

10 Budget Kitchen Remodel Ideas - Yelp


 Send to Kindle

Homeowners remodel their kitchens for many reasons. Maybe they have outdated wallpaper or appliances and want to freshen things up. Or they're selling the house and looking to improve resale value.

Either way, remodeling the kitchen has an instant impact. Even the smallest improvements can make the space more enjoyable to use, and your home more attractive to buyers.

A minor kitchen remodel costs an average \$23,000 and adds about \$18,000 to a home's resale value, according to Remodeling magazine. A major kitchen remodel will cost three times that amount (about \$68,500) and add a hefty \$40,000 to the resale price.

Clearly, spending money on a kitchen remodel pays off when your home sells. Homeowners who can't afford those price tags, however, often redo their old kitchen bit by bit, as budget permits.

 **Pro tip:** As a rule of thumb, a budget kitchen remodel shouldn't cost more than \$5,000, especially if you don't replace appliances.

If you're handy, you can save even more money on a remodel, but it's important to know your limits. Some redos are best left to [kitchen remodeling pros](#).

Here are 10 budget kitchen remodel ideas that won't break your bank account:

One of the easiest—and most affordable—kitchen makeovers? Painting existing cabinets.

You could pay a professional to do this, but it's a good DIY project for handy homeowners. The average cost to paint kitchen cabinets ranges about \$400—1,100. By priming and painting the cabinetry yourself, you'll reduce that cost to a mere \$100. And in just one weekend, you'll have virtually new cabinets that take your kitchen from dark and dated to light and bright.

Here's how to paint kitchen cabinets, step by step:

1. Remove all cabinet doors and hardware.
2. Spread doors on wood two-by-fours stretched between sawhorses.
3. Wipe down doors with a damp rag to remove dust.
4. Lightly sand doors. Sanding creates a smooth surface for the new paint.
5. Apply primer with a low-pressure spray gun.
6. Spray on two coats of paint finish.
7. Let dry before replacing hardware.

💡 Pro tip: Want to mix it up and get trendy? Painting upper cabinets a different color than lower ones is a current look.

No time for DIY? [Find a handyperson near you.](#)

A tile backsplash has two benefits: It makes it easier to clean splattered cooking grease, and completely transforms your kitchen.

When installed by a pro, the average backsplash costs about \$1,000 for 16 square feet, depending on the material. DIY installation, on the other hand, can take two

days and requires a lot of tools, which you can rent or buy. But this really isn't a job for rookies.

Installing a backsplash requires a lot of measuring and leveling. You'll also need to cut tiles to fit around electrical outlets and awkward spaces. A lot can go wrong if you don't know what you're doing. You might wind up with too few tiles or an uneven backsplash pattern, for example, turning your pricey investment into an embarrassing eyesore.

A better option: Pick out the materials you want and hire a [professional backsplash installer](#) to finish the job.

Popular but expensive material options include ceramic, glass, marble, and stone. Peel-and-stick subway tile and mosaics are more affordable. A 10-pack of 12-by-12-inch peel-and-stick mosaic tiles can cost \$30, compared to \$15 for one mesh-mounted glass mosaic tile.

But peel-and-stick tiles won't boost your home's resale value. They're prone to peel at the corners and look noticeably different from the real thing. So if you're aiming for quality, it's better to splurge on the genuine article.

Want to save money? Try this [budget-friendly DIY alternative](#): Install vinyl wallpaper, or staple fabric to pre-cut particle board, and lay tempered glass over the surface. There's more room for error, and no grout to worry about.

[Find a professional backsplash installer near you.](#)

Upgrade kitchen countertops

Updating countertops will give your old kitchen a whole new look without maxing out the budget. Plastic laminate, natural stone, butcher block, and solid surface are popular options.

On a tight budget? Laminate, sold under the brand name Formica, is affordable, attractive, and versatile at \$40–80 per square foot, including installation.

For best results, hire a [professional countertop installer](#) for the job, which should take one or two days. You'll also avoid dealing with more advanced tasks, such as cutting out holes for the sink and faucet.

💡 **Pro tip:** When you're ready for a new look, just sand down the countertop surface and paint over it. Or purchase a kit at a home-improvement center that makes laminate look like granite.

For a more high-end overhaul, consider solid-surface countertops, which range from \$50–120 per square foot, or granite countertops, from \$80–110 per square foot. A kitchen-renovation contractor can help you pick out the best kitchen countertops for your home.

[Find a professional countertop installer in your area.](#)

Swap out kitchen-cabinet knobs

Still enjoy your cabinets and drawers, but not their outdated knobs and pulls? Replacing cabinet hardware is fast, inexpensive and DIY-friendly.

Here's how to replace kitchen cabinet hardware, step by step:

1. Unscrew hinges and handle from one of the cabinet doors.
2. Take them to a home-improvement center.
3. Match size, hinge overlay, and screw spacing.
4. Unscrew old fixtures with a cordless drill.
5. Screw in the new hardware.

6. Your new hardware should fit perfectly; you won't even have to touch up the paint.

The cost of replacing hardware depends on the hardware you choose, and can range from \$80—800 for a 200-square-foot kitchen with 30 linear feet of cabinets and 40 knobs or pulls. Simple brass, crystal, and nickel knobs cost less than \$2 each, but designer knobs with glass, gemstones, and intricate details will set you back \$20 or more.

Don't want to get your hands dirty? [Find a handyperson near you.](#)

Install a new kitchen sink

Kitchen sinks take a daily beating from dishes, flatware, pots, and pans that cause scratches and stains over time. If your sink looks worse for wear, it may be time for a new one.

Two common types of sink installations are overmount and undermount.

Overmount sinks “drop in” to the countertop's hole; they have a lip and metal clips to stay in place. Undermount sinks, installed beneath the countertop, stick to the bottom of its surface with construction adhesive.

Once you've selected the type of installation, choose between a single- or double-basin sink. Some single basins may be large enough to wash cookie sheets and pizza pans, but double basins are ideal for homes without dishwashers—wash on one side, dry on the other!


Most sinks come with installation directions that a novice DIYer may find confusing, so it's better to leave this job to the pros. Average cost for a pro install is \$350.

[Find a professional kitchen sink installer.](#)

Splurge on new appliances

New matching appliances are a “nice-to-have” that can really make an impact. If you need a new fridge or stove, and your budget allows it, write a list of needs and wants:

- Do you want stainless steel, black, or white appliances?
- Should they connect to Wi-Fi and have smart features?
- Do your existing connections allow for a gas or electric range?
- How about an over-the-range microwave or range hood?
- Will you really use a flashy \$6,000 gas range?
- Do you need an energy-efficient dishwasher?

 Pro tip: Look for sales. You might find a four-piece set—including a stainless-steel refrigerator, range, overhead microwave, and dishwasher—for less than \$2,500.

Best to hire a pro for installation, but be mindful of costs. A handyperson can charge \$190 to install just one appliance, and that’ll add up for multiple installations. Retailers usually offer competitive installation prices, so you may be able to save money by adding that service to your purchase.

[Find a handyperson near you.](#)

Flooring is one of the first things you notice upon entering a kitchen, because it takes up the most space. That’s why replacing it can make a big difference.

Quality flooring, including installation, is not cheap. It can range from \$7–30 per square foot, depending on the material. Experienced DIYers can tackle the job at

no extra cost; on the low end, that may amount to \$1 per square foot of ceramic tile, compared to paying a pro \$5 per square foot for installation.

While installation accounts for most of the flooring's cost, you'll get the best results by hiring a [professional flooring installer](#). You can still choose the material and let a pro do the heavy lifting, which should take 1–2 days.

Hardwood, stone, and tile are popular kitchen-floor options. If you have a limited budget, consider peel-and-stick vinyl tiles, vinyl-sheet flooring, or luxury vinyl planks. (Vinyl is one of the most affordable flooring materials.)

💡 Pro tip: Want the look of wood, tile, or stone without the high price? Choose laminate flooring that's waterproof, scratch-resistant, and stain-resistant.

[Find a professional flooring installer in your area.](#)

Window treatments enhance any kitchen's appearance and tie everything together.

First, choose between hard and soft window treatments. Faux wood blinds, woven wood shades and faux wood shutters (ranging from \$30–70) are examples of hard materials. Soft materials include valances, curtains, and Roman shades (ranging from \$15–40). Hard window treatments are easier to clean—just wipe with a damp cloth and mild detergent. Soft window treatments are prone to stains. Dry-clean, hand-wash, or use a washing machine, as directed.

[Hiring a handyperson](#) to do the installation could cost \$100 per window treatment. But anyone with 15 minutes and simple tools can do the job. Just follow the manufacturer's instructions for mounting the curtain rod and hanging the panels.

[Find a handyperson near you.](#)

Your kitchen should show off your personality, cooking style, and values, so hang wall art that makes a statement.

An oversized wooden fork and spoon, matted and framed herbs, and decorative cutting boards are popular options. Have decorative china or framed photos of fruit? Hang them! And don't forget about your coffee bar—the perfect spot for small graphic prints of coffee, cappuccino, and lattes.

Local antique and thrift stores are great places to discover unique wall art for your kitchen. Copper pots and pans and old wooden cooking utensils always make great decorations. Hang them on the wall to add dimension and interest. Best of all, you'll be able to decorate on a budget.

[Need help? Find an interior decorator in your area.](#)

Add personality with plants and knickknacks

Adding nature and texture makes a kitchen feel cozy, welcoming, and “lived-in.” Have a window seat? Place pillows and a throw on it. Cold tile floor? Warm things up with an area rug matching the window treatments. Finally, place small houseplants and potted herbs on countertops or kitchen islands, and large houseplants on freestanding pedestals.

[Find lush plants at a garden center near you.](#)

How to find a good kitchen remodeler

Want to find a professional, reputable, and reliable kitchen remodeler?

First, check your local home builders' association. Also ask friends, relatives, and neighbors who've hired contractors. Word-of-mouth is important—after all, you know and trust these people.

Narrow down the list to three contractors and do some sleuthing. Make sure they're licensed and insured, and they've been in business for a while. And read [online customer reviews](#).

More important, it's not enough to be a contractor, even one with lots of experience. Make sure the pro also specializes in kitchen remodeling.

How to avoid kitchen-remodeling trouble

When hiring a kitchen remodeling contractor, be wary of the following red flags:

- Poor appearance. Don't trust contractors driving vehicles in disrepair and using dirty, malfunctioning equipment. Not every reputable contractor has the latest vehicles and tools, but how a business presents itself matters.
- Limited-time price. If the contractor lures you with a "limited-time offer," resist. Then find out if your state has a "cooling-off period." This allows you to cancel a contract a few days after signing to prevent buyer's remorse.
- Unexpected price hikes. Most contracts have firm material and labor costs. Prices shouldn't change much, but if they do, the contractor underbid the job and should absorb those costs.
- Subpar materials. During your walk-through inspection of the contractor's work, make sure everything matches the agreement. If you ordered granite countertops, but the contractor installed laminates, they saved a significant sum on materials—and used that savings to line their pockets.

Find a [kitchen remodeling contractor](#) or [design store](#) in your area.

Get good kitchen remodeling help—fast

Did you know that hiring a pro on Yelp is easy to do with [Request-a-Quote](#)? Many Yelp businesses display the bright red button on their pages. Just click on it, and you've taken the first step toward getting the service you want, when you need it, and at the price you can afford.

Yelp's Request-a-Quote feature allows you to compare quotes from up to 10 home services professionals in a matter of minutes. Simply request a quote from a local pro, answer a few quick questions about your project, and get quotes from top-rated pros that you can easily compare.

<https://www.yelp.com/article/10-budget-kitchen-remodel-ideas>