

Designer suggests nine ways of uncluttering your kitchen

"If your kitchen suffers from 'terminal clutter,'" says C. Jean Mattingly, certified kitchen designer (CKD) and manager Home Modernization for General Electric, "don't blame it entirely on too many utensils, appliances, boxes, bottles, furnishings and gourmet gadgets."

"Most likely," she says, "your problem lies in poor organization. And the way to solve that problem is to uncover every square inch of extra storage and workspace in your kitchen and put it to work."

An expert advises

To help you find and exploit hidden spaces, Miss Mattingly offers nine suggestions:

1) **Delete the unessential:** It is not always the items you use every day that clutter up your kitchen; it is the cumbersome ones you rarely need or use that keep getting in the way.

Make a thorough inventory of all your pots, pans, small appliances, utensils and dishes to sort out the items you don't use. Then arrange your remaining kitchen equipment according to frequency of use—put daily priority items close at hand, others in progressively less accessible storage spaces.

2) **Inside cabinets:** Widely separated cabinet shelves are prime space wasters. Try adding shelves to get more levels of storage. Or use portable, rubber-coated wire shelf organizers that are available in any housewares department or hardware store. Try putting hooks on undersides of shelves to hang cups and mugs.

Never leave the inside of a cabinet door empty. You can attach spice and condiment racks there or hang wire caddies that hold everything from cleaning supplies to utensils, wet towels to soap bars.

3) **Below and above cabinets:** Your backsplash—the space between the upper wall cabinets and the countertop—is a good place to

build long horizontal cabinets with sliding doors.

These shallow cabinets, sometimes called "garages" or under-cabinet storage, can house your small appliances—mixers, can openers, toasters, juicers, blenders—right where you need them, yet completely out of sight and out of the way when not in use.

The backsplash is an ideal storage space because most countertops are 25 in. deep and only the first 14 or 15 in. are normally used for workspace.

You generally find a foot or two of empty space between the top of your wall cabinets and the ceiling. This is a good place to store bulky, seldom-used articles, such as cake pans, punch bowls, chafing dishes or woks.

4) **Looking up:** One of the most overlooked and underused storage spaces in the kitchen is the ceiling. If your ceiling is high enough, you can hang lots of pots and tools from existing beams or commercial pot-hanging racks and grids.

It is also a good idea to use your ceiling for hanging three-tiered baskets to hold such odds and ends as food coupons, recipes, mail or pads, so they do not clutter up your counters and workspace.

5) **Against the wall:** Do not limit yourself to traditional storage places. Hooks and shelves can be put up anywhere. Kitchen walls offer spacious opportunities for storing cooking and dining equipment.

Hang it all!

Just about any flat wall will support horizontal or vertical strips of wood with hooks to hold everything from frying pans to towel racks, pot holders to plants. Plastic hooks with adhesive backs will stick to virtually any surface, so you can create instant storage on wooden walls, wallpaper or paint without making holes.

When you plan wall hanging storage, do not forget the walls behind doors. Most doors, when open,

leave a 6- or 8-in. wall space that is unused and seldom ever seen.

6) **Pegboard:** One of the best examples of kitchen wall storage is the perforated hardboard—commonly known as pegboard. These inexpensive, easily-worked boards can hold a wide variety of kitchen tools. And because pegboard hooks can be moved around so easily, you can create any arrangement that suits your need and then change the hangings whenever you like.

7) **Refrigerator top:** Unless your refrigerator is recessed into the wall, you probably have several feet between the top of the appliance and your ceiling—an excellent space for extra storage.

Roomy storage idea

But if you install cabinets in this space, be sure they are the oversized, deep cabinets that come all the way out flush with your refrigerator door. Then you can use it to store large items that are easily lifted out.

8) **Folding furnishings:** If you have a rigid kitchen table in a too-small kitchen, and you seldom need it at full size to serve all your family or entertain friends, consider a folding table.

Drop leaf tables snap quickly into place and can condense your table space by half. Drop-down tables fold down flat against the wall like a built-in ironing board. Attractive folding chairs slip out of the way between meals.

9) **Window seat:** Do you have a kitchen window that is not above a sink or table? Try installing a window seat. Simply take a couple of stock wall cabinets, preferably matching the ones on your walls, and secure them to the floor right beneath the window.

Top with a piece of wood to even off and add cushions for seating. The cabinet underneath gives more storage space, further contributing to the uncluttered look in your kitchen.

Floorcovering fashion: what's in and what's out

Once wall-to-wall carpeting was high fashion in home furnishings but today the floors that are making news are mosaics, wide plank and hardwood parquet, slate and Spanish and Mexican tile.

Today's fashion story is actually centuries old. Slate was used by the Egyptians 5,000 years ago, and by the 13th century, the Romans and Venetians were designing mosaic floors that were works of art. By the 17th century, parquet, intro-

duced by the French, had become a status symbol throughout Europe.

Centuries old tradition

Spanish and Mexican tile floors were never a status symbol but they've been the traditional materials for floors in homes of all economic groups throughout the Mediterranean and countries south of our border for hundreds of years.

All of these materials have much in common.

They are expensive, their installation calls for an expertise which is difficult to find, and very expensive when you do, and their upkeep requires special atten-

tion. Hardwood, in addition to its cost, is often not aged sufficiently and takes on an unwanted tint after it has been laid out and stained.



FINE VINYL FLOORING in patterns simulating hardwood parquet, Mexican tile or mosaics are often difficult to distinguish from the real thing.

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The average household has a four foot square energy hole

Most homes have an "energy hole" through which expensive heat and air conditioning escapes. The size of the hole varies with the size and condition of the house, but in an average 1600 square foot, six room house with two baths, the opening is equivalent to a hole in the wall estimated at four square feet. Through that hole approximately 35 percent of household heat is lost.

The "energy hole" is made up of small cracks and gaps that are usually hidden from view. The coverplates at light switches and electrical outlets hide openings around the receptacles. These openings pull air from an attic opening of about two square inches.

Hidden openings

Holes at plumbing pipes, vents and drains are often hidden by collars. The door and window moldings cover extensive irregular gaps. The floor board hides a gap between the floor and the wall.

The basement hides a small seam at the sole plate, where the house meets the



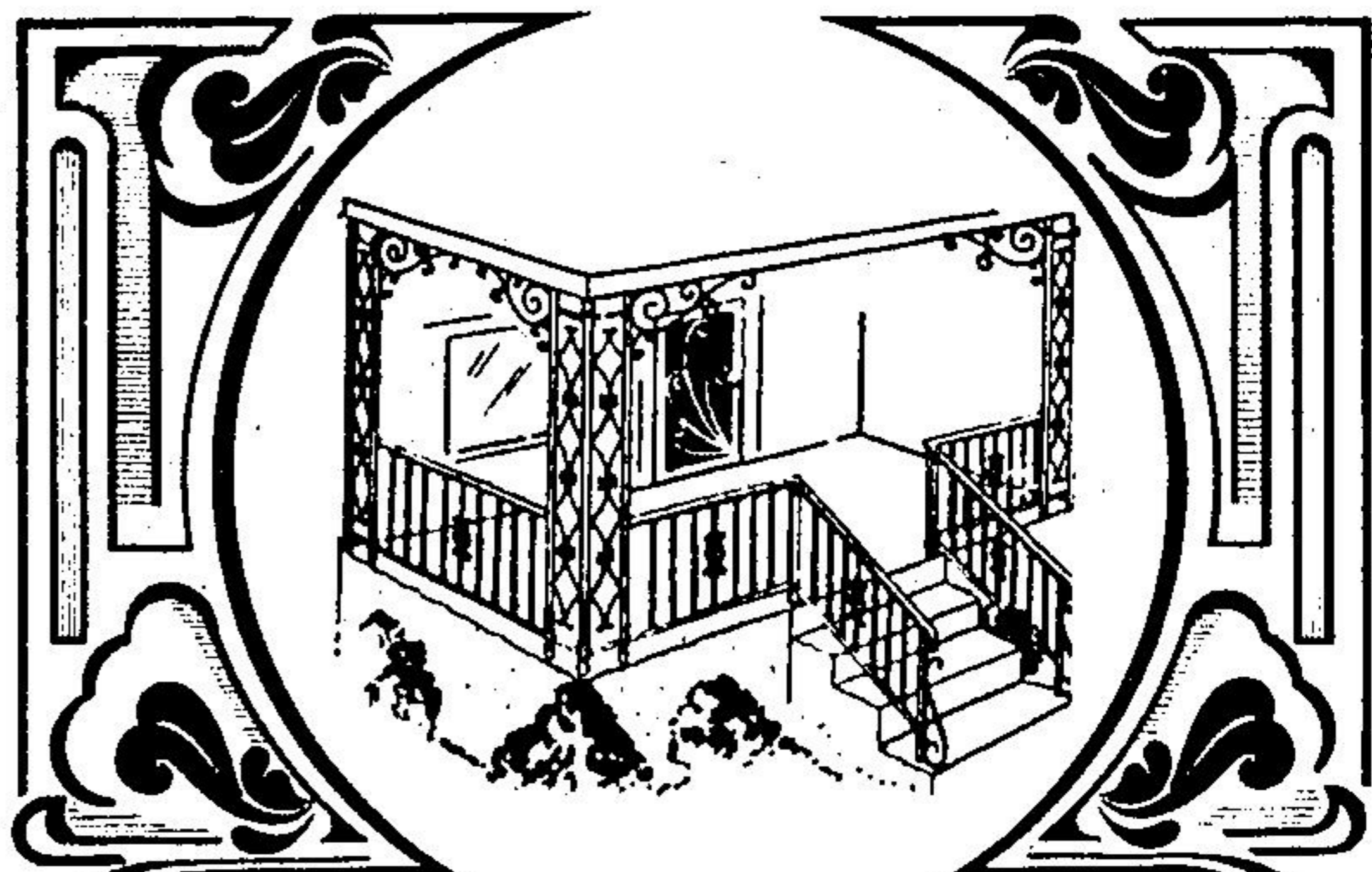
EVEN WELL INSULATED HOMES have "energy holes" comparable to this one.

foundation. This hairline crack emits a steady stream of cold air to rob the house of heat.

Homeowners can get a rough idea of the size of their household "energy hole" by estimating the size of the cracks then multiply-

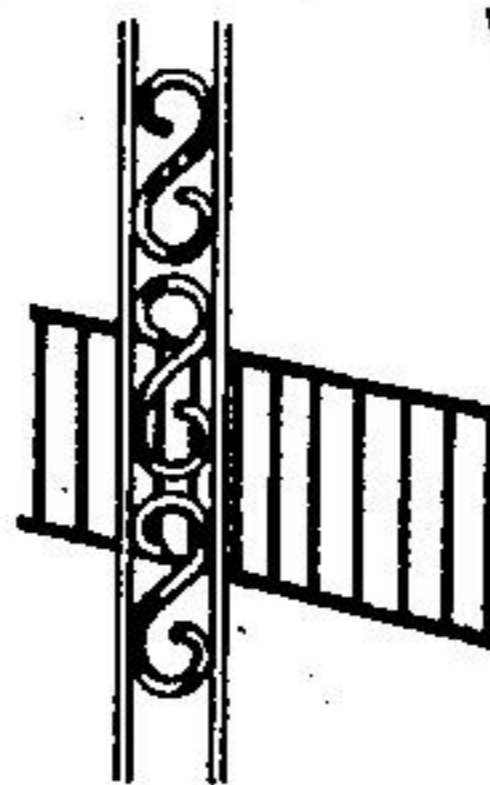
ing by the number of locations. The chart below displays the extent of the problem in a typical home.

Most tight houses undergo a complete air change about once an hour. Houses with a four foot square energy hole have air changes



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