storage by 25 percent. Handy shelves and drawers are all over, including the ends of curved cabinets. The microwave is an over-the-cooktop model, and the dishwasher is only 18 inches wide. “When you don’t have an endless supply of space, you work with every thing you have,” Brown says. “Most people don’t have any idea all the little things that can make a kitchen work harder.”

Her audience is delighted. “We think we improved the way the kitchen fits in with the rest of the house, and we had so much fun doing it,” Ken says. “Cherie knew how much our hearts were in it.”

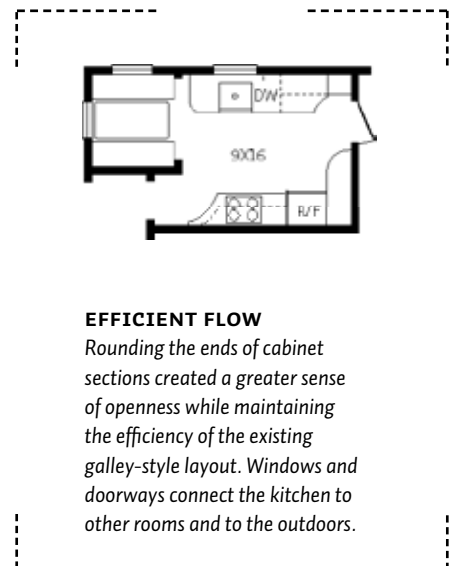
And the result is no illusion. KBI

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ABOVE: The sink and countertops are soapstone, a classic surface that suits the home’s era. A narrow pullout on the left and an 18-inch-wide dishwasher on the right (disguised as a set of drawers) save space. Cutouts in the cabinet doors echo the kitchen’s curved motif.

RIGHT: The backsplash is the same material as the sink and countertops, creating a continuous block of color that makes the area seem even deeper and wider.

OPPOSITE: Oak benches with leather upholstery upgraded an existing eating nook. The table features a wrought-iron base and marble top.



EFFICIENT FLOW

Rounding the ends of cabinet sections created a greater sense of openness while maintaining the efficiency of the existing galley-style layout. Windows and doorways connect the kitchen to other rooms and to the outdoors.

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