

# Installing kitchen appliances

*It may sound easy, but the practicality of satisfying both the homeowner and meeting the requirements of all involved be they the designer or architect, the manufacturer, the supplier, the cabinetmaker and the installer means there must be good lines of communication between all concerned. JOINERS Magazine takes a look at the issues involved and how they have been addressed.*



The location of appliances in the kitchen is all about utility and flow. The set up of a kitchen, its location and make up, has generally been the decision of the owner and a kitchen designer along with the architect.

“In designing a kitchen, understanding what the home owner wants and more importantly how they intend to use their kitchen is vital in helping them best allocate the space available to them most effectively,” comments kitchen designer Hilary Preston. “It’s all a question of the lifestyle they wish to pursue. Simple issues such as using gas or electricity, integrated or stand alone dishwashers and the height of appliances such as the oven are important. Cooking for larger numbers on a regular basis may mean they should consider a double oven in a tower.

Location and size affects the utility of the kitchen space. A particularly interesting one is the placement of refrigerators next to a returning wall or constricted entrance way but still allowing for adequate space to open and shut the door, to bend over to reach a lower freezer door or, the altering of fridge shelf positions. You have to place the fridge in a

position where the door can open fully. Having in depth talks with the owner and architect on an ongoing basis throughout the process is in my view most important to getting the right result.”

This utility issue means in many cases the designer has considerable influence on the appliances installed. “Appliances with the right features or indeed enough features to meet the requirements of the owner is something you can’t avoid. Again it is largely a question of the right communication being achieved. Usually once an architect has shown the owner the kitchen layout, the owner will go out and get quotes for the various appliances based on that layout. It’s still a matter of balancing space with utility. Working with the owner to get it right is the designer’s job”

Once you have your appliances sorted out though is only the first step in the process of creating the right kitchen. This ‘sorting out’ process can involve quite a number of factors centering around the manufacturer, the supplier, the kitchen manufacturer and the installer as well as the designer. The inter-relationship of all these people makes for a successful installation.

## The Right Dimensions

Once the location for each appliance is determined, the kitchen manufacturer who makes all the cabinetry to house these appliances becomes critical. They have to make sure the dimensions of the spaces required are precise.

“In any kitchen installation, having the right specifications for each appliance particularly the oven, cooktop and the dishwasher are very important” points out Murray Natrass from European Kitchens based in Napier.

“These specifications can be obtained in a variety of ways. The most usual is with the appliance when it is delivered from the manufacturer or more commonly from the authorised supplier. It has to be remembered too that in the case of ovens and dishwashers which involve connection to electricity and water supply a registered electrician or plumber must be involved as the warranty on most appliances technically only applies if it has been connected up by the right people.

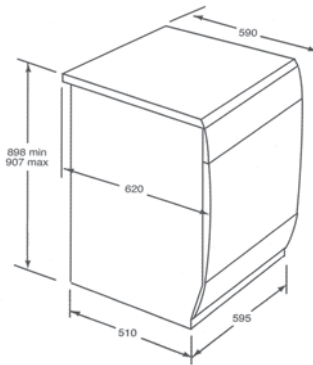
Some manufacturers such as Fisher & Paykel Appliances have access to installation details online through their own website. This is very handy so long as communication is up to date on any changes in installation instructions. Codes for various appliances should be given to the owner who can pass on to the kitchen manufacturer. In general terms the Fisher & Paykel Appliances site has been very good. Having standards and complying with them has in my view always been very important.”

Putting the power and water connections in the right place is very important as well. This is particularly so with the water connection from the wall for the increasingly popular

(continued over page)



*Ovens and hobs need consideration given to the effect of heat on surfaces above and around them.*



Most appliances such as this freestanding oven from the Duratech range, Omega, come with detailed instructions of dimensions and clearances.

ice makers that are part of the bigger double door refrigerators. Electrical connections for air extraction systems above oven tops are a source of contention as often air extraction systems (rangehoods) come as an after thought creating issues related to provision of ventilation out of the kitchen. This comes back to clear communication at the beginning of the race whether it be for a kitchen in a new house or a new kitchen in a renovated house so the kitchen installer for example, is not left with the headache of the hows and wherefores of ventilation which is usually the case.

There are three main issues in kitchen installation that always need to be addressed: heat, moisture and noise. Manufacturers and suppliers have a variety of ways of dealing with these issues. All come down to good communication and practical solutions.

### Heat

Ovens and oven cook tops all create heat that's obvious, but making sure there is no excess heat in the wrong places is not. Manufacturers have dealt with this in two ways. Ovens come in one of two modes, vented or unvented.

In the case of ovens requiring venting space such as the AEG range, ventilation openings need to be created to allow any heat build up to dissipate easily and quickly away from the oven. Naturally, knowing venting is required is an important factor for the kitchen manufacturer.

The other type, unvented, from manufacturers such as Fisher & Paykel Appliances, the Franke range from Burns & Ferrall and the Omega range from Ikon Commercial deal with the issue through the use of an internal fan that constantly circulates the air around the oven box from an intake and an outlet either at the bottom or top of the oven.

Often kitchen manufacturers also put in heat resistant foil panels affixed to the inside walls of the oven space as extra protection. Testing

ovens before delivery is another protection offered to owners. Fisher & Paykel as a local manufacturer obviously do this as do new boys on the block Ikon Commercial who import their ovens from Italy. "Testing the product in the warehouse before delivery be it an oven or a dishwasher or whatever is a good quality control measure" comments Ikon's Glen McLachlan. "It gives us as the supplier a chance to look at obvious 'problem' areas of any appliance to ensure all is in order before delivery. This makes the activation of any warranty down the line far less likely."

### Moisture

Moisture particularly in the form of steam be it from a dishwasher or from an oven cook top can cause problems in the kitchen. With the dishwasher it's moisture coming out of an open door to the underside of the benchtop above. This is really an issue if the benchtop above is made with an MDF substrate. Water and MDF do not mix well. Most dishwasher manufacturers have solved the problem by installing in the internal dishwasher wall a condenser unit that collect the steam as in condenses to water and removes from the machine through the normal water outlet at the bottom.

"What a lot of people don't realise is that where there is a condenser installed there is no need to open the dishwasher door to vent any steam. The machine deals with this as the washed load cools before being emptied" comments Glen McLachlan. "The ones you have to watch for are machines that have external vents on them which usually means they have no condenser unit inside."

A second precautionary step that should be taken if the benchtop is made of an MDF substrate is to ensure the under surface close to the door opening is sealed with a coating of sealant or paint. This is usually done before the dishwasher is installed. With steam or indeed any other fumes rising from an oven top or hob the installation of an air extraction

system is pretty much standard. More on this further on.

### Noise

This relates to the installation of air extraction systems. You can buy such systems that match the width of your oven top or hob but it is best to get one that is slightly larger to take in a wider catchment area of fumes or steam. These systems do make some noise but not inordinately. The real issue is the installation of the ducting. In a new house this can be more easily addressed as the kitchen is being built so long as its location is already known. Its preferable to have any venting going straight up to the outside where possible as this creates the best airflow. This is not always the case as is often experienced in renovated kitchens where it may need to go out a side wall. Installers often find they have to 'invent' how the system is to be vented at the time of installation as it has been overlooked.

Properly installed, air extraction systems make little noise and are a real necessity in the modern kitchen. Communication early in the piece before the installer turns up can save a lot of anguish down the line.

### Warranties and Service

Although these two matters are not strictly installation issues per se they are really important when it comes to selecting which appliances are to be installed in the first place.

Choosing which appliance to use in the first place is more often than not an issue addressed by the owner and an interior designer. All the recognised suppliers of kitchen appliances offer a warranty on their products. Usually it is for a minimum of two years on parts from the date of installation. A big part of what all the major suppliers do is a system of quality control prior to the product being sold. The interesting part is who is then responsible for any repairs should a warranty be activated.

(continued over page)



Fridges with features such as icemakers and water dispensers require consideration of the plumbing involved.

NEW CATALOGUE OUT NOW  
VIEW AT  
[www.katalog.co.nz](http://www.katalog.co.nz)



**HARDWARE**

KATALOG



24 Spring Street Freemans Bay Auckland New Zealand  
Tel + 64 9 360 4290 admin@katalog.co.nz www.katalog.co.nz

Kitchen Cabinets Online

Here are **10** good reasons System One will work for YOU!

Made in New Zealand

1. It's dead easy – easy to quote – easy to order – easy delivery!
2. We have cut out the middle man so you pay less which will improve the margin on your sale.
3. We are New Zealand's fastest kitchen manufacturer and you can expect to receive your order in as little as 5 days!
4. Choose from our two ranges of high quality cabinets.
5. System One Designer range has 250 cabinets including PVC doors in Melteca and Interior colours plus our Tuffbond range available with or without hardware - 10 day delivery.
6. System One DIY with 50 cabinets to choose from in 10 fashion colours delivery within 5 days as flat packs with hardware.
7. Know your costs straight away and improve your profitability.
8. When you purchase TDC quality cabinets you increase your sales output while reducing your investment in plant and staff.
9. Free up your staff to add value where it counts.
10. Quality and supply assured. After more than 30 years as a trade supplier we know kitchens and guarantee our cabinets from manufacturing defects for 5 years.



SYSTEM  
**ONE**



Ordering your kitchen cabinet online couldn't be easier  
[www.tdcmanufacturing.co.nz](http://www.tdcmanufacturing.co.nz) 0800 349 797



While many dishwashers, such as the pair of DishDrawers from Fisher & Paykel in this kitchen, have their own venting systems it is generally considered good practise to ensure surrounding areas are treated with sealant or paint prior to installation - this particularly applies to underbenches made of MDF

In the case of local manufacturer Fisher & Paykel Appliances they operate their warranty as a New Zealand manufacturer. "We operate an extensive servicing operation through a warranty should it be required" comments Fisher & Paykel's Technical Manager Nick Watson "This can be activated by any dealer in our dealer network or through a direct call to one of our service centres. A more recent development has been our investment in the use of a national call centre from which a customer can be directed to the appropriate people to have their appliance quickly serviced."

Burns & Ferrall, best known for their Franke range of appliances also see service as a vital part of what they have to offer. "We sell our range exclusively through the kitchen industry so it is important to offer them a great back up service." says Burns & Ferrall's Aaron Carson. "Our servicing operation is based around Burns & Ferrall employed technicians who operate nationally and can be contacted easily rather than searching through the phone book for your local repair man."

Ikon Commercial with their range of Omega appliances have similar warranties operated by the manufacturer through Ikon as their local distributor. "As a newer player its important to have the quality control prior to delivery aspect well covered which we do through thorough pretesting of each appliance in our warehouse facility here in Hamilton as well as standing by the product warranty." says their Glenn McLachlan.

#### It's All About Communication

The process of putting a new or renovated kitchen together involves a lot of thought and patience. It's not as simple as it sounds. The interaction of all those concerned from the owner, designer, architect through to the manufacturer and supplier, the cabinetmaker and the installer is at the heart of the whole process. Adhering to standards and following installation instructions correctly, issues all we spoke to felt strongly about, can be best achieved by good lines of communication between all those involved.

At the end of the day, it's a happy owner that's what its all about.

For further information here are some relevant websites to visit:

[www.burnsferrall.co.nz](http://www.burnsferrall.co.nz)  
[www.fisherpaykel.co.nz](http://www.fisherpaykel.co.nz)  
[www.ikoncommercial.co.nz](http://www.ikoncommercial.co.nz)