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Kitchen Installation Guide



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Welcome to our guide. We hope you'll find it very useful as you embark on this exciting project. In here you'll find step-by-step instructions to assist you in putting your kitchen together, as well as some additional tips and tricks, direct from our kitchen experts.

Principal kitchens are designed to give you the style and features you want at very affordable prices. We've sourced quality products from around the world to create a kitchen range that you can simply install yourself, or we can recommend a qualified tradesperson to do the work for you.

Our kitchens are finished with the finest quality doors and drawer fronts in laminate and two-pac painted finishes, Italian soft-close hinges, and drawer runners and hardware from Hafele and Kesseböhmer. For the ultimate peace of mind, all of these components come with a 10-year guarantee.



Metro



Newport



Mission Beach



Beaumaris



Kirra



Allure

Before you begin

Before you get started, there are a few important things you should know.

Lets get to work! Checklist

- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| ☐ Builder's pencil | ☐ Fine toothed handsaw or circular saw | ☐ Set Square |
| ☐ Caulking gun | ☐ Measuring tape | ☐ Silicon sealer |
| ☐ Clamps | ☐ Jigsaw | ☐ Spirit level (ideally it should be 600mm or longer) |
| ☐ Electric drill & assorted drill bits (incl. a hole-saw and pozi drive drill bits) | ☐ Phillips-head screwdriver | ☐ Step Ladder |
| ☐ Electronic stud finder | ☐ Protective glasses | ☐ Handles & kitchen accessories |
| | ☐ Drop sheet/masking tape | |

Some tasks require qualified tradespeople

When you're removing an existing kitchen or installing a new one, you will still need some help from tradespeople. Plumbing, gas and electrical tasks, such as disconnecting a sink and installing cook tops and ovens, need to be completed with the assistance of a qualified tradesperson.

Licensed electricians and plumbers will complete these tasks for you and supply you with a certificate of compliance. The certificate means the kitchen is in line with Australian regulations and will protect your insurance for the long term.

Preparation

It's incredibly important to be prepared when it comes to tackling a hands-on job like this. The first step is to read the entire guide through at least once before you start. We've tried to make it as concise as possible without losing any vital information.

If you're in doubt about anything, call us, come and see us in-store or contact a licensed professional.



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Part 1

Preparing your kitchen space

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1. How to check walls

Use a spirit level to check the walls. Mark any uneven spots or holes.

When you mount the wall cabinets, you might need a packer to fill the gap so that the cabinet and wall line up straight. Wood or Masonite pieces make ideal packers.



2. Check any right-angled corners

Use your set square to check what should be right-angled corners. If there's a gap between the wall and the set square greater than 6mm, you may need to organise some professional assistance.

If you have walls opposite each other, measure the distance between them at multiple points. This will give you clear information that the walls are parallel.



3. How to check the floor

Again using your spirit level, check the parts of the floor where you plan on installing the base cabinets. Make a mark on the wall with a pen or pencil, indicating the highest and lowest sections of the floor.



4. Measure and mark

Refer to your kitchen plan and measure the position of your cabinets. Mark their location with pen or pencil. This will help you see how everything fits together.

Tips

Getting rid of an old kitchen

- Is your Kitchen suitable for resale? Please consider this prior to discarding.
- Make sure you've had the electricity, gas and water disconnected by a licensed professional.
- Hire a skip for the weekend.
- When dismantling the old kitchen, remove the base cabinets and benchtops first. This makes taking down the wall cabinets a lot easier.
- Pull bar (or crowbar), hammer and screwdriver will make life much easier in removing the old kitchen.

Checking the levels of the walls and floor

To properly install a Principal Kitchen, you must ensure your floors are flat and level. If you find some areas that are significantly uneven, it's a good idea to hire a professional tradesperson to fix these problem areas first. At the very least, you should have them check the area and give you their advice.

Locating wall studs

Wall studs are important, because you'll be using them as anchor points for your base and wall cabinets.

So how do you find them?

- The most reliable method is to use an electronic stud finder. It works on all kinds of walls.
- Be aware though, that the stud finder can also pick up things like pipes, cables, nails and screws. To get around this, run the finder vertically up and down the wall to determine if there are other fasteners in the same vertical plane. If the finder responds to this, then you've located a wall stud.

If you don't have a stud frame wall

If your walls are made out of brick or concrete, or your plans don't suit fixing the kitchen to wall studs, then you'll need other hardware for the job. Principal cabinets are supplied with 60mm screws, which are suitable for wall studs, so contact your store to get advice and the right hardware for your walls.

Before continuing...

- With the space empty, it's a great time to apply your first coat of paint for the walls. When dealing with raw plasterboard, make sure you apply a sealer/primer undercoat before painting. The second coat can be applied once you have the cabinets installed.
- It's also an ideal opportunity to install new flooring. Protect it while installing the rest of the kitchen with a drop sheet or old blanket.
- Save time. Don't paint where your cabinets will be.

Part 2

Installing the Base and Pantry Cabinets

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1. Set the height

Earlier you would have marked the highest point of the kitchen floor (Part One: Step Three). Now mark the wall from that point at 870mm. Draw a level line from this new point to where you'll be putting in your base cabinets. This line will be used to set the heights of the cabinets.

Adjustable legs and uneven floors

Set your adjustable legs to 140mm, as kickboards are 140mm high. If your floors are uneven, cut your kickboards to suit. (More detail follows in Part Five.)

Assembling the base & pantry cabinets

Easy to follow, step-by-step assembly instructions are included in each pack. Assemble the cabinets following these instructions – once again read the instructions through before you start. Remember if you get stuck at any point we recommend you call your local store for advice.



2. Install the corner cabinet first

If your kitchen has a corner then this is where you should start. Position the cabinet and adjust the legs until the cabinet matches up with the line you marked out in Step One. Check the position with a spirit level. If you have plaster walls, measure out from the corner to the wall studs and mark where they line up onto the base cabinet.

You'll notice that the ends of the corner cabinet extend past the back panel. We've done this so that if your walls are not square, you can plane the end panels to ensure the front of the cabinet is square. If planing isn't required, there will be an insignificant gap between the wall and the cabinet.

If there's no corner cabinet in your kitchen design, then start with an end cabinet, making sure to fix the end panel or filler to it first (This is covered in Part Four).

Using a small drill bit (2-3mm) drill pilot holes into the cabinet at the points you have marked that line up with the wall studs.

If you're not using wall studs

Make sure you use the correct fittings and screws for your wall type. It may be that you need to use a wall plug system to join the cabinets to the walls, these can be purchased at your local store.



3. Securing the cabinets

Position the cabinet back into the corner, keeping it level. Using the supplied 60mm screws fix the cabinet into the wall studs. Two screws should be enough to hold each cabinet in place (4 for a corner cabinet). Check with spirit level and adjust if you need to before continuing.



5. Securing the cabinets

The base cabinet that will contain the kitchen sink should be prepared prior to installing. Holes for water pipes and drain can be sawn in either the cabinet base or back panel. There are two methods to do this; you can either use a hole-saw drill bit, or you can use a jigsaw.



4. Securing the cabinets

As before, mark, drill, line-up the cabinet, and fix with screws. Temporarily fasten the cabinets together with clamps. Use the small drill bit to make two pilot holes in the inside of the cabinet, top and bottom as shown in the image. 30mm screws (supplied) can then be used to join the two cabinets together.

6. Dishwasher cavity

If you're installing a dishwasher, make sure to leave enough space not just for the dishwasher but also the end panels, which are 18mm each. See Part Four for more advice on this procedure.

7. Attach the hinge mounting plates

In the packs that came with each cabinet, you should find the hinge mounting plates. All you need to do with these is to press them into the pre-drilled holes, then tighten the screws.

And that's it for the base cabinet installation.

Part 3

Installing the Wall Cabinets

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1. Set the height

Start by affixing a timber strip to the wall, as in the picture. The piece of timber needs to be about 18x90mm. This is going to give you an accurate guide for positioning and fixing the cabinets, and will make it easier to hold them in place.

To find the correct position to put your timber strip, start by marking the wall 1484mm from the highest point of the floor (based on a ceiling height of 2400mm or more). Now, using your spirit level to guide you, draw a straight line from this mark where you will be positioning the wall cabinets. This marking stands for the bottom edge of your wall cabinets, and is the place to put the top of your timber strip. This height will also ensure your wall cabinets align with any pantries used.

Now fix the strip to the wall, using your spirit level to ensure it's level with the marker. If you have plaster walls, be sure to fix it to the studs you've already marked out.

An important number

Keep this in mind when setting the kitchen height: Australian regulations state that the distance between the bottom of your rangehood and the top of your cooktop must be 650mm.



2. Start in the corner*

*If your kitchen has one. It's really going to make the installation easier. If you have plaster walls, measure out from the corner to your marked studs, and then make the equivalent measurements on your assembled wall cabinet.

Then, using a 2-3mm drill bit, make pilot holes at the marker points aligned with the wall studs.

Assembling the wall cabinets

Easy to follow, step-by-step assembly instructions are included in each pack. Assemble the cabinets following these instructions – once again read the instructions through before you start. Remember if you get stuck at any point we recommend you call your local store for advice.



3. Securing the cabinets

Position the cabinet on top of the timber strip. Then, using the supplied 60mm screws, fix the cabinet into place. In most cases, two screws per cabinet should be enough (4 for a corner cabinet). Check the cabinet's placement with the spirit level and if you need to, make any adjustments.



5. Securing the cabinets

Temporarily fasten the cabinets together with clamps. Then, using a 2-3mm drill bit, drill two pilot holes from the inside of the cabinet out (one top and one at the bottom). Use the 30mm screw supplied to join the two cabinets together.

If you use a slide out rangehood cabinet

you will need wall end panels either side. also remember the cabinet is shorter and should align with the other wall cabinets at the top.

4. Hang the next cabinet

Now you have a process to follow: mark, drill, line-up the cabinet, and fix with screws.



6. Repeat step 5

Repeat the process until you've installed all the cabinets, making sure to align each cabinet with the last one.

7. Attach the hinge mounting plates

In the packs included with each cabinet, you should find the hinge mounting plates. All you need to do with these is to press them into the pre-drilled holes, then tighten the screws.

Take down the timber strip, and that's it. You should be looking at a set of correctly aligned and secured kitchen wall cabinets.

Part 4

Filler Panels

1. Adapting panels for uneven walls

Check the space thoroughly with your spirit level. If parts of the wall or floor are uneven, then you'll need to cut the filler panels to match the wall's shape using the following method. If everything is level, skip ahead to Step Two.

If you have uneven walls then you'll need to make a template to cut to. You'll need a tape measure, compass, pencil and thick cardboard for template material.

- Cut the cardboard to the same height of the cabinet.
- Position it to the place where the filler panel is needed.
- Place the compass against the wall.
- Keep the compass horizontal and level, and follow the line of the wall, tracing the shape of the wall onto the cardboard.
- Measure the distance from the farthest point of the wall to the cabinet and mark it.
- Draw a straight line to the top and bottom of the template from this mark (this represents the straight edge of the filler that will sit against the cabinet).
- Cut the template along each pencilled line, ensure that it fits, then trace the shape of the cardboard onto the filler panel.
- Proceed to Step Three.

2. Measuring the gap for even walls

If the walls are level, simply measure the distance from the wall to the back of the cabinet, mark this distance on the top and bottom of the filler panel, then draw a line between the two marks.

3. Cutting the panels

You should use a fine-tooth handsaw or jigsaw for this task, following the recommended method.

Using a handsaw

Cut along the marked line with the face side of the panel up.

Using a jigsaw

Mark both sides of the panel. To avoid chipping, apply masking tape to the marking on the face side. Cut the panel with the face side down.

4. Installing the filler panels

Place the filler panel into the space with the cut edge against the wall. Make sure the panel stays securely in place while you attach it to the cabinet. After pre-drilling holes, attach the panel with screws from the inside of the cabinet. Repeat the process with any other filler panels you need to install.

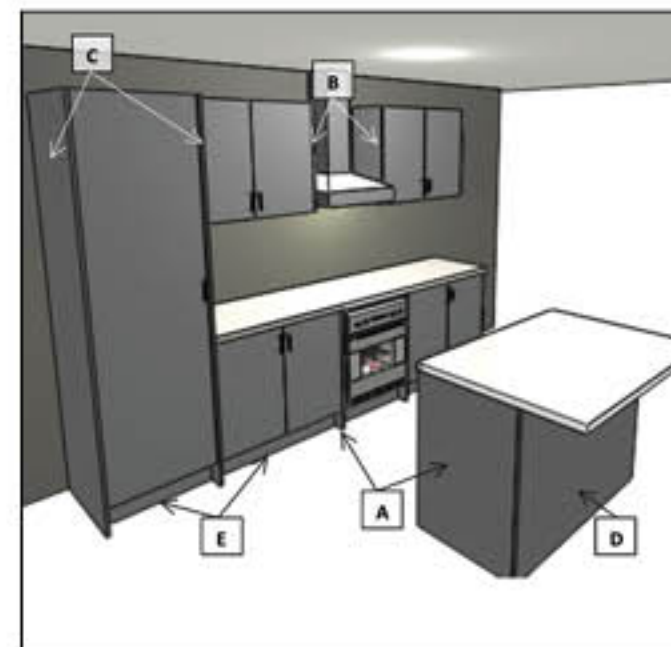
Tip for installing filler panel

don't forget to remove the protective film

5. Seal it up

Sealing the gap between the wall and filler panel is a good idea. You'll need a good quality brand of silicon sealant and a caulking gun. Before you begin, tape alongside the area to be sealed.

Types of panels and their purposes



There are five types of panel you can install to give your new kitchen a clean finish. Each panel has a different purpose, explained below.

A. Base End Panel

Finishing exposed sides of base cabinets; placed either side of dishwasher cavity.

B. Wall End Panel

Finishing exposed sides of wall cabinets; used as filler panels (after cutting).

C. Pantry End Panel

Finishing exposed sides of pantry cabinets; to create a fridge box (the sides of the fridge wall cabinet); used as filler panels.

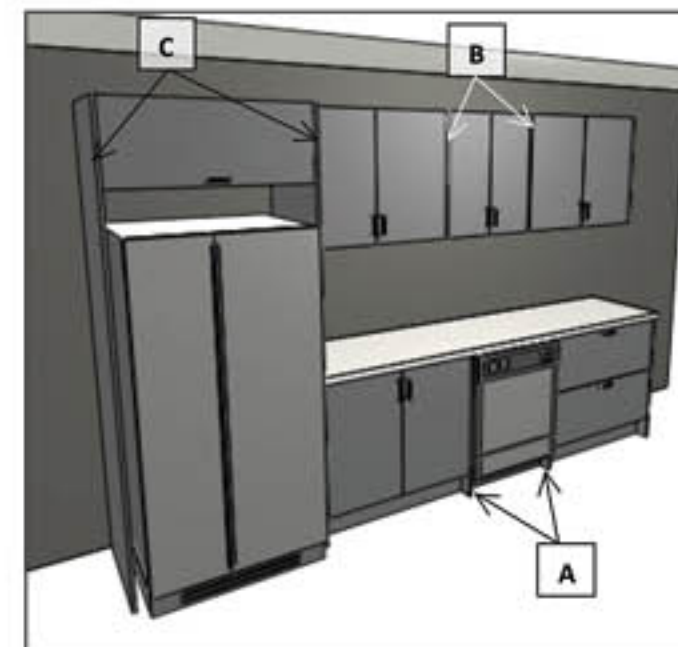
D. Island Back Panel

Finishing the cabinet backs of an island bench.

E. Kickboard

Hides adjustable feet of the base and pantry cabinets.

Kitchen cavities



Here are some useful measurements when planning out your kitchen cavities, commonly spaces for dishwasher and fridge.

Dishwasher cavity: Leave a space of 636mm or more between two base cabinets. Base end panels are 18mm thick, so when you fix a panel to each exposed cabinet side there'll be at least 600mm of space for your dishwasher.

When using end panels for a dishwasher cavity, use wall end panels either side of a 600mm wall cabinet to keep alignment of your base and wall cabinets.

Fridge cavity: A space of 900mm in width should be sufficient, but check before you go ahead. You can also choose to mount an overhead fridge cabinet, between two pantry end panels. As the image shows, the fridge wall cabinet will mount to the front of the pantry end panels.

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End Panels and Cavities

Part 5

Installing the Benchtops and Sinks

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End Panels and Cavities

1. Cutting benchtops to fit

(if necessary)

If you've bought benchtops and are cutting them to fit your kitchen then start by measuring and marking the benchtops, based on your kitchen cabinet measurements. If space permits, you can choose to leave your benchtops with a slight over-hang, or line them flush with the end panels.

Tips for cutting bench blanks

- Use a guide (such as a piece of timber), firmly clamped in place, to ensure a straight cut.
- For best result, use a jigsaw with a blade designed to cut laminate surfaces.
- Work slowly.
- If you have a design where two benchtops will meet in a corner, we recommend a mason's mitre-cut joint. As this is a join that requires advanced skill, either take your blanks to a local benchtop company, or have a contractor with the right equipment assist you on-site.

Laminate benchtops

These instructions refer to the installation of laminate benchtops. If you're installing benchtops of a different type, consult the instructions supplied by their manufacturer.



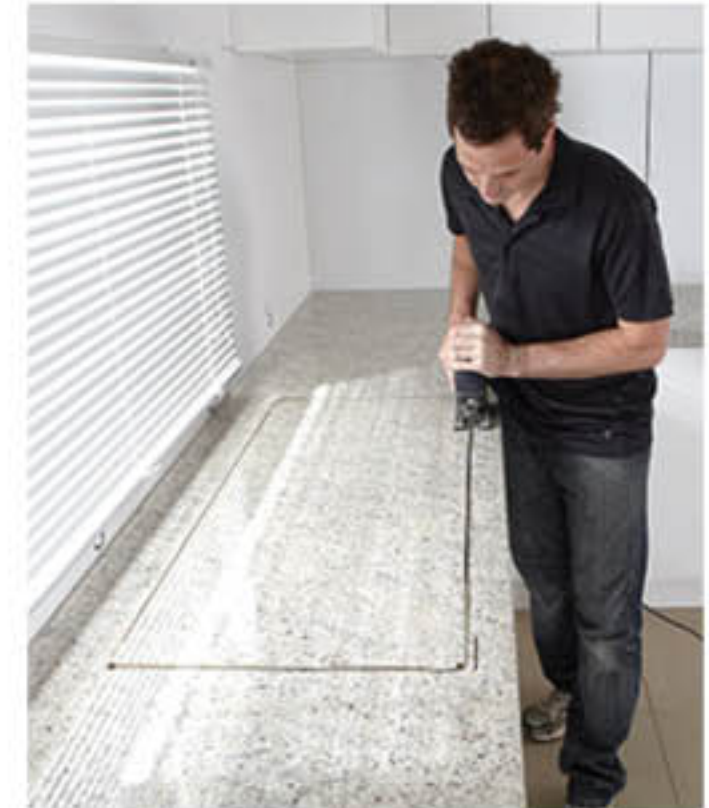
2. Position your benchtops

Make sure everything is straight before you start fixing them to the cabinets.



3. Fix your benchtops into place

Screw the benchtops into place. Screw up and through the front and back rail within the base panels (see illustration). If you have two benchtops meeting at a corner with a mitre-cut join, benchtop connectors can be used to pull the tops together so you can fix them in place with screws.



4. Sink fitting

To help you fit the sink into place, you will have been provided with a sink template to mark out the area to cut. The template is slightly smaller than the actual sink, both to stop the sink from pulling through the bench, and to hide the cut by allowing the edges of the sink to sit over it.

Once you have marked out the cutting space with your template, take a drill with a 10mm bit and make a hole somewhere within the area. From that hole slowly cut out the required shape with a jigsaw. From there it's just a matter of fitting the sink into place with the supplied brackets and tape, if you need to make any adjustments, do so now.

5. Cooktop fitting

This process will be almost exactly the same as the way you installed the sink, making your cut based on the template or instructions that have been supplied with your cooktop. Take your time when using the jigsaw to ensure an even cut.

And that's your benchtops, sink and cooktop installed. Only the finishing touches to go.

Part 6

Finishing the Kitchen

Nearly there...

Most of the hard work is done as we move to the finishing and fitting steps of the installation process. In this section we detail how to install the kickboards and handles as well as some advice on installing other items including doors.

Some of these items will have been supplied with their own instructions, but if you misplace the instructions, or get stuck at any point, contact your local store for advice.

Installing kickboards



1. Measure and cut

You may need to cut the kickboards to suit your cabinet height or the lie of the floor. Kickboards are 140mm high, so measure the height of the adjustable legs (including the glide) and if necessary, scribe your kickboards to ensure a snug fit.

Accessories, doors and drawer fronts...

Install any accessories before installing the doors and drawer fronts. These could be things like pull out bins, tea towel holders, and soft close fittings for doors and drawers.

Door and drawer front installation instructions will have been supplied as a separate document to this one. Refer to them for installation guidelines.

While installing doors, leave the protective film on the doors. Remove it after drilling the holes for the handles.



2. Fasten and press

Adjustable feet clips will have been supplied in the hardware packs. Position these in line with the cabinets' feet and then screw these to the kickboards. Once all the clips are securely fastened, line the kickboard up and press them into place.

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Installing handles

1. Find the ideal position

We recommend you purchase a Handle Jig available in-store to make this installation process easier.

Handle positioning is largely a personal preference. Some like their handles vertical, whilst others prefer them horizontal.

2. Mark the position

Take your tape measure, and measure from the top of the door or drawer to where you want the first hole. Mark with a horizontal line and then repeat with the second hole. Make sure these markings line up with the exact centre of where the hole needs to be.

With your set square mark the measurement from the edge of the door. Run your set square down to your marked handle position and mark with a vertical line to the position of the holes. If done right, the horizontal and vertical marks should intersect at the exact drilling point.

3. Drill and fix into position

Double check your measurements before you begin. Use a small drill bit, only slightly larger than the screws to make the hole, then screw everything into place with a screwdriver. Repeat until all handles are fixed into place. Make any adjustments to the alignment according to the assembly instructions included with your doors and drawers.



Congratulations...

Congratulations, you've installed a brand new Principal kitchen from start to finish. We hope you're delighted with the result. Before we leave you to enjoy your kitchen, here's a little advice to look after it:

Kitchen Care Tips...

- Use a damp cloth when cleaning down surfaces.
- Only use cleaning products intended for the door, cabinet and benchtop materials.
- Do not use cleaning agents containing ammonia, alcohol or abrasives.
- After cleaning, wipe down surfaces with a clean dry cloth.



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