

Space and Light in a Budget Kitchen

A bold backsplash and open shelves are the stars of this Texas kitchen

Problem: A ho-hum view of the back wall of the kitchen from the front door

Solution: The homeowners knew that they wanted white cabinets, but the colorful backsplash ideas the designer proposed were a welcome surprise. The homeowners chose these green penny-round tiles from Waterworks (www.waterworks.com).



The best thing about the original kitchen in this house was its proximity to an under-used storage room. The husband loves to cook, but he was frustrated by the kitchen's insufficient storage, lack of counter space, and awkwardly placed appliances that dated from the 1960s. Between the kitchen and the garage, however, a dark, wood-paneled room—part pantry, part storage area, and all unpleasant—sat ready for annexation.

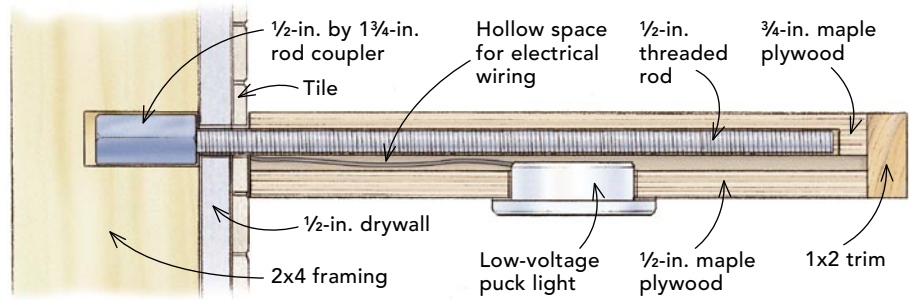
Working with a tight budget, Robin Colton of Laura Britt Design changed the plan by first removing two dividing walls and then moving the back door to a less central location. She substituted floating shelves for cabinets, enlarged the counter space against the wall, and added a big island that combined seating and more workspace. An informal office nook completed the room's role as primary living space. Best of all, for about \$50,000, they got a place that's intimate enough for a dinner for two and spacious enough for a big party.

"aha!" moment

The original kitchen was small, dark, and dated. The counter space was limited, to say the least. Between the kitchen and the garage, a small paneled room meant to be a pantry was so dark that the clients never used it. Removing the peninsula, a stub wall, and a partition wall at the pantry expanded the usable kitchen space. Moving the back door to the side of the house allowed the counter to extend across the wall.



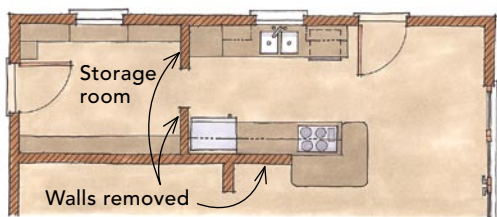
Cool detail



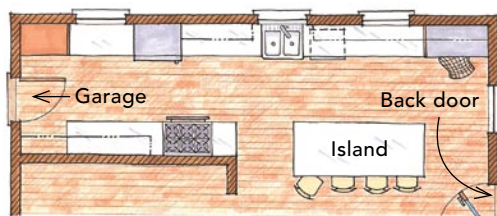
The shelving was integrated for display as well as for storage. The designers wanted to open up the room but not lose the vertical space. Having Royce Flournoy build the shelves on site allowed Robin to customize the design to the windows and cabinets and make sure they were a seamless fit. Because the room's look is so modern, the shelves were to appear as if they had no visible brackets or support.



Problem: Keeping the remodel from going over budget
Solution: Factory cabinets, pendant lights, and appliances were purchased from Ikea. The money saved by going to a big-box store gave the designer more leeway to include pricier items such as the quartz counters.



Before



After

Designer: Robin Colton of Laura Britt Design, Austin, Texas

Builder: Royce Flournoy, Texas Construction Company, Austin, Texas