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PAGE 20

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A custom design guarantees a place for absolutely everything in this Illinois kitchen

Photographs by Linda Oyama Bryan

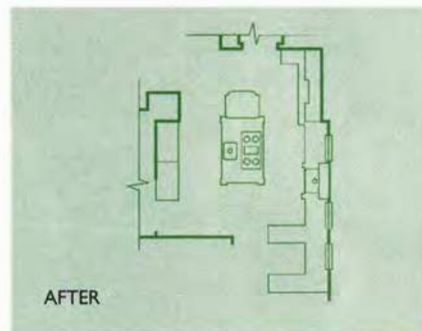
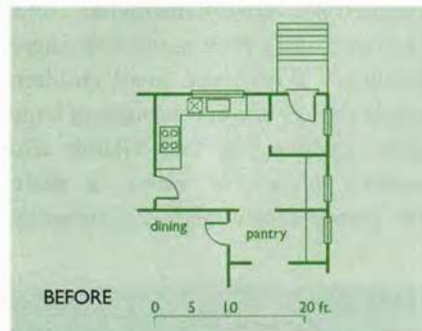
“Utter disrepair” is how Judith Konen describes the pre-remodel kitchen that was in her suburban Illinois home. Fortunately, she never had to use the kitchen; in fact, she never even saw it, except in some grisly “before” photos.

The 1918 house that Judith and her husband Joseph now live in was in the process of being remodeled by Orren Pickell Builders of Bannockburn, Illinois, when they bought it; by that time the small, seriously outdated original kitchen was a thing of the past and a new space was emerging. Laid out by Certified Kitchen Designer David Heigl of CabinetWerks (a division of Orren Pickell), the kitchen now includes a highly functional layout and an abundance of storage, both of which were important to the Konens. The look of the room was also important, so Judith worked with Heigl to create the warm and homey ambiance that she wanted, with richly detailed, off-white cabinets, chrome cup-style drawer pulls, granite counters, and a multi-hued slate floor that, according to Judith, never shows dirt. The cabinets—crafted in a traditional style that might have been found in the original house—provide the kind of storage features that this busy kitchen needs.

The work island, topped with a butcher-block counter, features deep drawers that hold pots, pans, utensils, small appliances, and spices. More storage can be found in the hutch-like cabinet to the left of the sink, with long drawers for linens, foil, and plastic wrap. The cabinet also boasts such specialty storage as glass-fronted bins for pastas and dried beans, and a tiny drawer designated for household keys.

The Konens’ favorite feature, however, is an unusual, U-shaped butler’s pantry that stands between the kitchen and the breakfast area. Here, see-through upper cabinets stow glassware, and base cabinets hold china and silver. “I love this little storage area,” says Judith. “No matter where I’m standing—kitchen, pantry, or breakfast room—everything I need is within easy reach.” She also enjoys the glass doors on the upper cabinets. “They keep openness and communication flowing between the work zone and the eating area, where my grown children and their families gather when they come home for a meal.” Another favorite feature is a granite-topped table that extends from the island. “It’s a handy serving station,” says the owner, “and it doubles as a little eating area for the kids.”

■ for product information, see page 101



Opposite: A butcher block provides plenty of workspace around the island cooktop. **Above:** Wall ovens are handily located near the island. The makeover expanded the kitchen from 135 square feet to 305 square feet (see plans).