

Stone...beyond the kitchen

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ask the experts

Organization

Q: *I'm having trouble organizing my tiny kitchen. I have an extremely small pantry and very limited storage space to work with and yet I have a lot of kitchen supplies and items that need to be stowed. I'm overwhelmed. Where do you suggest I begin to organize to make my kitchen efficient and clutter-free? – A reader in Bethesda, Md.*

A: When you're dealing with small spaces, you really have to be creative. Look up. Look down. If you have blank wall space, think of ways to use it, i.e., hang shelving for pantry items or place hooks for utensils. Can you mount a pot rack in the ceiling? Another option is to go mobile with a rolling baker's cart for containers and other supplies. Most come with a butcher-block top and make for a convenient, floating island. If you have a dining area/nook close by, perhaps you can store less frequently used items there. If you're low on cabinet space, invest in a stemware rack that you can hang under your cabinets, which also adds a nice visual touch. Use baskets of different sizes on your countertops to hide away smaller items like spices, napkins, etc.

– Lori Welch, professional organizer/concierge and owner of JCL Services, Ltd., Alexandria, Va.

Historical Renovation

Q: *I own a two-story center hall brick Colonial, built in the 1940s, and I want to remodel my kitchen and build a family room addition. What are some architectural elements to consider so that the addition doesn't look tacked-on? – A reader in Alexandria, Va.*

A: What you've described is a home in "Colonial Revival" style, which is the most popular architectural language in northern Virginia's older suburbs. The Colonial style is especially well suited to remodeling and expanding, because the massing forms are simple block shapes, making scale and proportion easy to achieve. Also, materials intrinsic to the period—double-hung windows, clapboard, brick, slate shingles—are readily available today.

To preserve the Colonial style's architectural language, highest consideration must be given to the following four subjects:

Form and mass - Replicate the home's original styles of form and mass. When remodeling a Colonial Revival, I often design the addition at the rear of the kitchen as a small wing. The new wing provides additional kitchen space and, as appropriate, an adjacent family room.

Roof Shape - This is essential when creating an ◉