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REAL HOMES

10 ways to cut the cost of your kitchen

BEFORE + AFTERS

50+ PAGES OF EXTENSIONS & RENOVATIONS

YOUR GUIDE TO GARAGE CONVERSIONS

Pastel power

Pretty hues to revive any room

BEST BUYS

BI-FOLD DOORS

WALL & FLOOR TILES

COFFEE MACHINES

HELLO SPRING

FRESH HOME UPDATES FOR THE SEASON AHEAD

8 Go back to basics

A good carcass can provide a solid foundation for a kitchen upgrade. If yours are built well, then a simple door change could give an instant update. Swap a sea of beige cupboards and wooden handles, which leave your kitchen firmly entrenched in the 1980s, for something more colourful and stylish. Companies like Plykea or Husk can bring a bespoke, handmade look and feel to standard Ikea and Howdens units by customising with plywood doors, for an on-trend pared-back look.

Formica Bermuda, Maui wall units and a Carnaval Red island give this kitchen a bespoke look. Fronts and worktops, £8,000, Plykea

TOP TIP

Sign up for emails for your favourite kitchen or DIY shops. You'll often get a discount for doing it, as well as advanced warning of special offers

This 1909 kitchen still looks good as new. £12,999, The Used Kitchen Company

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New to you

Display kitchens work to lure you into buying one that looks just like it for your home. But once the ex-display ones are taken out of the showroom, you can find them heavily discounted. Most will be in excellent condition because there won't be the years of family wear and tear and meal prep. And they can often include all the best features as they would have been used to showcase the brand. Though the display may have been dismantled, the units will probably remain pre-built, ready for collection – saving you time and labour in assembling.

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REVAMP YOUR SURFACES

A chipped work surface or multicoloured tiles and decals of fruit, flowers or animals can date your kitchen – so change them! A new, hard-wearing work surface or backsplash will transform a space, even if the cupboards remain. The same goes for your floor – if it's worn or torn, or an old-fashioned tile you can't scrub the dirt out of, take it up or cover it with modern flooring that'll cope with family life.

TOP TIP

Get inspiration from Instagram. The 'grammers have lots of tips for budget transformations and bargain buys

PULL IT OFF

Affordable but stylish handles from M. Marcus add a special finishing touch to refreshed units.