

7 tips for fewer steps in the kitchen

7 TIPS FOR FEWER STEPS IN THE KITCHEN

🕒 5 minutes

📍 INNOVATION LAB,
Blum

We may not realise it, but there's a marathon runner inside each one of us. After all, we go the distance of two marathons every year – and that's just in our kitchen. That is why there is an increasing focus on avoiding hurdles and other obstacles coming between us and the finish line.



To make sure our annual kitchen marathon is as efficient and ergonomic as possible, Blum's Requirements Research Department has been conducting intensive research using the so-called "Thread Study". This investigation enables us to map the kitchen marathon step by step, and to identify key patterns of behaviour and decisive factors. Find out exactly how you cover over 90 kilometres every year and what you should be considering when planning a kitchen in order to make it a walk in the park.

Our nifty method for identifying routes around the kitchen

A line of thread well worth following: The Thread Study is a proven method that allows you to precisely map out daily kitchen routines. The study involves tying a thread to the leg of a virtual test subject and using this to track routes and activities in the kitchen. Seven different daily routines were observed in an L-shaped kitchen. Optimum conditions were established for the study – that is without forgetting the influence of other people or things in the kitchen. On average, the test subject covered a distance of 264 m every day, which equates to more than 96 km in a year! For the sake of comparison, a marathon covers a distance of 42.195 kilometres. During our travels, we open the waste bin up to 50 times and our cabinets up to 80 times in a single day. We have therefore put together some helpful tips and tricks to make the kitchen layout as efficient as possible, so that unnecessary distances are avoided.



This is because when the many small trips around the kitchen are added together, they result in a significant distance over the course of the day.

Kitchen planning: the most efficient layout for your kitchen




If everything is stored where it is needed, you will spend less time moving back and forth.

Records of personalised kitchen planning and optimisation date back to the 18th century. For example, the "work triangle" was developed in the 1940s and remains the basis for all kitchen planning to this day. Over the course of time, a wide range of different kitchen formats and layouts have been devised – each of which has its advantages and disadvantages. The routes around the kitchen are important when selecting a layout, although other factors are also significant:

- ✓ Efficient use of energy
- ✓ Optimum food storage
- ✓ Ergonomic use of the working and storage space
- ✓ Additional usage requirements in the kitchen
- ✓ Buying and cooking habits

A few major factors and many minor details may be considered when planning an ergonomic kitchen.

A modern, bright kitchen with a large white island. A woman in a white top is cooking on the island, which has a black induction cooktop. On the cooktop, there is a large pot with a roasted chicken and vegetables. Various kitchen items like bottles, a pepper mill, and a cutting board with carrots are on the island. In the background, a man is also working at the island. The kitchen has large windows and a view of the ocean. The ceiling has a recessed light fixture.

Consider your cooking habits

There are different ways of using a kitchen. Do you tend to cook on your own, or are several people at work in the kitchen at the same time? Do you enjoy cooking, or are you a fan of take-away deliveries? When planning a kitchen it is essential to consider how it will be used on a daily basis and ultimately what service it needs to perform.

Fresh food or provisions

Think about your shopping habits. Do you buy in provisions and need storage space, or are you able to shop for fresh food almost every day? The way you shop affects your kitchen design – and the volume of central storage space needed affects the number of cabinets.



Keep together what belongs together



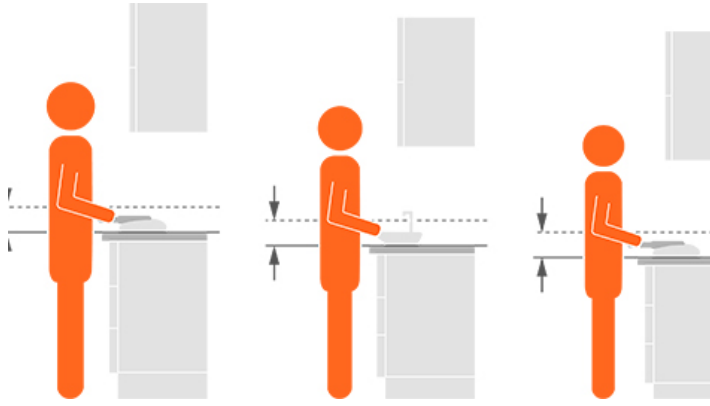
Knives near the cutting board, cutlery near the dishwasher. Have a think about typical tasks like preparing breakfast and design your kitchen accordingly. Where's the worktop? Where's the hob? You should have everything stored in the area you intend to use it. This will save time and shorten distances.

Plan sufficient work space

The ideal spot for food preparation is between the sink and hob; to avoid tight squeezes you should plan at least 80 cm of worktop space between the two.



Ergonomics thanks to the perfect work height



The right work height is essential when it comes to ergonomic work – anything else leads to guaranteed back pain. The main kitchen user should be able to work in comfort and without restrictions. Simply measure the height from the floor to beneath the bent elbow – the height of the worktop area should be 10 to 15 cm less than this measurement. Don't forget to take off your shoes first!

Cabinet solutions for the future

The life of a kitchen is up to 20 years. Choosing well-designed cabinets means that you can be sure of easy and convenient work in the kitchen, regardless of changes in your personal needs.

- ✓ Fit base cabinets with drawers and inner dividing systems
- ✓ Choose tall cabinets with individual pull-outs for storing provisions
- ✓ Plan wall cabinets with lift systems so the front moves up and out of the user's way
- ✓ Choose corner cabinets with drawers or include a "dead corner" in your plans

The perfectly formed kitchen

First and foremost, alongside personal preference, your design will depend on what the space dictates. Existing sockets, the room size, doors and windows are usually decisive when it comes to arranging a kitchen. The good news is that every kitchen layout can be optimised for the user's personal needs. We've equipped a range of different kitchen shapes with the same cabinets and compared them with each other.



The U-shaped kitchen is the most efficient layout because everything is just a few steps away.



A kitchen with an island is ideal for integration into an open-plan living space. In comparison to the U-shape, the distances are between 2% and 8% greater depending on the layout (sink on the island and sink at the back respectively).



A G-shaped kitchen is especially well-suited for more generous spaces. With just 6% more distance to cover, it is also highly efficient.



If you opt for a galley kitchen, the distance increases by 11%. This layout is usually selected if there are only two opposing walls available.



The L-shaped kitchen is the most common design because it can be implemented in almost every room. However, it does mean covering a significantly greater distance than in a U-shaped kitchen (roughly 23% more), making it significantly less efficient.



The single run kitchen is an economical and space-efficient alternative to kitchens with parallel counters, and is especially well suited for small households. As with the "parallel counter" kitchen, kitchen appliances are fitted next to each other along one side of the wall. This means a lot of walking back and forth, with users taking 40% more steps on average. This increases the annual distance travelled to more than three marathons!

If you take a step-by-step approach to determining furniture functionality and practicality when planning your kitchen, you'll be able to save a lot of walking in the long run. It's best to consult your kitchen planner. Tell him or her as much as you can about your cooking and buying habits, your preferences and other wishes, so that the fabled "kitchen marathon" remains a myth in your home.

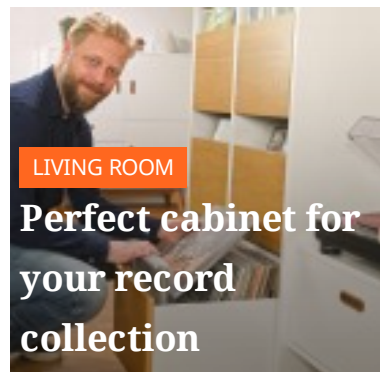
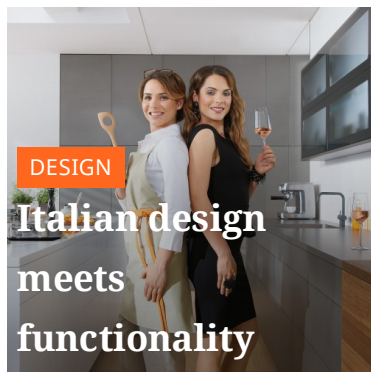
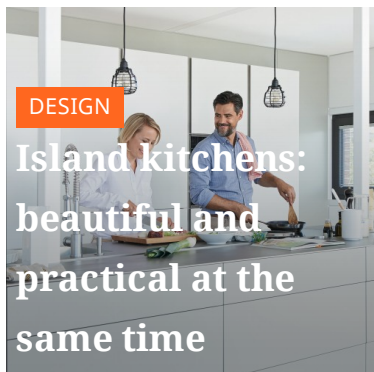
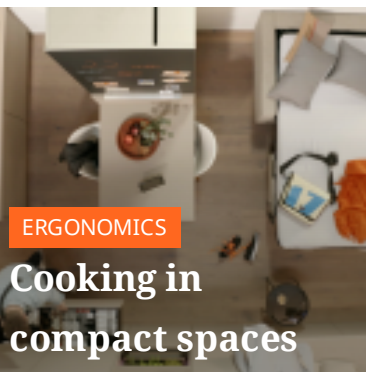
Seven tips for transforming your marathon into a walk in the park

Bid farewell to hurdles and obstacles that hamper your daily route around your kitchen.



- ✓ **Stop items falling.** The combination of drawers with closed sides and high back panels prevents objects falling down the back of the cabinet.
- ✓ **Create good ergonomics.** Mechanical or electrical opening mechanisms are ideal when you've got your hands full.
- ✓ **Make items fully accessible.** Drawers with full extension guarantee the best possible access to all contents.
- ✓ **Remain flexible at all times.** The better the inner dividing system, the more practical the kitchen organisation can be. Flexible inner dividing systems bring order to every drawer.
- ✓ **Ensure everything is clearly visible and easily to hand.** Store frequently used items at eye level and within easy reach for accessibility.
- ✓ **Keep heavy items down low.** Put heavy and bulky items on lower cabinet levels.
- ✓ **Keep rarely used items up high.** High storage locations are best allocated to things you use only occasionally. This frees up valuable space within ergonomic reach.

This might also interest you



Julius Blum GmbH

Plant 2

Industriestrasse 1

6973 Hoechst

AUSTRIA

Phone +43 5578 705

- 0

Email

About us

Blum is an Austrian manufacturer of innovative furniture fittings.

Find out more