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# The Ultimate Guide to Purchasing Cabinets



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Cabinets are an integral component of your kitchen and bath design. Not only do they play a critical role in room aesthetics, but they also fulfill the functional purposes of storage and organization. And with a ton of options in cabinet styles, materials, frames, and finishes, there's a lot to consider before buying new ones for your home. That's why we've created this Ultimate Guide to Purchasing Cabinets — to help you navigate the journey. **Sectioned into two parts, first you'll find a checklist of the entire process and then an overview of the various cabinet styles you can choose from.** Let's dive in!

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## Part 01: The Cabinet Purchasing Process Checklist

From detailed planning to regular cleaning, this checklist covers all the steps that lead to outfitting your home with beautiful, quality, durable cabinets. Check each step off after you complete it.

### Create a Plan of Attack

The key to a successful cabinetry project is a detailed plan. Without a plan in mind, you may end up with a finished project you don't like, a project that's over budget, or a project that never had the means to get started. So take some time to sit down and create a plan of attack, making sure you touch on each of the following action items:

#### IDENTIFY YOUR GOAL(S)

Why do you want new cabinets?

What is your goal for your home? Are you looking to rent it, resell it, or live in it forever? Keeping your goal(s) in mind can help you make the right decisions further down the line.

#### DETERMINE YOUR BUDGET

While it's tempting to dive in and get started without a budget, having one established early on can help reduce financial stress. With so many cabinetry options out there, it's easy to get carried away and wind up spending more than you originally intended. Having a budget can help you draw the line on what products actually fit your goals, and which might be a little over or under budget.

### Sketch It Up

In order to determine the layout of your new cabinets, you'll want to get accurate measurements of your existing space. Get a piece of grid paper, then start drawing your space from an aerial view, including the specific measurements for each component.

Once you're done, do a double check to ensure all your individual measurements add up to the total dimension of each wall. Now, you have a great sketch to refer to during the buying process.

#### MEASURE EACH COMPONENT

Wall width and height  
(account for soffits if applicable)

Windows and doorways

Appliances

Plumbing drain and supply lines

Electrical outlets and switches

## Choose a Cabinet Style

This is arguably the most difficult part of the cabinet purchasing process. With a slew of options relating to cabinet brands, types, materials, finishes, and more, the choices are endless — and often overwhelming! Luckily, we've dedicated the entire second part of this guide to outlining all of those options. Stay tuned.

## Prepare for Installation

If you're planning to install your new cabinets DIY-style, you should prepare for your installation by unscrewing your existing cabinets and clearing any furniture or equipment out of the way. If you're planning to hire a contracted professional to do the work for you, you should get in touch with them to determine a schedule and ask them if there's anything you need to handle before they get there. Usually, they'll just have you clear the space of furniture and equipment.

## Secure Financing

And now for the actual “purchasing” part of purchasing cabinets. Once you've chosen cabinets that work for your home and for your budget, it's time to figure out how to pay for them. Check with your bank, contractor, and/or supplier for their financing options, then choose the one that works best for you. Many homeowners find personal loans, cash-out refinancing, home equity lines of credit, and home equity loans to be most reasonable.

## Commit to Routine Cleaning & Maintenance

And just like that, your new, beautiful cabinets are installed! In order to keep them looking great and functioning well for years to come, it's important to clean them regularly. Check out our recent blog to learn more about how to clean your kitchen cabinets.

## Part 02: How to Choose a Cabinet Style

Since there are so many cabinetry options available, it's difficult to be aware of them all. In this part of the Ultimate Guide to Purchasing Cabinets, we'll walk you through some of the most popular choices and trends in the cabinet industry.

### Questions to Spark Design Inspiration

But first — some questions to get you thinking about design. Your answers to the following questions can guide your decisions and ensure aesthetic consistency and optimal functionality in your home.

Once you've got your answers, you're ready to dive into the various cabinetry options.

### Determine Your Cabinet Type(s)

Let's start with cabinet type. There are four main types of cabinets, each of them fitting differently and serving a different purpose in your home. You may need one or more of these types to outfit a full room.

### Pick a Cabinet Material

All of the cabinet types and styles listed above can be manufactured with a range of materials, including wood, laminate, melamine, particleboard, MDF, and more. Choose the material that best suits your home's aesthetic, your intended use, and your budget. For example, if you like the look of traditional wood, but you'd like a more cost-friendly alternative, MDF may be the perfect choice.

#### DESIGN QUESTIONS TO ASK YOURSELF

- What room are cabinets going in (office, kitchen, bathroom, mudroom)?
- What do these cabinets need to store?
- What is your current aesthetic? Is it the same as your future aesthetic?
- If cabinets are going in the kitchen or bath, what are your countertops like?

#### CABINET TYPE

- BASE CABINETS** - Sit underneath the countertop of a kitchen or bathroom.
- WALL CABINETS** - Suspended on the wall, usually above the counter surface.
- TALL CABINETS** - Also called pantry or utility cabinets, extend from the floor all the way up to the ceiling.
- SPECIALTY CABINETS** - Include unique features, such as pullout trash cans, built-in charging stations, or swiveling shelves (lazy susans).

## Choose a Door Style

There are a large variety of cabinet door styles to choose from, so whether you prefer a traditional appearance or a modern twist, you can find exactly what you're looking for. Check out some of the most popular door style trends.

## Add Personality with a Color/Finish

To add your own touch of personality to your cabinets, choose a unique color or finish for them. Depending on the cabinet material you choose, your cabinets may be painted, stained, glazed, or highlighted. There are even special finishing techniques to make your cabinets look aged and weathered if you prefer a more rustic aesthetic.

## Consider Sustainable Solutions

If you're interested in building with sustainable practices and materials, make sure to find a brand or supplier that has similar commitments.

Many cabinet manufacturers have sustainability certifications for sustainably sourcing their materials and sustainably manufacturing the products made with them. Although this may not be the first or most important consideration for you, it is a great way to build a better future.

### DOOR STYLES

- FRAMED** - Traditional style that show a wooden frame around and in between each cabinet. They're a versatile, and come with an array of framing options, from simple raised panels to decorative hand carvings.
- FRAMELESS** - Don't have space between cabinet drawers, doors, or sets. They suit the minimalist, contemporary aesthetic because of their sleek, clean appearance.
- SPECIALTY CABINETS** - Cabinets with transparent glass panels in the doors. They're a great option for making any room look bigger or for displaying a beautiful china or art collection.

## Implement Necessary Hardware

To finish off your cabinet's design, you'll need to implement necessary hardware like knobs, pulls, and hinges. In most cases, knobs work best for cabinet doors and pulls work best for cabinet drawers. Hardware designs range from minimalist to ornate, so you're sure to find one that compliments your cabinet doors well.

