

A Remodeling Secret That Will Give Your Cabinets A Totally New Look



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Thinking of remodeling your kitchen?

If you have stock or non-site built cabinetry and you have to keep your cabinets....this article is for you.

Stock and semi-custom, even custom cabinets that aren't site built, are made as boxes. Each cabinet is its own little box or entity all by itself. It's shipped that way, typically, and comes as a bunch of boxes on a pallet, all wrapped up together.

Upon installation, the boxes are installed one at a time around the kitchen. Each box is attached to the wall individually and separately, NOT to each other. They are simply butted together and then additional mouldings, such as crown or trim are added on top or bottom with small finish nails to complete their installation.

For that reason, they are EASY to remove, separate, etc. for remodeling purposes, particularly the uppers, that have no countertop resting on top.

Most people think when you have cabinetry like this that it's all or nothing. That if you want to change one single box of cabinetry in the run of cabinets, that it will damage the cabinets next to them and make a big mess.

Not true. It's actually quite easy.

Here's how....

First, you carefully remove the trim that has been added on top and bottom, and with small finish nails just holding it on, they're like staples basically. It sort of pops off with some prying. You unscrew the single cabinet from the walls and Viola! You now have one less cabinet on the wall. And yes, the sides of the adjacent cabinet are typically finished.

Now you can use that cabinet in your garage. :-)

Of course, you should KEEP the mouldings.....those can be cut, mitered, modified to fit whatever you are doing. You can butt them into the sides of your new cabinet OR miter them at the top corners, returning them on the side of the upper of the cabinetry to the wall. As long as you are using LESS than what you have you're okay.

Go ahead.....make a change!!!

We do this often in remodels where we are trying to keep costs down, but want a new look. If people don't want to spend all their money on new cabinetry (which is a big investment) and there are definitely some improvements that can be made with some of the cabinets, then this is a good option.

The most effective place to remove one single cabinet?

One of the most popular features we like doing, is a new range hood.

Many times, a new range hood is just exactly how to make a [big impact on your kitchen](#). It's often sort of the basis for a fresh, new look for our clients. You can replace countertops and backsplashes and paint cabinetry all day long.....and there are a *jillion* DIY examples of that out there on Pinterest.....but really, nothing makes a bigger impact than creatively modifying the cabinetry.

This is that *one step further* that requires one more trade, a carpenter, but it will be so worth it.

This is a game changer, a modification that truly pays off. Something that makes you feel like your old kitchen is gone forever and you have a brand new one in its place. :-)

After all.....isn't that exactly WHY you remodel?

Take a look below at all the before-and-afters of the box cabinets we removed above the hoods and even elsewhere....saving some money for clients by not totally redoing cabinets but achieving a brand new look for their kitchen.

Kitchen 1 - Before

In this first kitchen, we removed the two glass front cabinets, the stainless hood, and the cabinet above it. We replaced all that with a spectacular slate tiled hood that went to the ceiling. It added interest, height, and style to this kitchen that was previously just ordinary.



Kitchen 1 - After



Photographer: Tori
Aston

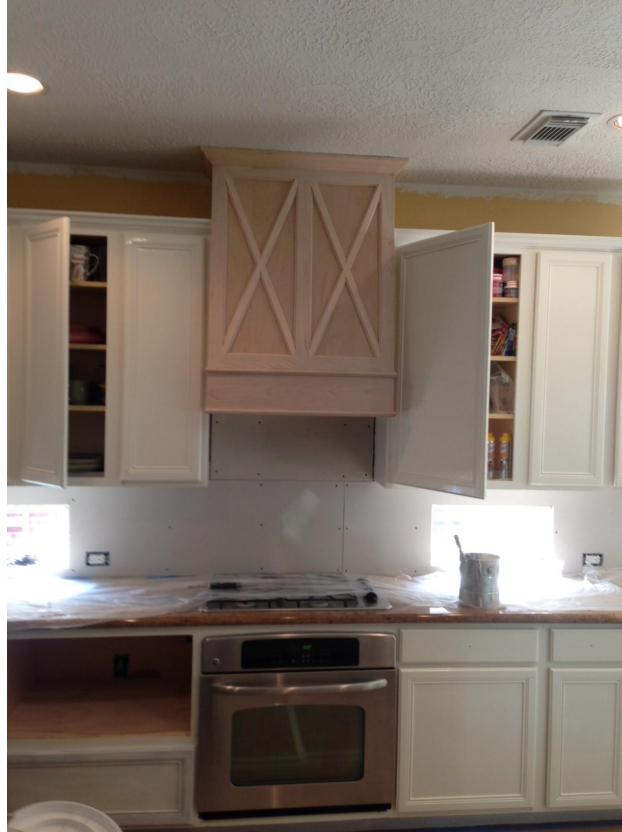
Kitchen 2 - Before

The client wanted to paint these dark, wood cabinets, but I felt like we could take it a step further. I thought the long, boring run of cabinets needed some variation and that this wall, that was visible from all over the house, needed to be a focal point with something more interesting. I also felt the microwave over the cooktop was a little “apartment-like” and knew we could improve on this elevation. We did so by removing the microwave and the cabinet above, relocating it to a drawer-style micro in the lower cabinets, and building a beautiful, taller, more impressive hood.

Kitchen 2 - Before >>



Kitchen 2 - After



During construction >>>



After >>>

See how the crown on the existing painted cabinets was cut to butt into the hood?

Kitchen 3 - Before

This kitchen had a long run of boring wood cabinets. The client wanted to keep their oak cabinetry, but stretched their budget enough to do a new island, oven tower, hood, and desk area. I designed a two tone kitchen painting these new cabinetry elements in a dark, rich color to contrast with the oak and match the countertops and backsplash.

Before >>>



Kitchen 3 - After

The crown on the existing cabinets was cut to butt into the hood and other new cabinets. Those were designed to be deeper than the regular uppers, so that the transitions would work specifically this way. This kitchen was published in *Real Life Kitchens and Baths*, and *Kitchen and Bath Makeovers*

Photographer: Cliff Roe



Kitchen 4 - Before

In this kitchen, we added on to the tops of these existing uppers, to take the cabinets to the ceiling. The middle cabinet, over the hood was removed (that sheetrock bump out above was removed too) and a sleek, wall mount stainless hood put in it's place, with tile to the ceiling. These existing cabinets were stained an ebonized color for a dramatic, more contemporary effect.



Kitchen 4 - After

This home's remodel was published in *Houston Lifestyles and Homes* magazine in February of 2016.



Photographer: Tori Aston



Want to read more?

I have more articles about modifying kitchen cabinets that I've already published on my blog. You can check them out below.

[*How To Make Ugly Cabinets Look Great*](#)

[*Can't Rip Out Your Kitchen's Furr Downs? Do This.*](#)

[*The Best Kitchen Space-Creator Isn't A Walk-In Pantry, It's This:*](#)

And here are the blogposts about those 4 kitchen remodel examples.

Kitchen 1 - [*Before and After: A Tired Kitchen Is Awakened w/a Coffeehouse Ambience*](#)

Kitchen 2 - [*These Families Weren't Quite Ready To Finish Their Kitchen Remodel, That Is Until.....*](#)

Kitchen 3 - [*What To Do With Oak Cabinets*](#)

Kitchen 4 - [*This Living Room & Kitchen Remodel Shows How "Transitional Style" Can Feel Warm & Personal*](#)