

BONSAI KITCHEN, BATH & FLOORING

Free Homeowner Guide

The Massachusetts Kitchen Remodel Planning Checklist

Everything you need to plan a smooth, stress-free kitchen remodel — from budgeting and permits to design choices and avoiding the mistakes MA homeowners regret most.

Bonsai Kitchen, Bath & Flooring

Design showroom in Leicester, MA · Backed by three generations of experience

Before You Begin

A kitchen remodel is one of the biggest investments you'll make in your home — and in Massachusetts, older homes, permit rules, and New England seasons all add extra layers to plan around.

This checklist walks you through every stage of planning, so nothing gets missed. Work through it at your own pace, check off each item as you go, and bring it with you when you visit our showroom — it'll make your design consultation faster and more productive.

How to use this guide: Each section covers one phase of your remodel. Check off items as you complete them. Anything you're unsure about is a great question to bring to a designer.

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Set Your Budget

Know your numbers before you fall in love with finishes.



Set a realistic total budget

Include materials, labor, permits, and a 10–15% cushion for surprises.



Add a contingency for older homes

MA homes often hide outdated wiring or plumbing behind the walls — budget for it.



Decide your must-haves vs. nice-to-haves

Know where you'll splurge (cabinets, countertops) and where you'll save.



Understand what drives cost

Cabinet quality, countertop material, and layout changes move the price most.



Think about return on investment

A well-planned kitchen adds real resale value to your home.

Plan Your Layout & Function

How you use the kitchen matters more than how it looks.

☐ Map how you actually cook and move

Think about the "work triangle" between sink, stove, and fridge.

☐ Identify what's not working now

Too little counter space? Poor storage? A cramped corner? List it all.

☐ Decide on an island or peninsula

Great for prep and seating — if you have the room for it.

☐ Plan enough storage

Pantry space, deep drawers, and corner solutions make a daily difference.

☐ Consider lighting layers

Task lighting for counters, ambient for the room, accent for style.

Choose Your Materials

Where design meets durability — see samples in person before deciding.

☐ Select your cabinet style & quality

We carry Wellborn Forest, Tedd Wood, JSI, and Dover Woods — see them side by side.

☐ Pick your countertop material

Quartz, granite, or other surfaces — balance looks, maintenance, and budget.

☐ Choose flooring that handles MA life

Durable against winter moisture, salt, and everyday wear.

☐ Plan your backsplash

Tile choice ties the whole look together — pick it alongside your counters.

☐ See samples in real light

Colors look different in a showroom vs. your kitchen — always view samples.

Permits & Timeline

The behind-the-scenes steps that keep your project legal and on track.



Check if you need permits

Electrical, plumbing, and structural work usually require MA town permits.



Confirm who pulls the permits

A design-build team can handle this for you — ask upfront.



Set a realistic timeline

Factor in design, ordering lead times, and installation.



Order materials early

Cabinets and countertops can have weeks of lead time — book ahead.



Plan for kitchen downtime

Set up a temporary space so daily life keeps moving during the remodel.

Choose the Right Team

The single biggest factor in how smoothly your remodel goes.



Look for design + install under one roof

One team means less coordination and no finger-pointing.



Check experience with MA homes

Local knowledge of older homes and town codes saves time and money.



Ask to see past work

Real project photos tell you more than any brochure.



Confirm licensing & insurance

Protect yourself — always work with licensed, insured professionals.



Get the scope & timeline in writing

A clear written plan prevents surprises down the road.

Ready to Start Planning?

Bring this checklist to our Leicester showroom and turn your plans into reality. See cabinets, countertops, and finishes in person — and work with a team that handles everything from design through installation.

Book your visit today

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