



Previous page (p45): Metris kitchens are available from independent retailers nationwide. This design features sleek, handleless cabinetry in gloss almond with a feature area in a contrasting brown grey. Expect to pay from £20,000.

Above: Make your island stand out with a Verdi Vienna solid granite worktop. This bespoke design from Laurence Pidgeon also features Häcker's Systemat cabinets in pure white high-gloss lacquer and a mirrored glass splashback with bespoke extractor hood from Westin. Prices start from £20,000.

Planning a new kitchen takes time and money, so before you begin it's important to consider how much of each you wish to invest. The key factor is whether this is a long-term kitchen to see you through the next 10 years or more, or if it's a revamp that will add value to your home if you're thinking of selling up.

"It's worth remembering that kitchens really do sell houses," says Steve Tough of Masterclass Kitchens, "so there is value in apportioning a fair chunk of any budget and saving as much as you can in order to do it properly. Estate agents have suggested in the past that if you're doing up your whole home, then around 15% of the overall budget should be spent on the kitchen."

Plan ahead

Once you have a budget in mind, the next step is to do your research and draw up a wishlist of styles, layouts, materials and products that you like. Look through magazines and brochures and check out online sites

such as Pinterest – take cuttings and create your own moodboard or scrapbook. The more information and ideas you have before you visit a retailer, the better.

Consider how much storage you need, how you use the kitchen and whether you'd like a dining area incorporated into the design. You can also take some basic measurements and draw up a rough floor plan indicating where doors and windows are, as well as existing plug points and plumbing. Take digital photos of the space too, and either print them off or take your camera or tablet with you to help the designer build a clear picture. Armed with this info, they will be able to draw up some initial designs and give you a broad idea of cost before visiting you at home to measure and price up in full to give you a proper quote.

It's also helpful to have an idea of what you don't like, as this will guide them into producing the right scheme to suit you. **KBB**

Turn to page 54 for tips on budgeting for a new kitchen.