

This Old House

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Bright and open

Merging the kitchen and the dining area creates one big happy family hangout

BY MEGAN BAKER + PHOTOGRAPHS BY ALEX HAYDEN

SOMETIMES IT TAKES a larger problem to finally spur the solution to a smaller one. Betina Simmons and Ian Blaine had been living in their 1927 Tudor Revival for nearly a decade, dissatisfied with the cramped galley kitchen but otherwise smitten with the Seattle house. Then cracks in the foundation appeared, necessitating a renovation—and prompting them to take a good look at what they wanted from their cook space.

Their priorities: open sight lines and lots of workspace, to give the couple and their two children room to spread out, even when they were all doing different things. With the help of a local firm, J.A.S. Design Build, the couple decided on a wide-open floor plan that fused cooking and dining areas and also called for a 9-foot rear expansion.

The result is a big, bright space with an island that seats three, a table that fits eight, and yards of countertops, along with plenty of windows. Upper cabinets lost in the shake-up are compensated for with island storage, lots of deep base-cabinet drawers, and a hutch-like wall of built-ins. “The new kitchen is inviting and cozy without being too crowded,” says Betina. “Our kids can do homework at the table while we cook at the stove, and it still feels like we’re together.”



BEFORE

BEFORE The counter-starved kitchen provided little room to work, and a separate breakfast nook broke up the cooking and dining spaces. **AFTER** An open layout with a large island offers lots of room to spread out and plenty of storage. Cabinets: Belmont Cabinet Company. Range: Wolf. Vent hood: Vent-A-Hood. Pendant light: Marston & Langer

• before + after:
kitchen



Homeowner Ian Blaine and son Anders gather around the new island, which is tucked into the kitchen's work zone. The space's salvaged-fir box-beam ceiling echoes the Tudor-style home's exterior details.

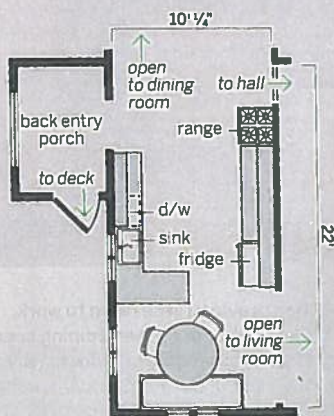
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before

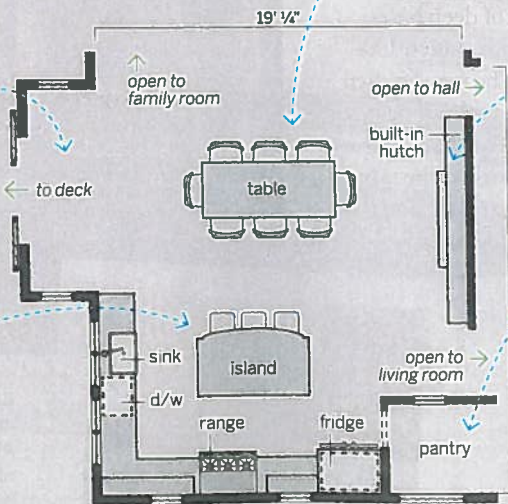
The old galley kitchen lacked storage, counter space, and natural light.



after

Pushing the back out 9 feet absorbed an entry porch and allowed for a large open-plan cooking-and-dining space lined with windows.

- 1] Bumped out the rear wall 9 feet, annexing the back entry porch and gaining 319 square feet of additional space.
- 2] Added a storage island with an expansive food-prep surface tucked into the reconfigured and relocated work triangle.



- 3] Created an almost square space to fit in an airy dining area that's visible from the kitchen.

- 4] Put in a wall of built-ins for storing dishware and cookbooks, with a counter for serving.

- 5] Carved out a pantry closet that steals 4 feet from the living room. It has an arched entry and an interior window salvaged during the redo.

• before + after:
kitchen



The cook space looks out onto an airy dining area and peeks into a corner pantry. The wall of hutch-like built-ins is a functional showpiece, with leaded-glass cabinet doors and a salvaged marble counter.



New, energy-efficient windows match the look of the original ones. Their awning style makes them easy to operate when reaching over a deep counter.

An apron-front sink, a gooseneck faucet, and soapstone counters lend vintage charm, while micro-sized ceramic subway tile adds a modern kick. Sink: Shaws. Faucet: Kohler. Tile: Ann Sacks



homeowner tip IAN BLAINE, SEATTLE

“Using the same fir for the base cabinets and the ceiling beams helps unite the look of the kitchen, even with the various paint colors added throughout.”



The curved detail on the island countertop shows off the thick edge-grain maple, while the dark blue base brings out its warm tones. Butcher block: Windfall