



We maximised space for a smart kitchen



Jean Anderson lives with her husband Alec in a four-bedroom Georgian-style house in Hampshire

Streamlined units, pale finishes and good lighting made Jean and Alec Anderson's dated kitchen look bright and spacious

Jean and Alec Anderson's kitchen was dated, dull, and in need of a revamp. After a lifetime working in the Forces, the couple had moved so many times that they'd formed a definite idea of what they wanted. 'We've had 26 kitchens in our married life,' says Jean, 'with a lot of making do.

I wanted a modern kitchen here, which would be unlike anything we'd had before.'

It was quite a challenge, as the original kitchen was fitted in typical 1970s style. Luckily, their daughter Madeleine runs an interior design business and understood the need for a chic, contemporary kitchen. 'Your parents can be your harshest critics,' she smiles, 'but I knew they'd love a kitchen where they could cook, eat and entertain.'

Jean and Alec's action plan

As Madeleine talked them through the options, a clear wish-list emerged: clean lines, discreet lighting, contemporary materials, an airy feel and integrated appliances. 'It was already light and airy,' says Jean, 'so we wanted to exploit that.' But the fuzzy carpet, flowery wallpaper and oak-trimmed units all had to go.

However, with windows on two of the walls and a door on the ➤



Maple units and stainless-steel appliances provide the sleek, modern look that Jean had hoped for, while terracotta-effect flooring is easy to clean

This bank of different-shaped units offers lots of storage without dominating the room

5 TIPS FOR A PERFECT KITCHEN

■ PLAN THE LAYOUT

Keeping appliances where they are is always the easiest option, but it can pay to change key features. Moving a sink or oven can make better use of space, for example. Open up the room with French doors or wide windows, and exploit wall space with base and high-level units to squeeze in extra storage.

■ SPICE UP A SCHEME

Tone-on-tone colour schemes in cream, brown and muted whites are smart and easy to live with, but highlighting one key feature can lift the whole look. Here, a pebble mosaic splashback defines the cooking area and reflects the whole colour palette. Tinted, etched or sandblasted glass, granite, and sleek steel are all good alternatives.

■ USE SPACE CREATIVELY

Mid-height units are a great way to pack in easy-access storage and to set ovens at a comfortable level to minimise bending. But make sure a heat-proof surface is within reach, so you have somewhere to put down those piping-hot oven trays.

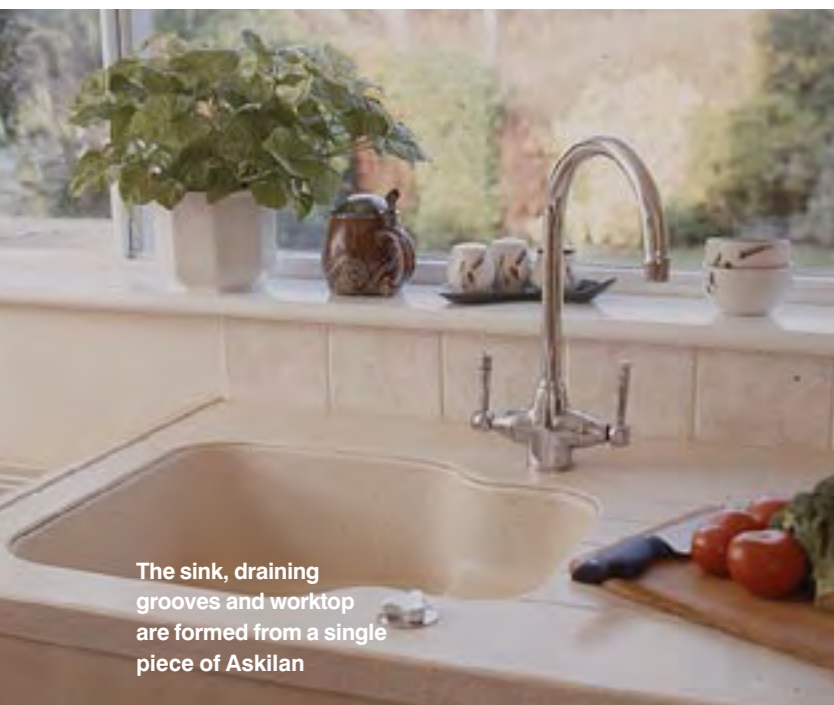
■ MAXIMISE WORK AREAS

The key to stress-free cooking is having room to work. Keep preparation areas free from clutter and allow yourself space to spread out. Composite worktops such as Corian and Askilan are practical, hygienic and versatile. You can include sinks, draining grooves and curves in their seamless surfaces.

■ MAKE USE OF LIGHTING

The different uses of a kitchen/diner make big demands on lighting. Task lighting under units, halogen downlights, and angled spots are all excellent ways to focus light on the working area. For dining, use pendant lights on dimmers to create a relaxed atmosphere.

FOR SHOPPING DETAILS SEE 'STOCKISTS'



The sink, draining grooves and worktop are formed from a single piece of Askilan

third, there was limited wall space, so one key decision was to swap the working and eating areas around, creating a more practical layout.

Madeleine set aside a bright corner next to the windows as a dining area, while practical terracotta-effect Amtico flooring, stainless-steel appliances and pale maple units all make the area feel spacious. As both Jean and Alec are tall, Madeleine allowed for higher-than-standard work surfaces, and designed a sleek bank of mid-height units with an integrated oven and microwave, so they wouldn't have to bend too low.

Jean and Alec chose a simple, neutral colour scheme, based on a palette of soft browns and muted creams, to complement the pale furniture and flooring. Their quest for state-of-the-art materials was rewarded when

they found the sleek composite worktop, Askilan. 'I love it because there are no joins between the worktop, sink and drainer, which makes it easy to care for,' says Jean.

Choosing subtle spotlights and a pendant lamp to replace the existing brash fluorescent strip was essential to the overall effect, as were small details such as the steel bar handles chosen for the cupboards.

For Jean and Alec, the end result is perfect. 'We both agree it's much more pleasant to work in now,' says Jean. 'It fulfils all the criteria we laid out and I love it when my friends admire it.'

Madeleine is pleased with the room, too. 'The way the space has changed means my parents use the room a lot more now, especially as the lighting is more homely. And as I wanted them to love it, that's a huge relief!'

A new layout means the dining area now has garden views, while pendant lighting creates a cosy atmosphere for evening meals



Rustic mosaic tiles create a stunning splashback that defines the kitchen's neutral scheme



SHOPPING LIST

Walls in Buttermilk vinyl matt emulsion, around £13.99 for 2.5 litres, Dulux. MQR45 Quarry Terracotta **floor tiles**, £61.50 a sq metre, Amtico. Jonelle Rimini **units** in Light Maple, £199 for a 600mm base unit; Askilan Ask 021 **work surfaces**, £240 for a W600mm x L1000mm size; **splashback** in Cartolli rustic mosaic tiles, £7.50 for a 28cm sq tile; all John Lewis. K5614 **fridge**, £427.99; G4344 side-by-side **fridge-freezer**, £349; H5642 conventional **microwave oven**, £427.99; U1452 double circotherm **oven**, £699.99; T1212 touch-control ceramic **hob**, £349.99; all Neff. Stainless-steel Tamaya 60 **chimney hood**, £179.99, Elica. Integrated SE64A630 **dishwasher**, £464.99, Siemens. **Blinds**, £45 each, Prêt à Vivre. Stainless-steel under-unit **pyramid spotlights**, £59 for two; **pendant light**, £60; all John Lewis. TT91100 Porsche **toaster**, £92.88, Siemens. **Kettle**, £27.99, Russell Hobbs.

WHAT IT COST

Paint	£41.97
Flooring	£840
Units	£3095
Worktops	£867
Splashback	£75
Appliances	£2899.94
Blinds	£135

TOTAL £7953.91

Text: Hazel Dolan. Photographs: John Boucher



ANN'S VERDICT

'This room was in such a grotty state that it made sense to start again. Swapping the cooking and eating areas has made for a much more useable arrangement, with a cosy dining area. Adding a 'wall' of units and built-in appliances not only looks smart but increases the amount of storage, too, without encroaching on valuable floor space. A pendant light above the dining table, rustic terracotta flooring and an eye-catching splashback also help to soften this smart-looking room.'