

Standard Kitchen Cabinet Sizes

There are some [standard kitchen cabinet sizes](#), and standard appliance sizes. Whether you purchase [stock](#) (factory built) cabinets or custom cabinets makes the difference on how flexible those standards can be. Custom built cabinets, depending on who you have built them, can virtually eliminate the need for any fillers, utilizing all your space.

Custom cabinets can also easily be built to accommodate appliances that vary from the norm, like an oversized stove or [refrigerator](#). They can be built in 1/16" increments, even 1/32nds, so, even though there are "standards", or rules of thumb, there really are no standard kitchen cabinet sizes for custom cabinets.

Stock cabinets are normally built in 3" increments. The same goes for semi-custom cabinets, which are really stock (factory built) cabinets with a few more storage options. Check with your cabinet sales person as to what the semi-custom "standard kitchen cabinet sizes" are for sure, because each company may vary a little.

Although you will be somewhat limited regarding dimensions and sizes if you are purchasing stock cabinets or semi-custom cabinets, the good news is, if you know what you want and the dimensions of your room, you can easily find stock cabinets to fill your area effectively and to your liking. Be aware that you may have to use fillers in some areas that you wouldn't have to with custom cabinets.

STARTING WITH THE BASICS

Standard kitchen cabinet sizes are as follows:

- **Base cabinets - 24" deep, 34 1/2" tall**
- **Upper cabinets - 12" deep and usually 30" or 42" tall**

*** Please note that almost all stock cabinets will come in 3" increments regarding width (9", 12", 15", etc., usually up to 36", sometimes more)**

STANDARD KITCHEN CABINET SIZES: BASE CABINETS AND ISLANDS

A 24" deep base cabinet is the perfect size to accommodate your [countertops](#). Laminate, solid surface, or quartz countertops will normally come 25 1/2" deep for kitchens. This allows for an 1 1/2" overhang on the front.

If you are incorporating a simple island, 24" deep cabinets allow a standard 36" island [countertop](#) to be used. You will have an 1 1/2" overhang on the front side of your island, and a 10 1/2" overhang on the back side. This overhang on the back is for your knee area while seated, in other words, an eating area overhang. These are standard sizes. You can get countertops in other sizes, but there will be an up-charge.

Lets say you want an extra-deep island; instead of 36" of countertop space, you prefer 48" in overall depth. If you want your eating area to have a 10 1/2" knee space (overhang) on the back side of the island, you will need to do something creative. If you are purchasing stock cabinets, order a normal 24" deep base cabinet, then add a 12" upper cabinet to the back side of that. This results in 36" of total cabinet depth, leaving you 12", of the 48" countertop, available for overhangs (1 1/2" in front and 10 1/2" in back).

Keep in mind a 48" deep countertop is more expensive than a 36" and will probably have an added up-charge because of the extra depth. These types of extra-deep islands work well in kitchens where you'll be putting the stove, cook-top, or sink in the island.

Also, if you do this, make sure you know the exact height of the 12" upper cabinet you will be using on the back side. With a base cabinet that is 34 1/2" tall, and an upper that's 30" tall, you will have to add an appropriate height toe kick to make up this difference. You could also add a filler to the upper cabinet's top, which will fill in the needed space. The two cabinets must match in height, or your countertops won't work.

If you are purchasing custom built kitchen cabinets, this really isn't an issue. Your cabinet maker (or designer) will sit down with you, discuss your needs, and build a cabinet area to fit your specifications without having to piece together pre-built pieces.

Alternative: An alternative to having an extra-deep countertop to accommodate a stove or sink in an island is to use standard kitchen cabinet sizes against a wall. Use a normal base cabinet with a depth of 24", and put a normal depth countertop (25 1/2") up against a 42" to 44" wall. *The photo at right shows a shaker maple kitchen like this. There is a bar sink at the end of the island. The raised eating area allows for plug-ins in the wall (the ones pictured are mounted sideways so the eating area doesn't become too high).*



On top of the short wall behind the cabinets, an eating area with 15" to 21" of countertop space can be used. *The next photo at right shows the back side of this island. We surrounded the backside with 1/2" maple veneer thermal-melamine. We then nailed 3" wide solid maple boards on top. This gave it a shaker look to match the rest of the kitchen. It would be easier to leave the 1/2 wall just sheetrock, but I don't think it looks quite as nice as this.*

Make sure your raised eating area is not too high, 42" to 44" [works](#) best. Some people think, oh, just go 4 feet, but a 48" high wall with 1 1/2" high countertop added to it becomes 49 1/2" high. This is way too high for the average person to feel comfortable sitting at, even on high [bar stools](#).

Any kind of island wall will need electrical plug-ins too, to meet your local housing codes. Plug-ins can usually be easily built into your wall sideways. Laminate countertops with a standard backsplash are 39" high. A sideways plug-in will take another 3" or so, making your countertop 42" high at minimum. With 1 1/2" of countertop added to the top of the wall, you're now at 43 1/2" without even leaving room for leveling the cabinets. If you were to leave the plug-ins at their normal height, your wall would again be way too high to sit at.



PENINSULAS

The countertop for peninsulas can be a bit tricky. On one side you will have a normal 25 1/2" countertop. This will usually butt up to a 36" deep countertop. Usually this will happen at a 90 degree angle, but not always. 45 degree and 22 1/2 degree angles are also common in today's kitchen.

If you have a standard [laminated countertop](#), you will normally have a 3" backsplash on the 25 1/2" part. Be sure to order this countertop "bull-nosed" at your miter joint (where it attaches to the 36" countertop). If you or your cabinet salesperson does not order this correctly, your backsplash will look odd and not be finished correctly.

The standard kitchen cabinets sizes for peninsula cabinets are 24 1/2" depth, just like the rest of your kitchen. There are two things to keep in mind:

- **Be sure you order or have your cabinet maker include a finished side to your peninsula back (you don't want to be looking at an unfinished cabinet back from your living room, etc.)**
- **Avoid "blind" corners in your peninsula by having a lazy susan area in the corner of your peninsula, or a regular cabinet, 24 1/2" deep and 24" wide, pushed into the back side corner of your peninsula for access from the "back" of the peninsula.**

BUMPED OUT SINK AREA

Bumped out sinks are popular in different areas of the country, but are not very practical unless you have a disability and can only access the sink area from a wheelchair. If this is the case, either be sure to leave the sink area open underneath the countertop, or, when you open the sink doors, be sure there is not a middle support frame in your way.

Often sink bump outs are for looks. With that extra bump out area, you can add a decorative piece of trim in the cabinetry for sophistication.

Keep in mind sink bump outs in countertops are an added expense, as well as more costly to install.

*** Standard kitchen cabinet sizes for a standard sink cabinet will be 36" wide to accommodate the most common double bowled sinks (21" deep x 32" wide), and again, 24 1/2" deep.**

UPPER CABINETS

In the factory cabinet world, standard kitchen cabinet sizes for upper cabinets are normally 12" deep, with the width starting at 9" and going up in 3" increments. The exception is refrigerator cabinets which can be 24" deep (and 12 or 15" high).

Custom built cabinets are often 14" deep. This is especially true for laundry room areas (to allow for soap boxes), or in kitchens where the home owner envisions using 12" plates, or just wants the added room.

Standard kitchen cabinet sizes regarding the height of uppers are either 30" high or 42" high. There are variations to this in stock cabinets. Some are now built 36" high to allow for slightly staggered heights, as well as 24" high. Stock cabinets for above your stove normally come 15" high, but can be 18" high as well. Don't use an 18" high cabinet above your stove if you'll be installing a microwave above the stove. There won't be enough clearance between your stove and microwave.

For standard kitchen cabinet sizes in the custom cabinet world of uppers, anything goes. Even if you have 9 foot ceilings, you can have cabinets built 54" high to go right up to the ceiling without any splices. If you purchase stock cabinets and wish to fill the space of a 9 foot ceiling, you will have to purchase two cabinets and stack them one on top of the other, usually a 42" and a 12", or a 30" and a 24".

BATH VANITIES

Stock, or factory built bath vanities are 28 1/2" tall. This results in a 30" high cabinet when standard 1 1/2" thick laminate countertops are added. If you install a marble top, which is usually 3/4" thick, you will have a 29 1/4" high cabinet.

Custom built cabinets often build higher bath vanities, although you may need to ask them to do this. It's nice to have a bath vanity so the final height is 33" or 36" high, unless, of course, you have small children.

Important Note about Bath Vanity Heights:

Be sure to let your electrician and plumber know if you are raising bath vanity heights, before they begin their work. They will most likely have to move where they planned plug-ins and plumbing (or where your blue-print says to put the plug-ins and plumbing). You don't want to go to install your cabinets, and a plug-in sits where the back-splash for your bath vanity is going to be.

If everything is in place, sheet-rocked, and painted before you realize the error, it's often too late to fix without doing some major damage to your walls, your time-frame, and budget (purchasing a different cabinet or re-sheet-rocking and painting).

APPLIANCES

Standard kitchen cabinet sizes correlate with standard sizes for kitchen appliances. The standards for kitchen appliances are:

- **Stove (free-standing):** 30" (you can get special order models that are 42", 46", 48", etc.) Keep in mind that most units are 25" deep, plus their oven door handle
- **Drop-in stove:** usually 30", but can vary. You will need to be extra careful when ordering your countertop. Be sure to have your drop-in-stove dimensions. They will usually include directions as to what kind of space is needed in your countertop.
- **Cook Tops:** Usually vary from 30" to 36" wide and are cut-into the countertop.
- **Refrigerator:** vary, can be 30" wide to 48" wide for commercial type models. They can be 67" high or higher. Most side by sides today are 35 7/8" wide require 70" of space before an upper cabinet can be placed. Standard dimensions for kitchen cabinets regarding refrigerator openings are 36" wide.
- **Dishwashers:** 24" (unless you special order an 18", which I wouldn't recommend unless you absolutely have to because you are remodeling and that is all the space you have - 18" dishwashers not only loose 6" of space, but are more expensive than standard 24" dishwashers)
- **Microwaves - above the stove:** 30" (just like a range hood), however, microwaves on the counter or built into a cabinet can come in almost any size. Please keep in mind microwaves that go over your stove come in slightly different heights, and may need to be built out from the wall (to ensure the air from the fan is not blowing directly onto your cabinets, thus discoloring or removing the finish from your cabinetry over time - if someone else is installing your over-the-stove microwave, be sure they do this if necessary).
- **Compactor:** usually 15 to 18" wide
- **Built-in Wall Ovens:** Vary. Make sure you have the dimensions before you order your stock cabinets, or have your cabinet maker build a unit.

STANDARD KITCHEN CABINET SIZES: BE FLEXIBLE, BUT DON'T LET YOUR CABINET MAKER OR SALES PERSON MAKE YOU PAY FOR THEIR MISTAKES.

Standard kitchen cabinet sizes are just that: what's standard. We've given you a brief overview, but double check with your cabinet salesperson or cabinet maker to see what's available to fit into the dimensions of your room.

You can't always go off of the blue-print if you're building a new home. They might not draw the kitchen cabinets correctly, the sizes of your walls will change slightly, or you might want to make minor or major changes to the kitchen layout. Here's where you have to trust your custom cabinet maker, kitchen cabinet sales person, or yourself if you've building your own cabinets. Your kitchen will have to be measured once all the walls are where they are going to be. The measurements must be accurate.

If a custom cabinet maker or your cabinet sales person makes a mistake in measuring, and the standard kitchen cabinet sizes that they order don't fit, it's their problem. Don't let them make you pay for rebuilding or reordering cabinets or countertops.