

Kaboodle Kitchen has a range of modular cabinets and benchtop options.

ADVICE

Ask an expert...

## Cool kitchen hacks

If you're happy with your cabinets, consider replacing the door handles or the benchtop as a relatively cost effective option.

You don't have to start from scratch to give your kitchen a new lease on life, writes **Catherine Nikas-Boulos**

**Q** I want to refresh my kitchen, but I'm worried about the cost. How can I spruce up my kitchen without starting from scratch?

**A** It may feel like the best way to start a renovation is with a sledgehammer to get rid of the past and prepare a clean slate, but that's not your only option.

If you're trying to save money, or you're after something temporary to tide you over, then a kitchen makeover should be an exercise in removing everything you don't want, while holding onto the structural elements that can be reused.

### Save what you can

Lisa Mayski, marketing manager at Kaboodle Kitchen, (pictured), says don't be in a rush to demolish the entire kitchen.

"In the first place, set yourself a budget," she says. "Something as simple as painting the door cupboards and changing the handles can make a significant improvement to the look and feel of a kitchen."

Lisa says that if the structure of the kitchen is solid, and you are happy with the position of the main amenities like the sink and oven, then you have just saved yourself thousands of dollars because moving amenities is expensive.

"This depends on if you have a relatively solid structure," she says. "All you have to do at that point is change over the doors. If the old kitchen shows wear and tear or has water damage, you may be out of luck."

"At that point the best thing would be to start over."

### Time for a shake up

If you have an L-shaped kitchen, Lisa suggests shaking things up by introducing a freestanding island bench, and overhead cabinetry above existing benchtops, if you have the space. The materials and colours can be in contrast to what you already have.

"Introducing new materials in the kitchen, such as modern timbers or bamboo, will make it much more interesting," she says. "There are so many resources available now, with magazines and design blogs doing the research for you on new colours and trends."

"You could just Google new product materials on the market that would work in your kitchen," she says.

If you're unsure, Kaboodle has the option of buying swatches at Bunnings for you to take home and try before you buy.

"So you don't over commit unless you're 100 per cent happy with your choice," Lisa says. →



Make a statement with your splashback for a dramatic kitchen facelift. Luxe Walls wallpapers offers a range of easy-to-use but bold designs.



→ With most modular systems, sizes are standard so it is quite straightforward to interchange the doors, but for products that are custom made, you may have to check the hinge location.

"The great thing about modular systems is that you can you go back and refresh the same kitchen in a couple of years to give it a whole new look, or replace something that may look tired," Lisa says.

### Getting a handle on it yourself

Simple changes to the kitchen, such as changing a door or a handle, doesn't usually require a professional tradesperson.

However, replacing a benchtop, retiling the splashback or perhaps adding additional joinery to the kitchen may be best left to licensed tradespeople.

Lisa says the spate of renovation shows on TV has inspired homeowners to try their hand at DIY, with the kitchen a popular place to start.

"In the past, with a kitchen renovation, there was no way you would consider doing it without a professional getting involved," she says.

"But once people see how easy it is to make small changes that make a massive difference, they become quite comfortable with DIY."

"From our perspective, the DIY market has grown exponentially."

Although it's quite easy to change a splashback, paint a feature wall or change the door knobs, Lisa says it's worth considering the bigger picture.

Taking the time to plan, measure and think through the kitchen restyle could save you time and money in the long run.

It's not just modular kitchen manufacturers who can help restyle your kitchen, with Luxe Walls offering wallpaper splashback solutions to completely change the look and feel of the space.

Industrial, marble and botanical wallpapers are really popular in the kitchen right now — and generally cheaper than the real thing.

The wallpaper is printed in one panel, which makes for easy installation, and must then be covered with clear glass to allow for easy cleaning.

If a new splashback alone won't give the overall look you are after, you could also cover the cupboard doors with peel and stick wallpaper. Adding a textured look, block colour or even a pattern will totally change the look of your kitchen.

The company can change the colour and the wood panel widths depending on the customer's needs, making it easy to get the look you want.

More [kaboodle.com.au](http://kaboodle.com.au); [luxewalls.com.au](http://luxewalls.com.au)



### Cooking up a sweet style

Here are the kitchen hacks to give your kitchen a fresh twist.

- ✓ Changing the door knob is a quick and effective way to introduce colour or a sleek, modern feel to the kitchen.
- ✓ Switching up the cupboard doors in a modular kitchen should be straightforward because they come in standard sizes.
- ✓ Introducing an island bench in an L-shaped kitchen is a great way to add a usable space that is on-trend and functional.
- ✓ A new kitchen timber bench makes a strong modern, statement in an old kitchen. Consider hard-wearing timber laminates if your budget is tight.
- ✓ A boring splashback can be reinvigorated with a sleek wallpaper print. They will require a glass top to protect the surface.
- ✓ Painting the kitchen a new colour can make the room feel fresh and vibrant. Ask your paint supplier about the right product for the job.



Luxe Walls (above) has created a wallpaper product that can be used in the kitchen as a splashback, though the wallpaper needs to be secured with a glass panel to protect it. It is an effective way to create drama and fun in the kitchen, in stark contrast to monochrome joinery.

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