



The Kitchen & Bath Insider[®]

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Intelligent Design

In 1925, one of the biggest stories in the news was the Scopes' Monkey Trial. And, if you're a fan of *Inherit the Wind*, you know that the argument has been going on since Charles Darwin first published *The Origin of Species*. Can man, without the help of divine inspiration, achieve perfection in a kitchen or bathroom design? Did the concept of the "work triangle" evolve solely from the mind of a designer, or was he guided by a higher authority?

There are no easy answers when dealing with a conflict of social and intellectual values. Some of us study for years and years to master the art of balancing practicality with aesthetics. Learning that cabinets for glasses should be stored near the dishwasher - because you can only carry two at a time. Absorbing facts like putting a microwave near the refrigerator because most of the stuff you microwave comes out of the fridge. Countless decisions must be made and each correct answer brings the kitchen closer to perfection.

Putting a pull-out garbage pail is most efficient when next to the dishwasher. Scrape, rinse, dishwasher. Simple, right? But, you better make sure that the pail doesn't interfere with the opening of any other appliance, especially the dishwasher itself. And you don't want it where the person washing the dishes will block its access by others, while you're scraping and rinsing.

Installing a microwave over the stove looks great, but is it the best place in the kitchen for this appliance? With limited space, it is a solution, however, if you have little kids it can also be dangerous. The microwave is the first appliance they will learn to use, so be sure to teach them that the stove can be hot! And if you are vertically challenged (short), it can be awkward removing hot food from a high position.

Do you need a cabinet over the fridge that nobody can reach? Not really, but the space looks like its missing something if you don't put something there. It's best to use a cabinet that's twenty-four inches deep so that it's easier to reach (at least the things in the front).

Should you have shelves in the base cabinets, or drawers, or roll-out trays? And if you select drawers, what size should they be, how far should they pull out? There are *three* schools of thought involved in this, and the debate has been going on as long as evolution. One day, a thought popped into my head. (Where it came from is a mystery. Was it from up above?). With shelves you have to bend over and it's hard to see what's in the back. With roll-outs, you don't have to bend, you just pull out the tray. However, in order to access the roll-out you have to open the doors. With large drawers you don't have to bend, you don't have to open the doors and you can easily see what's in them. Eureka!

Should you reface? Should you replace? Should you do wood? What kind of sink? Wall oven and cook-top or free standing range? Can we squeeze an island in a 12 foot by 7 foot kitchen?

You may have noticed that there are many questions posed in this month's *Kitchen & Bath Insider*[®]. This abundance of queries reflects the myriad of design choices in almost any kitchen plan. Which brings us back to my original question: is a new kitchen so complex, that a simple designer cannot grasp all the nuances of the perfect design without God's help?

After much reflection I still have not reached a conclusion. Although, when the perfect solution to a perplexing problem pops up, who's to say who came up with the solution?