



The Kitchen & Bath Insider[®]

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Renovation Alternatives

It's a beautiful, fall morning. The kids are finally back at school. You're alone, sitting peacefully in your kitchen sipping your coffee, but your eyes keep straying to the kitchen cabinets. Before your day continues, you luxuriate and set aside a whole minute to read the newspaper. Trying to concentrate, your mind wanders to the upcoming holiday season, but your eyes again wander . . . to those cabinets! You don't verbalize it, but nevertheless ponder, "my home is so beautiful, why does my kitchen have to be ugly?"

Fortunately, there are many alternatives available today when it comes to kitchen renovations. The choices include inexpensive, one-day cabinet restorations; painting; refinishing; custom refacing; and complete renovations.

If you already have beautiful wood cabinets but they've been neglected, cabinet restoration may be just what you need. Technicians remove all the grime that has been building up on the woodwork; touch-up nicks and scratches; and apply a new top-coat. Keep in mind, however, that a restoration of this type will not make heavily worn cabinets look new again, nor will it change their color.

When wood cabinets have deteriorated to a point where restoration isn't possible they can be painted or refinished. Painting can make cabinetry look new again but it is a temporary solution. Just as you have to paint your home every several years, you will have to re-paint the cabinets. Because the surfaces on the cabinets are subject to the wear and tear of everyday use the paint will scratch, chip, and eventually fade.

Refinishing cabinets is a traditional method of rejuvenating them and in many cases can lighten the color as well. A good refinishing job will last for years and will be much more durable than painting. The procedure can take a few weeks to complete and does involve sanding and harsh chemical "strippers" to remove the old finish and stain. As with painting your cabinets this options does not change the style of the door and drawer fronts and if that is your goal then other options must be investigated.

Probably the least invasive method of renovation is refacing, (also known as resurfacing). If you're ready for an exciting new look for your kitchen and you're happy with the location of the cabinetry, custom refacing provides an attractive alternative to replacing them. Using 21st century technology, refacing has come of age. You can have the look and feel of a new kitchen in three to five days. Replacement components come in real woods like cherry, maple and oak; or easy-to-clean thermofoil. With the addition of cabinet and drawer organizers your kitchen can also have the convenience of a completely new kitchen.

If you want to change the layout of your kitchen then you must consider remodeling. Using advanced computer design systems a kitchen specialist can show you what your future kitchen will look like, designing and re-designing the plan with your assistance. Custom cabinets can be built to your exact specifications and are available in numerous styles, colors and wood species. You can also chose from semi-custom or economical stock cabinets to achieve your "Dream Kitchen".

When you're ready to make amends for abusing the room you spend most of your time in, make sure that you chose a company that you can trust. Check licenses, references, insurance, warranties, and pick a company that you feel comfortable with. You want to work with a company that has a proven track record and will be around for a long time to come.