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kitchen makeovers

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Your Dream Kitchen

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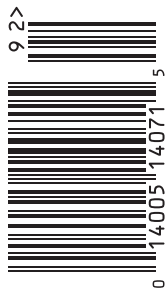
4 Ways to Use 3 Feet

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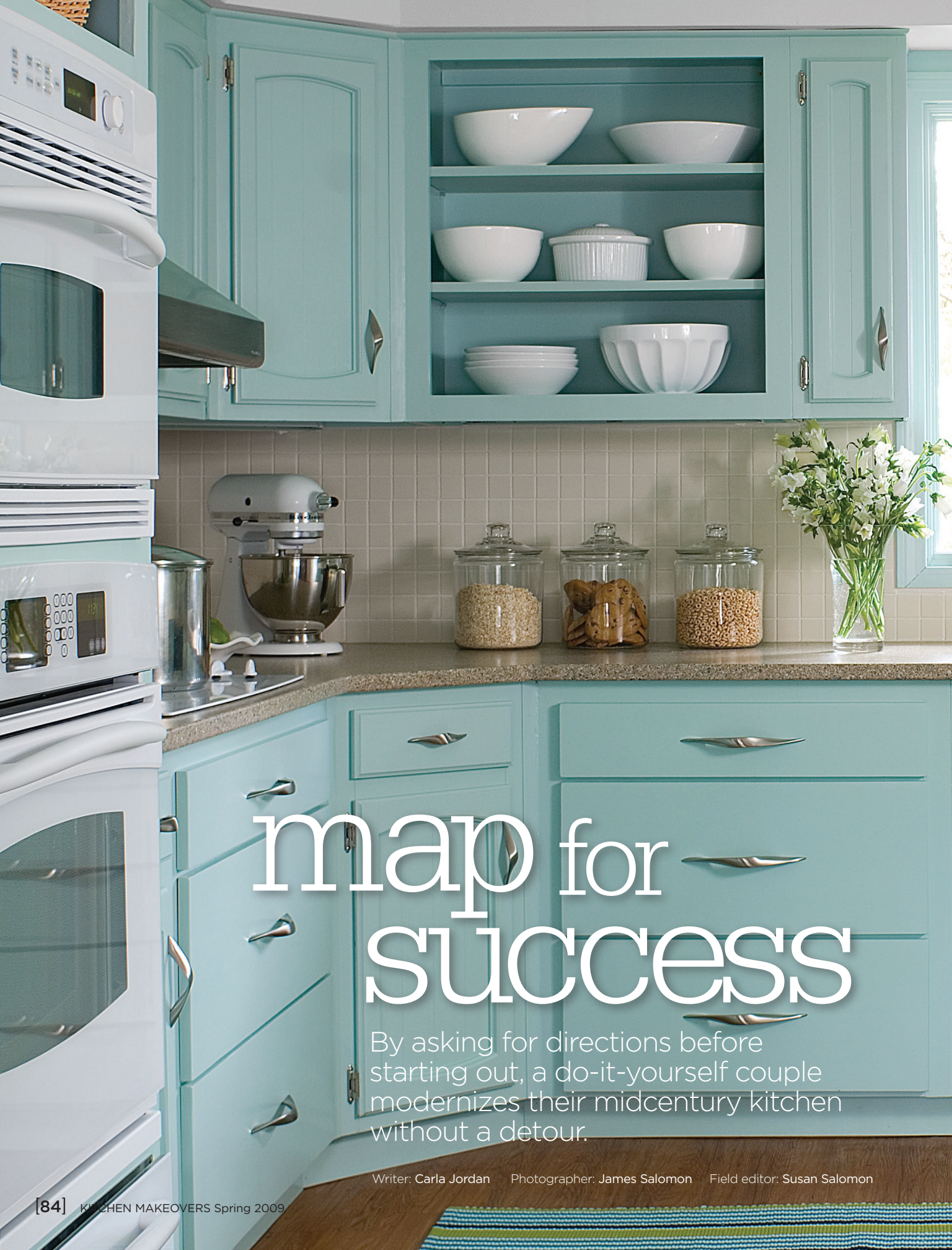
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35 Best Buys for Tight Budgets



map for success

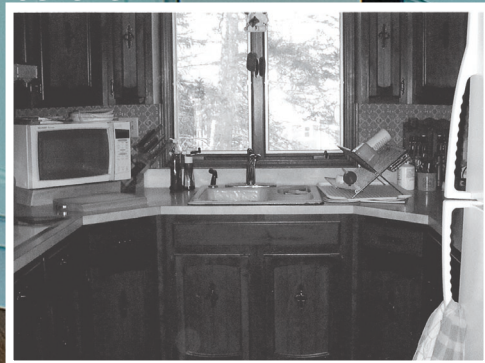
By asking for directions before starting out, a do-it-yourself couple modernizes their midcentury kitchen without a detour.

Writer: Carla Jordan Photographer: James Salomon Field editor: Susan Salomon

THIS PHOTO: The biggest change in Mary and Colman Connelly's kitchen was aqua paint that reminds them of the sea. They chose seaside hues of sand and natural wood to carry out the look.



before





THIS PHOTO: Crisp white appliances keep the cozy kitchen looking clean and tidy. The stainless-steel hood is an upscale addition.

OPPOSITE: Diagonal corner cabinets soften the kitchen's boxy layout. A light-color backsplash and countertop keep the room looking light and airy.

For nearly a quarter of a century, Mary and Colman “Coley” Connelly started their day in a dreary kitchen so small they bumped into one another when reaching for their cups of java. “We couldn’t even open the refrigerator and oven door at the same time—there wasn’t enough room. Plus, the kitchen was like a time capsule from 1970 with dark cabinets and harvest-gold countertops, appliances, and sink,” Mary says. “The wallpaper was a red-and-green print with a smaller print in red tones on the soffit and backsplash walls.” What was groovy in the ’70s was anything but some 30 years later. The couple decided the time had come for a complete overhaul.

Because funds were tight, Mary and Coley opted to do much of the work themselves but set aside money for an upfront consultation with designer Elaine Murdoch so she could tweak their game plan. “The Connells made it clear they wanted to remodel on a budget and that they were hiring me for ideas,” Murdoch says. “An obstacle for many do-it-yourself homeowners in a project like this is differentiating the good from the not so good and establishing priorities.” Together, they zeroed in on their three most important goals and divided up funds to make the 80-square-foot kitchen larger, brighter, and contain updated appliances.

Murdoch suggested working within the existing floor plan except for bumping out the cooktop wall into the garage. This added an additional 25 square feet to the room at a fraction of the cost of moving the exterior sink wall. “That amount of space might seem miserly, but it makes all the difference in the



world,” Murdoch says. “The existing layout was classic and functional so it made sense to keep it. That meant most of the cabinetry could stay in place and minimized electrical or plumbing that had to be moved, which kept labor expenses down.”

Instead of gutting and replacing all the cabinetry, only four new cabinets were needed for the bump-out. Then all were painted to match. The Connells chose open cabinets and new drawers that look similar to the old ones to avoid a mismatched look. Outdated hardware was replaced with chic, ergonomic stainless-steel pulls that mimic gently rolling waves and lend a modernist touch to the room.

As a textile designer with her own business, Mary values color and its ability to impart moods. Here she opted for seaside hues of aqua, sand, and natural wood that infuse the space with soft tones and gently reflect the light coming from the room’s single window, which is above the sink.

A simple shell-hue mosaic tile backsplash wraps the room in a calming tone as it protects walls from splashes. The engineered quartz countertop, an admitted splurge, resembles a warm, sandy beach;

Why Hiring a Pro Pays

When the budget’s tight, it can be tempting to try and tackle your makeover yourself. However, here’s how a kitchen designer can help you with your project.

Objectives. A professional can help you set overall objectives and zero in on priorities. Charting the course is critical.

Plan and measure. Every inch counts and mistakes can be costly if appliances don’t fit.

Save time. A pro knows where the product deals are as well as where to splurge and scrimp.

Hire work crews. Because designers work with painters, tile installers, and other artisans on a regular basis, they have a reliable network of service-based pros with whom they can hook you up.



its low sheen was picked so undercounter lights don't reflect off it.

Energy Star-rated appliances, finished in white instead of stainless steel, saved enough that the homeowners were able to not only purchase a refrigerator and cooktop but three luxe items, too—a Trivection oven, combo speed-cook microwave, and warming drawer. A toney stainless range hood adds visual contrast.

In just two months, Mary and Coley's kitchen went from frozen in time to in step with the times. Although they rolled up their sleeves to do a lot of the work, they credit Murdoch's initial direction as instrumental to their success. "I thought I could do a great deal of the planning myself until I realized I didn't know how to get a look that would make me happy," Mary says. "Elaine gave great suggestions on colors, finishes, and where to shop, saving

\$ budget breakdown

■ APPLIANCES

Cooktop	970
Oven (quick cook/microwave)	1,850
Refrigerator	800
Vent/hood	850
Wall oven	2,200
Warming drawer	840

■ CABINETRY/HARDWARE

2,500

■ PLUMBING

Faucet, sink	900
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■ SURFACES

Backsplash	600
Countertop	5,750
Flooring	2,000

■ MISCELLANEOUS

Light fixtures	135
Other materials (lumber, etc.)	800
Paint	135

TOTAL

\$20,330


Details Add Character

1 An undermount sink creates a sleek look. The lack of a sink rim makes wiping countertops easier.

2 Converting a section of upper cabinetry into open display shelving adds a modern element.

3 Resilient plank flooring that's spill-resistant and easy to clean gives the look of real wood without the upkeep.

4 Installing light-color mosaic tile and undercabinet lighting eliminated dark recesses.

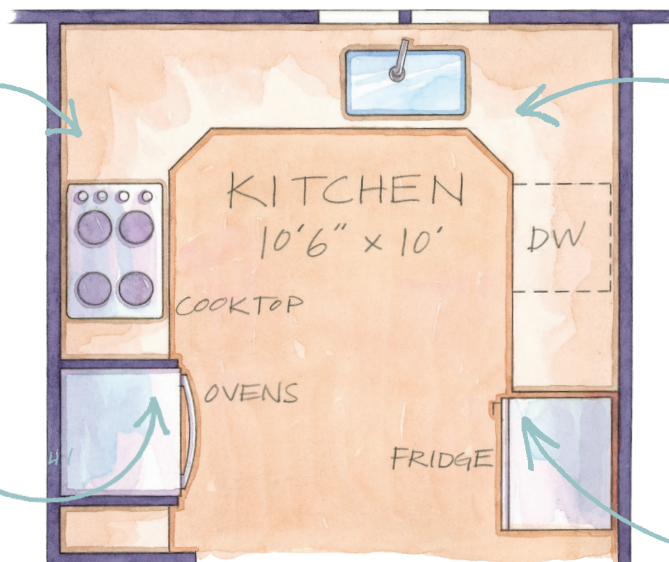
us hours of time. She took measurements we didn't even know were needed and pointed out potential problems. Her guidance was invaluable because spending that kind of money, we didn't want to make any mistakes. A design consultation is worth every penny—it gives you a degree of peace of mind." Oh, and a great new kitchen. 

RESOURCES begin on page 108.

floor plan

Bumping a wall into the garage gained the kitchen extra room. It was less costly than moving out the sink wall.

The Connelllys saved space by stacking a Trivection oven, a combo speed-cook microwave oven, and a warming drawer.



Angling the corner cabinets adds interest and helps utilize space by putting stored goods within easy reach.

The refrigerator, range, and sink form an efficient work triangle for the cook.